

J.P. Mills and the Chittagong Hill Tracts, 1926/27
Tour Diary, Reports, Photographs

Annotated and Commented Edition
Wolfgang Mey

Foreword
Geraldine Hobson

2009

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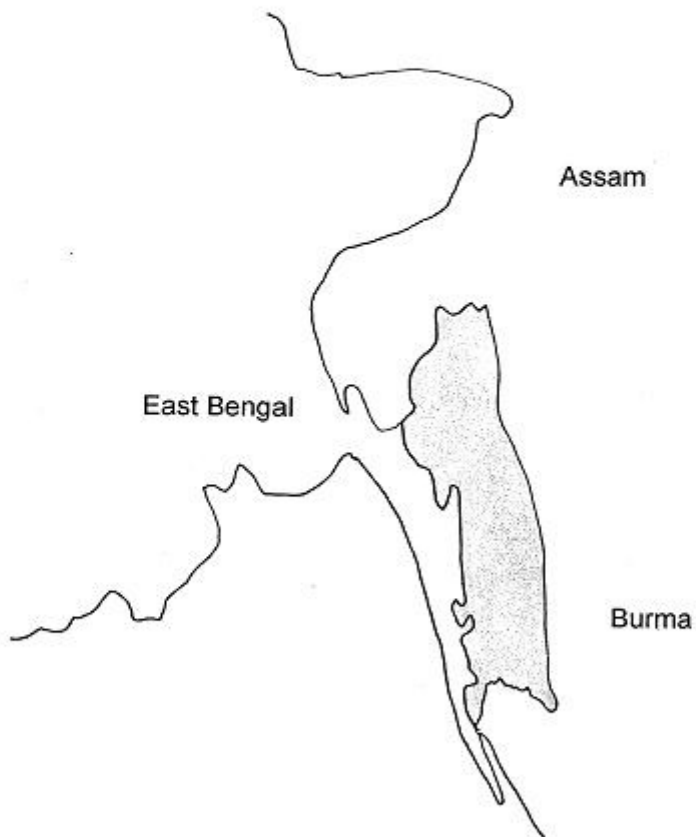
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FOREWORD

Philip Mills was born in Stockport, Cheshire in 1890. He was educated at Winchester College and at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He entered the Indian Civil Service in 1913 and was posted to Mokokchung in the Naga Hills of Assam in 1916 at the age of 26. There he served as Sub-divisional Officer for several years. By 1933 he was serving as Deputy Commissioner at Kohima, the administrative headquarters for the Naga Hills. In 1943 he was appointed Adviser to the Governor for Tribal Areas and States, with overall responsibility for tribal matters throughout North-east India. This included the little known area north of the Brahmaputra then known as the North-east Frontier Agency (now Arunachal Pradesh) and meant that for the first time he could tour in the area and study the people living there; Mishmi, Dafla and Apa Tani.

When Independence came in 1947, Mills was aged 57 and in poor health, weakened by frequent bouts of malaria and other tropical diseases. He retired from the ICS, and in 1948 took up an appointment at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, first as Lecturer then as Reader. Ill health due to a failing heart forced his early retirement in 1954 and he died in 1960. He was President of the Royal Anthropological Institute 1951-52 and was awarded their Rivers Memorial Medal in 1942 "for anthropological fieldwork among the Nagas of Assam". Likewise, he was presented with the Gold Medal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal for "contributions to the study of cultural anthropology in India".

Mokokchung, at an altitude of 1370 m, was four marches from the railhead, so everything had to be brought up in carrying baskets by porters. The bungalow provided for Mills was simple but entirely adequate for his needs, with a large garden for the cultivation of vegetables and fruit trees for his needs. Meat was obtained from the local village, where he quickly made friends among the Naga, the nearest European couple living 9 miles away. Mills found this existence very much to his liking, and enjoyed gardening and fishing in his spare time.

Mills quickly realised that it was through anthropology that he would begin to understand the culture of the people whom he had been appointed to administer. He was definitely not the “white overlord” type; rather, he believed that anthropology often provided the key to a problem, by working with “tribal” custom, rather than imposing alien western values on the communities. The headmen or chiefs of the Naga villages were an invaluable help in this respect.” No one could despair who, like me, numbers chiefs among his real friends [and they] have time and again proved literally indispensable” [OM I:2].

Not only were the chiefs an essential part of administering justice in “tribal” disputes, they were also instrumental in protecting him from harm on many occasions. Perhaps the most important example was Chingmak, chief of Chingmei, which was a village deep in un-administered territory towards the Burma border. As a young man, Chingmak had travelled many days to Mokokchung in order to meet Mills, who had received him with the honour due to Chingmak’s chiefly status. They had been firm friends ever since. At the time of the Pangsha expedition in 1936, Mills and his small force passed through Chingmei on a mission to rescue child slaves who had been abducted by a truculent headhunting village called Pangsha. Chingmak, a noted headhunter himself, provided an escort of warriors to protect the expedition. Without his help, the expedition might not have been successful in its aims. After the child slaves had been rescued and restored to their families, Chingmak, by now an old man, and Mills bade farewell to each other, knowing they would never see each other again in this life. Both had tears in their eyes” [Hobson (ed.) 1995:41].

As a footnote to this story; in 1994 I was asked to give a seminar about my father at the University in Shillong – now the capital of the State of

Meghalaya. The room was packed with Naga students and staff. One was from Chingmei, and said “J.P. Mills is part of our folklore and is known as a great warrior because of the Pangsha expedition” I was amazed that the memory of my father was still green after all those years.

Much of Mills’ time was spent on Tour, travelling almost entirely on foot, as there were very few bridle paths. He would walk between villages across the jungle-clad hills, marches averaging between ten and fourteen miles. Typically, he describes “a hard march without a hundred yards of level ground. [We] dropped 2000 feet to a stream, and climbed 1500 to Thurigarethen down another 1,500 ft. To the Chimei River which forms the frontier of administered territory and up about 3000 feet to our camp” [Hobson (ed.) 1995:8].

Naga villages were always built on ridges for defensive purposes. Having arrived in camp, the day’s work would begin. Litigants would have come in from far and wide with cases to be heard, including from the territory beyond the administered area. The tribesmen trusted and liked him and his knowledge of customary law was at least equal to that of the village elders. Punishments meted out were in accordance with tribal custom, such as a fine of mithan (*bos frontalis*). Then there was the official Tour Diary to be written, correspondence, brought in by runner, to be dealt with, and always his daily letter to his wife whom he had married in 1930. Professor Christof von Fürer-Haimendorf wrote in Mills’ Obituary: “ Mills’ sympathetic and unbureaucratic approach to the Nagas and their problems suited the administration of a loosely controlled frontier region to perfection [...]. He repeatedly had occasion to enter the unadministered tribal area then extending between Assam and Burma, and several of his tours represented the first exploration of territory which was right off the map and had never before been visited by Europeans. Though of gentle and quiet temperament, Mills showed on such occasions great personal courage, indifference to discomfort and a physical toughness which put to shame men many years his junior” [Fürer-Haimendorf 1960:960 f.].

Mills also found time to publish the results of his studies of the indigenous societies he lived with. These include three monographs which are classics of ethnographic writing – The Lhota Nagas (1922), The Ao Nagas (1926) and the Rengma Nagas (1937). This brings me on to

another aspect of his work, his ethnographic collection – totalling over 2000 objects - for the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford. There is also his photographic archive, held at SOAS, comprising twenty-four albums of images and two boxes of negatives and loose photographs. These document a way of life which has long since vanished - daily activities, villages and rituals associated with Feasts of Merit, death and head-hunting. The photographs were donated in 1960, but remained an essentially unusable resource until 1996, when I produced a descriptive catalogue of the images for SOAS. Dr Mey has used the ones relating to the CHT for this publication.

Mills' Presidential Address to the Royal Anthropological Institute entitled "Anthropology as a Hobby" gives a good insight into his methods of establishing mutual trust, eventually friendship and of collecting information and objects.

I quote some passages from it below: "It was only in 1905, shortly before I went up, that a Diploma in Anthropology was founded at Oxford [...] a subject useful to Greats men in a general way" (Mills 1953:1). My father read Greats.

His great friend and mentor, Professor Henry Balfour was at that time in charge of the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford and they probably met before Mills joined the Indian Civil Service. It was he who encouraged Mills to collect for the PRM and to take photographs. They maintained a correspondence over many years and Mills' letters (unfortunately Balfour's have not survived) are in the PRM archives. Mills says: "I doubt if those of you who have not lived long abroad can know what it means to have someone who will always answer letters and give a welcome and a patient hearing when one comes home on leave (Mills 1953:2).

Mills said how important it was to live a long time among the people one was studying and to make real friends among them. He certainly had many close Naga friends, Chingmak being but one example. Widows and others who had fallen on hard times were often helped out of his own pocket. "In my view, friendship, and by that I mean real friendship, is the master key to the amateur's work in the field. The hobby brings you friends, and without friends it cannot be properly pursued. Real mutual trust and confidence must be established, and if you show your interest in and appreciation of their institutions, your

friends will in turn reveal to you their pride in them and tell you things you might not otherwise learn" [...]. Your friends will include priests, medicine men, warriors and so forth, and as friends you often see them in mufti as ordinary family men" [Mills 1953:3].

The "number and variety of material objects you are likely to see is directly related to the size of your circle of friends and acquaintances [...]. I have been speaking of simple, ordinary things in everyday use which no one is likely to show you as being of special interest, or to offer you for sale or as a present. There are of course, the more spectacular ornaments [...]. These are the things most likely to be brought out for sale and the least likely to be of any use to a museum" [Mills 1953:5].

Unfortunately Mills was only able to spend a couple of months in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, of which he remarked: "we still await the detailed accounts we long for. Such accounts can only come from those who have lived among the people [...]. A casual visitor like my self can only record what he sees; beliefs and social systems must remain hidden from him" [Mills 1931:515]. Nevertheless, in that short period of time he travelled 500 miles, mainly on foot, and his writings and photographs of the area, so ably assembled and commented on here by Dr. Mey, provide a valuable addition to the knowledge of the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Geraldine Hobson
December 2005

1. J.P. Mills and the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Introduction

Acknowledgements

First of all I would like to thank those institutions and persons who made the edition of these texts and photographs possible. My thanks go to the “Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft” in Bonn. This Research Foundation supported this work with a grant. There are the “Archives of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Archives, Manuscripts and Rare Books Division”, which kindly gave permission to publish the “London Manuscripts” and the photographs. There is the “Archive of the Pitt-Rivers-Museum, School of Anthropology and Museum of Ethnography”, which kindly gave permission to publish the “Oxford Manuscript”.

There are four persons to whom I am grateful for their kind co-operation. First, to Mrs. Geraldine Hobson, J.P. Mills’ daughter. She provided detailed information on her father, his ideas and experiences and wrote the Foreword. Dr. Swapna Bhattacharya (Chakraborty) and Dr. R.S. Dewan helped me with the translation of vernacular terms I could not find in the reference books. Akhyai Mong from the CHT supplied information promptly and helped me to clarify some questions pertaining to the Manuscripts.

Lastly, my thanks go to the colleagues of the Library of the South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg for copy editing and publishing the Mills Papers on the electronic repository SavifaDok.

I would like to add a personal note. This study is meant to be an analysis of a text and its interpretation in the perspective of both history of ethnographic knowledge and theory-building. It is neither meant to construct “ethnographic truth” nor to hurt individual feelings.

Technical Remarks

- Underlined words are Mills' emphasis
- ~~Deleted words~~ are thus deleted in the original text.
- (...) Mills' brackets
- The numbers in the text (5) indicate the pagination in the original text
- [...] are my comments, additions, or references

2. The Chittagong Hill Tracts

The Mills Collection of papers, photographs and ethnographic objects documents aspects of the life of the people in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), today Bangladesh, in the late 1920s. These hills in the hinterland of Chittagong, border Burma and India to the East and North. They are the home of 12 different peoples (Chakma, Tongsonya, Chak, Marma, Khyeng, Tripura, Brong, Bawm, Pangkhua, Mru, Khumi, Mizo). Except for the Tripura, a Bodo-speaking group, which immigrated into the hills from Tripura, all had migrated into the CHT from Upper Burma and Eastern India. This immigration was part of general population movements in Upper Burma, which extended partly westward [Mey 1980:93 ff.]. Today, the CHT form the South-Eastern districts of Bangladesh.

Pressures on this hilly area from outside came also from the west, from the plains of Bengal as a result of the expansion of the Mogul powers. In 1664/65 this expansion had come to an end. The Mogul administration interfered only marginally with the economic and political structures in the hills. The East India Company extended its hegemony over the area of Chittagong in 1760, but the changes it had implemented in Bengal did not affect the living conditions in the hills structurally. It had its side effects, though. Some representatives of kinship groups of the hill people succeeded in monopolising the collection of a tax, part of which they submitted to the collectorate. Thus they were able to establish their own economic basis in clear contradiction to, and outside of, the traditional kinship system and its mutual obligations.

The results of this indirect installation of chiefs were at the basis of many political and administrative problems in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

The annexation of the CHT in 1860 by the British was the result of prolonged disputes and fights over land between peasants of the plains and those of the hills and British tea planters [Lewin 1869:22 ff.; Hunter 1876:341; Roy 2000:29]. Colonial administrators had sharpened their tools in the administration and exploitation of the plains of Bengal. Now they were confronted with peoples of different ethnic origins who were basically unknown to them and where the tools of administration as employed in the plains necessarily failed. Civil servants in the administration realised this very soon and removed the area from the laws applicable to the plains of Bengal.

Incompatibilities of ethnic and colonial notions permeated most of the relations of the British administration and the hill peoples. This necessitated frequent administrative adjustments.

As compared to other parts of the world, these hilly regions have received little attention. This is due to a number of reasons. They were “excluded areas” in colonial times and access for anthropologists was difficult. After decolonisation, regional wars for independence or autonomy waged by hill peoples in India and Burma and later in Bangladesh made national governments apprehensive of granting access to these areas to outsiders.

British administrators who had worked in these areas left important accounts of the history and cultures of the hill people [Lewin 1869, Hutchinson 1906], but still many of the data have to be extracted from the colonial correspondence to allow for a more comprehensive view.

Studies by anthropologists and historians were published after independence [Bessaignet 1958, Bernot & Bernot 1957; Bernot & Bernot 1958; Bernot 1967 a; Bernot 1967 b; Holtheuer 1967; Löffler 1960 a; Löffler 1960 b; Löffler 1964; Löffler 1966; Löffler 1968 a; Löffler 1968 b; Löffler/Pardo 1969; Mey 1979; Mey 1980; Spielmann 1968; Van Schendel 1992; Van Schendel 1995].

Bengali sources are few [Ghosh 1909; Bangladesh District Gazetteers 1971; Husain 1967; Rajput 1965; Sattar 1971; 1975].

Studies on the CHT “from within” are few, often they address human rights violations and the policy of underdevelopment [Chakma 1985/86; Chakma et al.1995; Dewan 1991, Roy 2000, Shahu/Pardo, 1998].

Many if not most of these texts are out of print or otherwise inaccessible to scholars in Bangladesh and especially, the CHT. The reception and critical discussion of historical documents would play an important part in the context of the formation of new identities in the CHT [cf. for instance van Schendel 1995].

The edition of the Mills’ Reports helps to provide insights into the formation of economic and political power in the CHT and into the construction of ethnographic and political notions of his time and their extension into the field of politics.

3. J.P. Mills’ Mission to the Chittagong Hill Tracts

Administration in the CHT had reached a critical state during the first decades of the 20th century. The mismanagement of the chiefs in the CHT had compelled the Government in 1925 to take the collection of plough rents out of their hands. This problem had been discussed in the colonial correspondence at length [Chakma Chief 1925:1 ff.; Cook 1924, in: Selections 1929:469 ff.; Stevens 1924 (c), in: Selections 1929:471 ff; Hopkyns 1925, in: Selections 1929:480 ff.; Roy 1925 a, in: Selections 1929:485 f., 495 ff.].

“The necessity for the serious step was beyond all doubt and made it clearer than ever that the Chiefs were in danger of fast becoming useless” [OM 1:1 f., see 3.1].

The aim of J.P. Mills’ mission to the CHT was to bring the chiefs of the CHT in tune with the demands of the British administration. In order to define the tasks of the chiefs in the future administration, Mills inquired into their history and status, their privileges and duties. As their tasks should be in line with their status and history, he identified what he considered the “tribal” foundation of the societies of the peoples of the CHT. In the light of these findings he was “to advise the Bengal Government how the Chiefs in the Chittagong Hill Tracts may best be utilised in the administration, regard being had both to the interests of

the people and the desirability of maintaining the dignity and influence of the Chiefs and preventing them from becoming mere figure-heads in receipt of certain emoluments" [OM I:2] and to find out "whether having regard to their history and influence they can be given a useful place" [OM I:2] in the administration of the CHT.

His proposals, he wrote, were based on his experience of his residence of 2 months in the Hill Tracts, on a perusal of different kinds of publications on the CHT, his experience in the Naga Hills, and his anthropological experience [OM I:3].

His findings provided the basis for his article "Notes on a tour in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in 1926" (Mills 1931).

Before I discuss the constitutive parts of the Mills Collection I give a survey of the *corpus*.

3.1. The Mills Collection

The manuscripts I publish in this edition are kept in the Archives of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Archives, Manuscripts and Rare Books Division ("London Manuscript", "LM") and the Archive of the Pitt Rivers Museum, School of Anthropology and Museum of Ethnography ("Oxford Manuscript", "OM").

The "London Manuscript" consists of the following texts:

- A hand-written "Diary of a Tour (Tour Journal) by J.P. Mills starting at Chittagong, 18. Nov. 1926 - 13. Jan. 1927" (pp: 1 - 23)
- A typescript, Part I, "Report on the Chiefs of the Chittagong Hill Tracts" (pp: 1 - 16)
- A typescript, Part II, "Proposals regarding the Chiefs" (pp: 1-59), and of a translation of a "Subtenant's Lease" (pp 2),
- of one Appendix:
 - "Suggested Agricultural Experiments" (17 pages), this includes as chapters "Suggested Agricultural Experiments" (pp:1 - 4)
 - "Specific Duties for Chiefs" (pp: 4 - 8)
 - "Compulsory Labour" (pp: 9 - 11)
 - "Specific Duties of Chiefs (cont.)" (pp:12)
 - "Chakma Chief's History" (pp 13 -14)
 - "Education" (pp: 15 -17)

- Four word lists (“Khyeng. List of Relationship Terms”; “List of Relationship Terms, Marma”; “List of Relationship Terms Tippera-Mro”; “Word list Mro-Khyeng”)
- 101 photographs (“Photographic Collection”, duplicates not counted).

The “Oxford Manuscript” consists of the following texts:

- Part I, “Introductory”, pp 1 - 48 (“History of the Chittagong Hill Tracts”; this text corresponds to Part I, “Report on the Chiefs of the Chittagong Hill Tracts”, “London Manuscript”)
- Part II, “Proposals Regarding the Chiefs”, pp:1 - 59; this text corresponds to Part II of the “London Manuscript”
- Four appendices (16 pages) including
 - Appx. A: “Translation of a Subtenant’s Lease of the Chakma Chief” (pp 2)
 - Appx. B: “Suggested Agricultural Experiments” (pp 1 - 5)
 - Appx. C: “Compulsory Labour” (pp 1-4)
 - Appx. D: “The Collection of the Jhum Tax” (pp 1 - 5)
- “History of the family of the Bohmong” (pp 1 - 3)

The Pitt Rivers Museum also holds the ethnographic material J.P. Mills had collected in the Hill Tracts during his trip.

The structure of both manuscripts is basically the same. As the comparative Table of Contents shows, the London Manuscript is, with the exception of the “History of the family of the Bohmong” more comprehensive.

Yet, the texts also display differences. The “Oxford Manuscript” contains a number of passages, which are not to be found in the London Manuscript. These additions provide partly more details, partly they relate the contents of the text to anthropological theory. These additions do not mark a change of argument. They were added to the text at a time when J.P. Mills had access to anthropological literature, and helped to clarify his argument.

The Parts II of both manuscripts contain many but not all arguments of what is laid down in the appendices of both manuscripts. Whereas the “Subtenant’s lease” is part of the appendix of the OM (Appendix A) it is kept in the LM as a separate text.

The “London Manuscript” has the character of a report: “This report was written by Mr. J.P. Mills” [LM I:1]. The “Oxford Manuscript” is listed under the title “History of the Chittagong Hill Tracts”. This indicates that later he considered the manuscript not only as a report but also as a preparation for a more general study on the history of the Hill Tracts. Quotations from contemporary anthropologists and administrators indicate that J.P. Mills wanted to rest the book on a larger theoretical basis. I could not ascertain why this project was never realised.

The “Oxford Manuscript” is the younger version. I have chosen this text as reference text.

Those texts which are not part of the Oxford Manuscript are added from the London Manuscript so as to present the complete corpus.

The documents of the “London Manuscript” and the collection of photographs and negatives were handed over to the SOAS by the widow of the late J.P. Mills.

The “Oxford Manuscript” is kept in the Hutton Archive of the Archive of the Pitt-Rivers Museum in Oxford. Neither the accession records of both institutions nor the personal recollections of Geraldine Hobson, J.P. Mills’ daughter can shed further light on the history of these documents.

3.2. The Texts

The records which have been available to me in the Hutton Archive show that in early 1926, J.P. Mills had received a notification that his expertise would be needed to inquire into the history and status of the three chiefs in the CHT. In fact, it was Lord Lytton who had requested the Assam Government to depute Mills to the CHT [Three Chiefs Reply, Annexure A:1, 1929; Harvey 1961:39, fn 9) Mills had not read much about the CHT then. In a letter to Balfour he wrote:

“I may go to the Chittagong Hill Tracts for a couple of months in the autumn [...]. Has anyone but Lewin written on those people?” (Mills, May 12th, 1926)

In August 1926, he wrote: “The Chittagong Hill Tracts job is settled for me all right. I shall be there for two months in the cold weather. I hope I shall collect some specimens + catch some fish but whether I shall settle the problem set me remains to be seen” (Mills, August 3rd, 1926).

Later he added: "I must try to collect some things + take some photos. It ought to be very interesting" (Mills, September 2nd, 1926).

3.3. The Diary

J.P. Mills travelled in the CHT from November 18, 1926 to January 1927. The Deputy Commissioner of the CHT, Mr. Stevens, accompanied him (Three Chiefs' Reply, Annexure A:1,1929). The last entry in his Diary was made on January 13, 1927. The Diary contains the schedule of the trip, a short account of his meetings and the topics he discussed with a number of persons, personal remarks and reflections concerning the history and status of the chiefs and the changes he was to propose.

3.4. The Reports

When the different versions of the report were written I could not ascertain. From the Oxford Manuscript it becomes evident that Mills had spent some time in revising it and to bring it into line with current theoretical thoughts (vide the quotations of Malinowski et al.). This could not have been done in the field. The Oxford Manuscripts were added to the Hutton Collection in 1927.

In the introduction to the "Report on the Chiefs of the Chittagong Hill Tracts" (LM) Mills wrote that "certain parts of the original version have been omitted". The available documents provide no clue what these "parts" contained.

An official and printed version of his report has existed, though, as a footnote in the Table of Contents of the Selections 1929 indicates: "The report by Mr. F.D. Ascoli, Special Officer, 1919, and that by Mr. J.P. Mills, Special Officer, 1926, have been separately printed". [Selections 1929:4]. The Mills Report was sent to the three chiefs of the CHT and they were asked for their comments to Mills' analysis and recommendations [Three Chiefs' Reply 1929].

Yet, except to a few addresses [The Three Chiefs, the Government of Bengal, the Government of Assam] the version of the report was, so it seems, not circulated. This is astonishing as, for instance, even the Report of F.D. Ascoli [1918] which had very limited importance to the British administration outside the CHT was circulated.

The Reports were also used by the Government of Assam in its debate of the future administration of the district in the early 1930s when total

or partial exclusion of “tribal tracts” or “frontier areas” was discussed: “The difficulties that may be put in the path of administration by any process of corruption of native customs, by the substitution of alien agencies for the indigenous institutions, and by an attempt to set up more convenient intermediaries than the troublesome mechanism of tribal organization, have been illustrated in the report submitted by Mr. J.P. Mills, I.C.S., to the Government of Bengal (1927)” [Cosgrave 1931, Appendix G].

This original version seems to have disappeared. I found a copy of the London Manuscript with a stamp “Lucien Bernot” on the first page in the strong room of the SOAS in 1971. Bernot had quoted from this manuscript in his study of the Marma (1967). A copy of this text came into the hands of L.G. Löffler who added some references on the sources Mills had used but not mentioned. He referred to the manuscript: “a copy (...) I could consult owing to the kindness of Lucien Bernot, Paris” [Löffler 1968:201].

Somehow this commented and stamped version which Bernot had used, or a copy of it, found its way back to SOAS. He gave contradictory information on the manuscript. “L'exemplaire que nous possédons se compose de 16 pages dactylographiées, 21 x 34, sans interligne (...). Nous n'avons eu qu'une seule fois entre les mains l'original imprimé de ce *Report*. D'après le format et la typographie il semblait provenir d'une *Gazetteer*. J.P. Mills, à qui nous avons écrit par la suite nous répondit qu'il ne se souvenait plus avoir écrit cet article” [1967:41, fn 1]. The copy which Bernot had used (stamped “LUCIEN BERNOT”) is a version of 19 pages. (The photocopy shows that the original version of 15 large format pages has been cut and mounted to an edition of 19 pages). This version is the LM I and corresponds with the OM I. Except another part of the corpus, the “History of the Family of the Bohmong”, Bernot did not mention the other parts of the London Manuscript, possibly he did not know them or had no access to them. The History of the Bohmong Family was, however, known to him.

Bernot wrote that he had once seen a printed version, yet he wrote that the Mills Report was “pratiquement interdit” [1967:41]. I myself cannot recall having come across any publication of the Report. Apart from Lucien Bernot's using the manuscript, G.E. Harvey published the Bohmong genealogy which Mills had sent to him [Harvey 1961:35 ff.].

Later, I published a few quotations in my study on the political systems in the Chittagong Hill Tracts [Mey 1980] and further use was made of the reports in the publication “The Chittagong Hill Tracts. Living in a Borderland” [Van Schendel, Mey & Dewan 2000]. Apart from these references the manuscript was never made use of. In fact, it seems that only the persons I mentioned had knowledge of the existence of these texts. The photographic collection was not accessible in 1971. A few photos from this collection were published in C.D. Braun’s and L.G. Löffler’s book “Mrs. Hill People on the Border of Bangladesh”, 1990. Mills had sent copies to Löffler. It was only during my research on historical photographic documents on the CHT for “Living in a Borderland” in 1998 that I got access to this part of the Mills’ Collection in the SOAS after Geraldine Hobson undertook to produce a descriptive catalogue at the request of SOAS.

3.5. History of the Family of the Bohmong

Mills collected information on the history of the chiefs to ascertain their origin and status and to document their rise as “colonial chiefs”. Among the information he received was the family history of the Bohmong written for him by one of the sons of the Bohmong. He referred to this text in the Report:

“Since 1906 when Mr. Hutchinson compiled his ‘Account of the Chittagong Hill Tracts’ the ancient records preserved by the Bohmong’s family [cf. Hutchinson 1906:108 ff.] have been destroyed by fire. Fortunately however the information contained in them had been extracted, and there is no reason to doubt its substantial accuracy” [OM I:19].

Bernot did research among the Marma, Khyeng and Chak from November 1951 to October 1952 and from October 1959 to March 1960 [Bernot & Bernot 1957; Bernot & Bernot 1958; Bernot 1967 a; Bernot 1967 b]. When he inquired into the history of the family of the Bohmong chiefs he was told “que les archives avaient été volées dans une petite valise, en gare de Chittagong, quelques années auparavant” [Bernot 1967:41, fn. 2]. This is a contradiction to the information given to Mills, e.g. that they were destroyed by fire. He lent these notes to Harvey who based his article [1961] on these data. Bernot remarked: “Il est dommage que M. G.E. Harvey, qui fait autorité en matière d’histoire de la Birmanie, ait

reproduit cette généalogie sans moindre commentaire critique” [(Bernot 1967:41, fn 3)].

The manuscript on the genealogy consists of three pages and ends rather abruptly, referring to the abdication of “Kamalangya” [i.e. Kong Hla Nyo, cf. Bernot 1967:91] in favour of his parallel cousin “Monfroo” [i.e. Mong Phru, cf. Bernot 1967:91] in 1866. In the Reports he described the succession of the chiefs up to the rule of “Keozan Phru” [OM I:21; i.e. Kyaw Zen Phru, cf. Bernot 1967:93], e.g. the 1920s. Evidently, the last part of Mills “Bohmong Genealogy” is missing. Mills did not comment upon this family history. Bernot presumably received the text from Mills personally.

Bernot wrote “the fullest account of the Marma Chiefs of Bandarban hitherto published” [Löffler 1968:189, Bernot 1967,1:84 ff.]. He did not discuss the implications of his description, of the earlier data available to him and Mills’ “History of Family of the Bohmong”. This was done in an article written by Lorenz G. Löffler in 1968. To add this discussion to this edition would, however, reach far beyond the scope of this text. It may suffice to refer to Löffler’s contribution here.

The “History of the Family of the Bohmong” is more a commented list of “historical” traditions whereas the main information on the rise of the Bohmongs’ power is given in the Report.

3.6. The Lists of Relationship Terms and the Word List

Mills made three resp. four lists of relationship terms and word lists. Such lists were needed to understand social relations and ultimately social structures [cf. also Mills 1922:93 ff.]. In the Diary, Mills mentioned that he made these lists [November 24th, 25th, December 10th, 19th 1926].

They have no bearing on the argument of the Reports and it may be reasonable to infer that he wanted to use them in the context of a monograph.

The same may be true for the Mro-Khyeng Word list. It was possibly taken to identify the linguistic relationship between the Mro and Khyeng as Chin groups. He noticed a relationship of the Mro to the Ao Naga numerals.

3.7. The Photographic Collection

The photographic collection consists of 101 black/white photographs, duplicates not counted. These photographs were taken during the field trip. Neither the Diary nor the Reports comment upon the photographic collection.

3.8. The Ethnographic Collection

When J.P. Mills indicated in a letter to Henry Balfour of May 12th, 1926 that he might go to the CHT, he asked him: "Is there anything you want me especially to look out for?"

Mills had a long-standing friendship with Henry Balfour, then director at the Pitt Rivers Museum. Balfour had toured with him in the Naga Hills during October and November 1922. Mills had been collecting for the Museum, at Balfour's request, for several years, so it was a chance for him to show Balfour some of the Naga villages.

Mills collected 89 ethnographic items in the CHT. These objects were loaned to the Pitt Rivers Museum in 1927 and donated in 1928.

After he had acquired the collection he wrote to Henry Balfour: "I thought you would like the C.H.T. stuff, for you probably had little or nothing from there before [...]. Magh [Marma] things ought to be all from Burmese, for they are Burmese themselves" (Mills, May 13th, 1927). And on June 7th, 1927 he added a missing piece of information:

"I have got the information about the Magh flute with the extra hole. It is called BULUI. A piece of dry onion skin is stretched over the extra hole + fastened with wax so that it vibrates" [Mills, June 7th, 1927].

The collection is kept in the Pitt Rivers Museum (www.prm.ox.ac.uk/databases.html). The list in this text [9] differs from the accession list in the Pitt Rivers Museum text; I have numbered the objects according to the date of acquisition as mentioned in the Tour Diary. In some cases the dates of purchase differ, too. My corrections are put in brackets. Not all of the objects mentioned in the Tour Diary show up in the acquisition list.

4. The Ethnographic Analysis

In the course of his inquiry J.P. Mills found it necessary to identify different historic influences, which had shaped the institutions of the peoples of the CHT:

“The problem set me I have attempted to attack from a new standpoint, discussing first the basic nature of Chieftainship here, and then attempting to indicate to what extent it has been warped and smothered by later extraneous influences and accretions” [OM II:57].

He identified two different strata, first the basic “Indonesian” culture, characterised by shifting cultivation, clan chieftainship and systems of reciprocity and second, a superstructure modelled along Bengali Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist notions and eventually British measures of administration and the transfer of technical knowledge.

4.1. The Indonesian Layer

The “tribes of this area possess a typically Indonesian material and social culture” [OM I:11].

“The whole material culture [...], under a superficial layer of Bengali and Buddhist culture, is purely and typically Indonesian” [OM I:3]. „They have the typical Indonesian tension-loom, the typical fire-thong, the typical fish-trap lined with cane-thorns, houses, type of hearths, traps, method of cultivation, and so on [OM I:3].

This “Indonesian layer” of material culture was linked to a specific mode of leadership: “The ancient Chieftainship was a clan Chieftainship, under which a Chief was addressed as father by men of his own clan and such outsiders as he had specially befriended or protected. The relation was reciprocal, and ‘fathers’ owed duties to their ‘sons’, just as much as ‘sons’ owed duties to their ‘fathers.’ This clan feeling and clan chieftainship still exists” [OM I:11]. He specified: “each clan, as elsewhere in Indonesia, still in its heart of hearts regards itself as entirely independent of any other” [OM I:6].

4.2. The Bengali - British Layer

There were yet two more issues which needed clarification. The “nature” of the *jhum* tax was not clear: “For years the Chiefs have maintained that their right to collect and keep a share of the *jhum* tax is inherent in their position as Chiefs” [OM I:7] and he noticed an assumption “so often tacitly made in files [...] that the *jhum* tax is some primitive tax of which the paramount power takes a humble share” [OM I:7].

Mills argued that the *jhum* tax was no ‘primitive’ tax but everything “tends to show that it was first raised when the Moguls demanded tribute from the tribes in the hinterland” [OM I:7 f.]. It has nothing to do with the gifts due to a chief in a reciprocal kinship system. The hegemonial powers of the plains “farmed out the right to collect tribute from the individual household [...]. It is thus seen that the portion of the *jhum* tax which is taken by the Chiefs and headmen [...are] the fruits of ancient extortion condoned by time” [OM I:11].

This farming out of the collection of a tribute or tax from individuals went along with the transfer of first Mogul, then British concepts of hegemony *sub specie* territoriality and hierarchy. The *jhum* tax appears thus as a tax levied in the perspective of a system of land ownership.

Second, the “nature” of the “*abwabs*” was obscure [OM I:12 ff.]. The different dues the chiefs demanded from their subjects were of different historical origin. Mills identified those dues, which were part and parcel of older systems of reciprocity in kinship based societies as opposed to those, which were claimed by chiefs in the course of their expansion of their systems of domination [OM I:14 ff.].

The distinction of “tribal” and “colonial”, i.e., justified and unjustified claims of the chiefs enabled Mills to define their “correct” position and duties both *vis-à-vis* their subjects and the British administration.

5. Proposals

After the different historic layers in the societies of the people of the CHT, their outreach, the dues, privileges and obligations were identified, J.P. Mills submitted proposals, which aimed at keeping the chiefs in the administration. Yet, their future position should be in tune with their “tribal” background.

He advised the administration to take measures “which are aimed at giving the Chiefs a perfectly fair chance to perform useful work that is well within their capacities, in recognition of which they will enjoy certain emoluments and dignities” [OM II:57].

The future position of the chiefs, however, he concluded, should be placed on a different footing. They should be relieved of duties which had no connection to their “tribal” realms. If they would perform the duties offered to them they would keep their emoluments. In addition they could be granted “such additional marks of distinction as their future position will demand” [OM II:2].

“My proposals are that the Chiefs should no longer be employed as revenue collectors and petty magistrates. To these tasks, with their inevitable atmosphere of book-keeping, rules, codes and inspecting officers, the Chiefs are not suited either by character, upbringing, or position. They can be performed far better by subordinate officials” [OM I:2].

“The second duty of which it is proposed they should be relieved is that of trying cases as Chiefs, their powers as headmen being still retained by them” [OM II:58].

The third reason why the Chiefs should be relieved of these powers is the “oppression and extortion” [OM II:6] connected with their execution.

He wanted “to see the Chiefs working as Chiefs, with undiminished incomes and with an influence only bounded by their capabilities” [OM I: 2 f.]. “In place of the duties from which they are freed it is proposed to give them other duties, no less extensive, and more suitable to their position and character. These are described in general terms, and detailed examples are given. Provided they take up the responsibilities offered to them it is proposed that they should receive an income not less than their present one, and that certain dignities be accorded to them” [OM II:58]. This involved both “an entire change in the nature of the

tasks they are asked to perform" [OM I:2] and a change in the policy of the colonial administration.

Yet, relief "from tax-collecting and Court work is not intended to give the Chiefs time for idleness. Rather it is meant to leave them free for other duties [...]. A Chief has a duty towards his people and a duty towards Government. By leading the one and advising the other he can prove himself a strong link in the chain of administration" [OM II:21].

He refers to others' experiences in Sarawak and recalls his own experiences in the Naga Hills:

"To me Chiefs have been eyes, ears, hands and feet, keeping me closely informed of all that goes on, ever ready with sound advice, and, when such advice resulted in orders, conveying them with speed and seeing that they were carried out. They have been as ready to consult me as I have been to consult them, and I could know that their voice was the voice of their people. For they were the leaders of their people, and in that lay their value" [OM II:21].

The Naga chiefs to whom he referred with a number of examples gain "little in the shape of material reward [...Their] principal rewards are the social precedence and deference accorded to [... them] and the satisfaction found in the exercise of authority" [OM II:22]. He proposed that the chiefs of the CHT "be asked, in return for what they receive, to place their knowledge and influence unreservedly at the disposal of Government, and to give continual and active assistance and advice, both on the broader questions of general policy and on all those smaller details which together make up the administration of the district. This is their natural duty" [OM II:22 f.].

In detail he proposed that the chiefs take an active interest in questions of improvement of agriculture, forest preservation and use of forest produce, education, excise, game preservation, compulsory labour, limiting the breaking up of villages, and advising in granting prospecting licenses to private companies [OM II:23 ff.].

His proposals executed, "the Chiefs will cease to be mere parts of the revenue system" [OM II:39] and certain honours would be bestowed on them: a Guard of Honour at occasions, an arched gateway at Rangamati which to pass through would be a privilege of the Governor, high officials and the chiefs, rights to forced labour as Government servants enjoy [OM II: 40 f.], a suitable State Umbrella, "a plaque suspended from

a handsome gold chain to be worn round the neck and bearing on it his coat of arms in enamel" [OM II:41], the chiefs should be "excused the formality of renewing their arms licenses and should be granted life licenses for such arms they possess" [OM II:41]. Further, they should be entitled to use the P.W.D. Inspection Bungalows while touring in the hills [OM II:41]. The uniforms of their retainers should be regulated, the chiefs should be allowed a board with a coat of arms instead of a number plate and they should be given titles to mark their rank [OM II:41 ff.].

In the past, government did not nominate "a successor to a disputed Chieftainship till the death of the holder" [OM II:47]. Mills proposed that "in future a successor be nominated, subject to good behaviour, during the lifetime of a Chief" [OM II:47]. The distinction between personal and official property in the chiefs' offices should be recorded [OM II:47 f.].

These were the proposals J.P. Mills made in order to put the chiefs on a different footing: They would no longer be part of the revenue system in which they had traditionally no place anyway but would be part of the colonial administration in which they were to be charged with the "tribal" administration. "The more branches of the administration the Chiefs are in touch with, the better" [OM II:56]. Dues and privileges would mark their status.

But, as he pointed out, the "whole blame [...] does not lie on the Chiefs" [OM II:1], the colonial administration was also responsible for the mismanagement in the Hill Tracts. In order to remedy this situation he suggested that the administration should be improved. The mauza system should be strengthened by relying more on the local people rather than the interested advice of the chiefs [OM II:52 ff.]. Further, an improved presence of officials in the hills [OM II:50 ff.] should be guaranteed, transfer notes and tour diaries for instruction of successors should be kept. Officials changed too often to guarantee a coherent administration. "Therefore I recommend that transfers be as infrequent as possible; that the Officials be carefully selected, and when the right man is in the right place that he be allowed a free hand and his decisions upheld whenever possible [...]. If an Officer cannot give sound decisions the Hill Tracts is no place for him" [OM II:50].

Mills' suggestions aimed at changing the chiefs into functionaries in the administrative system with duties performed by them which were in tune with their traditional duties. Behind his proposals for

administrative reforms lay yet another aim. The administrative status of the CHT had been under discussion for quite some time. This ambiguity was part and parcel of the administrative history of Bengal and Assam.

6. The Mills Report and the Administrative Status of the Chittagong Hill Tracts

The status of the Chittagong Hill Tracts was repeatedly discussed by administrators (1). The administration of the area was far from being a smooth job. F. Ascoli had received orders from the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal in 1917 to submit a report on the revenue administration of the CHT. "An examination of the revenue conditions showed that matters were not satisfactory, that realisation of rent was much in arrears" [Ascoli 1918:§ 8, p.10].

Though some of Ascoli's proposals were realised [AR 1921/22:56 f.], the internal administration of the CHT was far from being satisfactory. The chiefs' mismanagement had forced the Government in 1925 to take the collection of plough rents out of their hands and they were in danger of becoming a hindrance to the administration.

The application of the 'Government of India Act, 1919 aimed at changing the structure of power: "The effect of the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1919, was to transfer control [...] over a number of provincial subjects to the legislatures in which the elected representatives of the people predominated" [Chand 1983,3:467].

The reform meant to provide for a clear demarcation of political powers and lines of representation. In "the sphere of provincial governments [...] a greater degree of autonomy was conceded to the provincial governments" [Chand 1983,3:466]. Yet, there were exceptions. The CHT were declared a "backward tract" and placed directly under the Governor-in-Council (2).

The revision of the Act of 1919 with the scope of a further transfer of power began in 1927 with the appointment of the Simon Commission. In this context the status of the CHT was again discussed. Yet, the discussion of the status of the CHT must have been an undercurrent in the political discourse all the time. Mills clearly referred to this with one remark when he anticipated the chiefs' resistance to his proposals:

“Should they therefore obstinately continue to put their own interests before those of their people, and should they, by maintaining on legal grounds that the settlement cannot now be brought to an end, succeed in delaying a reform which is clearly most necessary, they can hardly expect lavish treatment in 1935” [OM II:14].

The Simon Commission reported its recommendations in 1930. A Round Table Conference was instituted to work out the new constitution.

This administration reform aimed at the “establishment of autonomy, with a representative parliamentary system of government, for eleven British-Indian provinces, within their defined provincial powers; it intended these provinces to become [...] components of an all-India federation including Princely States. The federation was also to have a representative parliamentary system, and a large degree of autonomy in the federal sphere, but the Viceroy would retain supreme powers, including the appointment of his own Executive Council or Government and the whole control of defence and foreign affairs and the ultimate responsibility for law and order” [Hodson 1985:48; cf. also Banerjee 1978:126 ff.; Mehrotra 1979:172 f.].

In the course of the discussions the future status of the CHT as a “Totally Excluded Area” or “Partially Excluded Area” was questioned [White Paper 1934:1 ff; Lytton 1933, in: White Paper, Annexure 2, 1934]. Eventually, the Commissioner of the Chittagong Division invited the opinion of the three chiefs. They submitted their recommendation through the Deputy Commissioner in 1933 and suggested “that it would be politically convenient and expedient to group the Chittagong Hill Tracts with Tippera State (with Deputy Commissioner as ex-officio Political Agent) and placed under ‘Wholly Excluded Area’” [Roy et. al., July 16th, 1933:5]. The Deputy Commissioner of the CHT, S.K. Ghosh, discussed the options of the future status of the Tracts and endorsed basically the chiefs’ recommendation: “The only safeguard for this place, lies in turning it permanently into totally ‘Excluded Area’ and administering it directly under the Governor” [Ghosh No. 2480 G/1-9, 20th July,1933:iv].

Due to his long experience with “tribal people” in North-Eastern India Mills’ opinion on the future position of the CHT was asked for.

He revised the principles and criteria of the policy adopted and made recommendations on different areas in Bengal and East India. Mills endorsed both the positions of the chiefs and of the Deputy Commissioner of the CHT: "The total exclusion of this District was proposed in the Sixth Schedule of the Bill, and to this the Government of Bengal appears to agree [...]. The inhabitants desire total exclusion and I agree that total exclusion is necessary. Its culture differs wholly not only in degree of advancement, but in kind, from the rest of the Presidency" [Mills 1935:11].

The CHT, along with other frontier states inhabited by indigenous peoples in Eastern India were made "Totally Excluded Areas" under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

The Mills Reports did not elicit any official comments in the colonial correspondence, as it seems. The official correspondence was no longer published as it had been in earlier years [cf. Selections 1853; Selections 1887; Selections 1929]. The publication of the Administration Reports where the basic changes in the administration were published had come to an end.

Yet some measures dating back to Mills' proposals seem to have been taken in the aftermath of the Government of India Act of 1935. The British policy changed. (3) In 1937, when "a revolutionary change reversed the roles of the hill 'Chiefs' and the government (as represented by its superintendent, and later, the Deputy Commissioner) in the administration of the Hill Tracts. Whereas previously the Chiefs were 'charged with the administration of the three circles' they now found themselves assigned the role of advising the government on policy matters besides having their administrative powers curtailed" [Anonymous 1990:2, in: Roy 2000:29, 212].

Notes

(1) After the CHT were constituted a district by Act XXII of 1860 and treated as a separate district (Hutchinson 1906:4). Administrators had from the very beginning realised that the CHT could not be administered under the laws and regulations which were applicable in the plains districts. The "Lieutenant-Governor recommended that the whole country east of the cultivated plain country of Chittagong should be removed from the operation of the General Regulations" [Mackenzie 1884:341].

Accordingly the CHT were listed among the “scheduled districts” under the India Act XIV of 1874, when Bengal and Assam were separated. “They were subject to special laws and administrative procedure secured either by enactments for individual tracts or by notification under All India Statutes” [Ahmad 1937:1]. Military changes in Upper Burma and Assam affected also the administrative status of the CHT. After the Chin Hills and the Lushai Hills were finally subdued and annexed to the British empire [AR 1895/96,II:12] and placed under the administration of Assam [AR 1897/98, II:12], the CHT moved out of the focus of immediate political and military attention.

In 1905 Bengal was divided, an answer to the rising resistance to British Rule. The Districts of Chittagong, Dacca, Rajshahi and Malda were formed into the Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam [AR 1905/06:1]. In 1909/10, the Chittagong District and the Chittagong Hill Tracts were separated, and the Hill Tracts were “formed into a separate charge” [AR 1909/10:28]. In 1912 the division of Bengal was repealed [AR 1911/12:52] and the CHT were placed “under the general supervision of a member of the Indian Civil Service with the style of ‘Deputy Commissioner’” [AR 1921/22:56].

(2) The special status the CHT had enjoyed under the India Act XIV of 1874 was honoured in drafting the new Act of 1919. Under the clauses of the “Government of India Act 1919, the CHT were declared a “backward tract” in 1921 and neither “the Central nor the Provincial Legislature shall have power to make law applicable to the tracts, but the Governor-in-Council may direct that any Act of the Provincial Legislature shall apply to the tract, subject to such exceptions and modifications as the Governor thinks fit” [Ahmad 1937:1 f.].

The discussion of the future of the “backward tracts” in preparation of the Government of India Act, 1935 seems to have started, at least, as far as Eastern India was concerned, in Assam. “Backward Tracts” in the neighbouring state of Bengal were considered in this discussion.

The lines of argument were similar to those which had led earlier to the CHT to be administered as a separate district. I relate the discussion in Assam somewhat at length because not much of the “philosophy” in the background of the discussion on “Partially and Totally Excluded Areas” in Assam and Bengal can be gathered from existing publications.

The first Round Table Conference in 1930 “did not deal specifically with the treatment of backward tracts” (Government of India 1931) but it was understood by His Excellency in Council that “the problem should be specifically considered by the Conference and that due regard should be paid to the views of the Statutory Commission and to the opinions already expressed by this and other local Governments” [Hallett 1931].

Two major arguments lay in the background of the debate on the future of the “backward tracts”: The economic and cultural diversity of the plains populations to the hill peoples in Assam and Bengal, and the security question.

“Nowhere in India is the contrast between the life and outlook of these wild hillmen and the totally distinct civilisation on the plains more manifest” [Cosgrave

1931:§ 4]. This dichotomy was marked and ever present. "Culturally and economically their life is, and must by force of nature remain, diverse from that of the plains" [Cosgrave 1931:§ 8].

The consequences of a policy of assimilation were clear to the Assam Administration: "Even if the constitutional changes were accomplished peacefully there must be the greatest doubt whether they could be made suitable for the hillman. On the contrary the lesson of history throughout the world appears on the best authority to be that primitive tribes, robbed of their own culture and faced with the competition of another on unequal terms, speedily decay and die out" [Cosgrave 1931:§ 8].

Yet, there was another concern. "To the economic self-sufficiency of the indigenous hill races- the Nagas, Mishmis, and the rest - the tea planter and the immigrant Bengali alike constitute a real danger" [Cosgrave 1931:§ 4]. The Abor Rising of 1911 and the "Kuki Rebellion" of 1917, were still fresh in the memory of administrators and the hill peoples' menace of jungle warfare was a pending threat to the security in the district and still "the air is unsettled" ,emphasised the Chief Secretary of Assam in his communication to the Reforms Office of the Government of India [Cosgrave 1931:§ 6]. The Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam maintained that one "cannot overlook the anti-India feeling, probably due to fear of economic competition, which appears to be deeply engrained in those Mongolian races" [Cosgrave 1931:§ 6]. If marked changes would affect the life of the hill people "trouble of a most serious nature must be apprehended" [Cosgrave 1931:§ 8] and "a change in the policy adopted in the past is likely to provoke trouble" [Cosgrave 1931:§ 8].

While the general outlines of the constitution of India were still "nebulous", it was "difficult to submit definite proposals for the future government of the "backward tracts" of Assam. On one point however the Assam Government was unanimous, e.g. that certain tracts must, in their own interests and those of the province, be definitely excluded from the control of the popularly elected assembly" [Cosgrave 1931:§ 2]. This line of policy His Excellency in Council had eventually endorsed.

The Government of Assam had decided to examine the problem of the future administration of the district in three ways:

"(A) What should be the system of administration, and to what areas should it apply.

(B) How the deficit on the revenues of these areas is to be met and by whom.

(C) To what authority the administrators of the future should be responsible" [Cosgrave 1931:§10].

The frame for an answer to these questions was given by the Government of Assam: "What is needed for the future is a policy of development and unification on lines suited to the genius of the hill peoples, an object in itself of formidable magnitude. The task of encouraging the heterogenous tribes to combine for the regulation of their own affairs in some form is one to which none of the authorities concerned, save perhaps to some extent and for their own purposes the Christian Missions have yet addressed themselves" [Cosgrave 1931:§ 10].

Considering the experiences of the past, the Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam proposed that the Naga Hills, the North Cachar Hills and the Lushai Hills should be totally excluded and that administration of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills (excluding Siems' territory), the Garo Hills and the Mikir Hills should be "left to the Ministers in the new constitution, subject to certain restrictive powers which could be exercised by the Governor" [Cosgrave 1931:§ 18].

The perspective for the CHT was, at least at the beginning of the debates, less defined and statements on the future situation of the CHT were few. In 1931 the Government of Bengal had decided that "the backward tracts of this Province must come under the control of the popular Executive, and that no exceptional treatment can be devised for them" (Reid 1931). As it seems, the positions taken up by the three chiefs in the CHT, the DC of the CHT, the Commissioner of the Chittagong Division and by Mills succeeded in changing this decision.

(3) Cf. "Amendment of Rule 38 of the CHT Regulation by the Provincial Government's notification No. 9088 E.A. dated 16 April 1937 as published in the Calcutta Gazette (Part I) dated 12th April 1937. See also Rules 35, 37, 39, 40 and 40 A of the Regulation for the details of the Chiefs' role in the CHT administration", in: Roy 2000:212.

7. The Texts. A Comparative Table of Contents

This table of contents shows the composition of the two *corpora*, the London Manuscript and the Oxford Manuscript. The former corpus is part of the SOAS Archive (London Manuscript), the latter is part of the Hutton Papers in the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford (Oxford Manuscript). I have preferred to use the Oxford Manuscript as reference text but add those texts of the London Manuscript which round off the complete corpus.

The texts I use in this edition are marked **blue**. Texts marked **black** here are reference texts.

The Table of Context contains links to all paragraphs of both the London and the Oxford Manuscripts. Below each paragraph there is a back button which leads one back to the Table of Contents and helps the reader to compare both versions.

London Manuscript

[Diary of a tour by J.P. Mills
starting at Chittagong
18. Nov 1926 - 13. Jan. 1927](#)

Part I

Report on the Chiefs of the
Chittagong Hill Tracts
Part I

Introductory

The Primitive Foundations of
Chieftainship in the
Chittagong Hill Tracts

History of the Jhum Tax

Abwabs

The History of the Chiefs

The Bohmong

Chakma Chief

The Mong Raja

Summary

The Mauza System

Oxford Manuscript

Part I

No title

Introductory

The Primitive Foundations of
Chieftainship in the
Chittagong Hill Tracts

History of the Jhum Tax

Abwabs

The History of the Chiefs

The Bohmong

Chakma Chief

The Mong Raja

Summary

London Manuscript

Part II

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No title

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Word Lists

List of Relationship Terms, Khyeng,
Taken from Pilifru of Kukiyachhari

List of Relationship Terms. Magh
Kangcha areng of Ramghar.

List of Relationship Terms Tippera - Mro
Manikchandra Tippera of Ramgarh.

Word list Mro - Khyeng

7.1. The Tour Journal [Handwritten Manuscript]

Notes on a tour in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

[18th of November 1926 - 13th of January 1927]

November

18th. From Chittagong to Rangamati 65 miles. River very broad at first, + water being salt. no houses on bank. After about 25 miles stream narrowed. Heavy jungle on banks. Noticeable that bamboos not heavily cut at any distance from the bank. Banks show that soil ought to stand up under terracing, but soil may be bad + water supply inadequate for terracing. Lac and pan might grow. Considered Shabwa as title for chiefs.

19th. Rangamati. Chakma chief + Dewan came to see me. Chief began to cross-examine on the privileges of chiefs in Assam. He was dressed as a Bengali + has privileges on the brain. He showed me the gold watch granted to his father, who, I believe, was not called Raja, but Rai Bahadur, I tried to interest him in jhum improvement, but he showed not the faintest interest. I protested against the way in which Chakmas were getting Bengalised, + he said that Bengali culture was higher than the Chakma. I pointed out that there would be no room for a Chakma Chief in Bengali culture, but he did not seem to mind as long as it lasted his time.

Considered whether chiefs could not be given rights over labour of the inhabitants of their circles.

Davidson, F.O.[Forest Officer] came to dinner. Talked jhums + discovered that all tribes here only take one crop off in jhum. He said he was trying "Molatta" on jhums - a tree with big heart shaped leaves. Saw Chakma Chief's court book. His relations in his court, + his head clerk. Endless delays with petty + vague cases. Obviously unfit to have powers.

Chakmas mostly dressed in Bengali style, with small puggaree. Simpler ones wear string round waist + a cloth runs through. Women wear dark blue skirt edged with red, and a red cloth round breast. They remove latter when bathing, but (2) put up skirts if stranger comes along.

20th. To Mahalchari 28 miles by bicycle. Through low land, little tilas, + rice land in between. Most people living by plough cultivation + jhuming insignificant. Tilas covered with adjuratum. A few places showed that hill recover if left, Mulatta kills out adjuratum. No real need to worry about jhuming in the area. The agricultural man, whom we saw yesterday, knows nothing about terracing or jhum regeneration. Country we have been through is all sandstone, but Stevens [Deputy Commissioner of the CHT] says there is slate on the ranges.

At Mahalchari photographed a Chakma woman + girl of about 11 + child. A lot of Maghs in, looking exactly the Kacharis, in coat, dhoti + puggaree.

From Mahalchari went to Singinala + visited Neuma, daughter of Mong Chief, + daughter in law of Bohmong, a widow. Wore a red Burmese skirt, + English blouse + ornaments. Her servant girl wore vest + Burmese skirt + had hair done in bun. She knelt + touched our feet. We were shown some old Magh ornaments of no great interest. Real Magh women's dress here is red skirt + narrow cloth - usually red, round breasts.

My orderly is to get me some bottle shaped Chakma fish traps.

Says Kukis know cire perdu process. Both Magh and Chakma homes built on piles, with setting out machans.

Chakma Chief resigned School Committee, the only public body, in May 1925. No chief subscribes to anything.

Our journey today was up the Chingri valley.

Stevens tells me that no D. C. has ever left transfer notes, in spite of work being so different from anything in Bengal. (3) 21st. To Nunchari 10 miles. Still along Chingri valley + turned in towards hills at end. Land rather higher than yesterday, + less plough, but little low sandstone tilas quite jhumed out + useless. First went in to Limusuli village (Chakma). Went into house. On low machan. Little moveable hearths are used for people to warm themselves at. Big cooking hearth also moveable of beaten clay, with small wall at back, + reversed cones instead of cones for cooking pots. Indonesian looms; game with beans; jholas very nice; pellet bows.

Then to Maischari, a Magh village. Men all in dhotis. Women hardly visible, but wear foreign silk skirts + home made breast clothes of red + dark blue. Ordered two. Curious custom is that of building little low

houses close to main house, to which inhabitants retire in case of hurricane. Slept at Nunchari, a Tippera village. Men all in dhotis, but one kept to old custom of long hair, + leaves in ear. Women wear Chakma, skirt, after puberty a cloth round breasts. Large silver ornaments in ears, + spiked silver ornaments, with chains through top of ear. Usual to remove boots on entering house, + can not enter kitchen. Hearth of Chakmas, Maghs + Tipperas the same. In Tippera village (Nunchari) a bunch of rice of first fruits tied to centre post of front room. Bunches of former years left there. Loom + circular winnowing fan of Chakmas, Maghs + Tipperas the same. Bought blue + white cloth at Nunchari man's cloth.

Headman of Nunchari says he used to send a leg of game to Mong Chief but does so no longer, + the chief does not ask for it. Outside village by little stream was little offering place - flat clay, bamboo at each corner joined by arch, + lump of clay in front. Hindus. Ordinary little platform trap for Jungle fowl in jhums. (4) Probably chiefs try cases of other tribes contrary to tribal custom. Headman of Nunchari came in for long talk in evening. Said that Mong Chief tried cases according to custom of tribes concerned on rare occasions when he takes them, but said that none went to him now because bribe + expenses in a case amounted to four or five hundred rupees, that a case often lasts two years to settle. Preferred to go to S.D.O. Ramgur. Tipperas here have few old folk tales, but say marks on moon are trees. No story for alternate night and day.

22/11/26. Took photo of place where goats are sacrificed at Nunchari place mentioned yesterday. Noticed zigzag lines up bamboo.

Up to Jadmai para - a little Tippera village on top. Bengalised, but women in Chakma dress. Notice that neither Magh nor Tippera women very particular breast cloths where no strangers about. Land near jhumed out - all adjuratum. Two crops taken off same land - first rice + then cotton. Just enough rice in village to carry them through the year, with nothing to spare. We then went through some land which was very lightly jhumed, presumably owing to distance from village. The people of Jadmai recognised only the Tipperah Raja, having come from Tripura. Then down to Taimatai, a Magh village. Noticed circular dhan pounder. Headman said that his decisions were never appealed against, + he had

no judicial dealings with Mong Chief at all. More tattoo here. Words in Burmese tattooed on heads arms, back of women's' hands + shoulders. Done by men from near Cox's Bazaar. Instrument used is three needles in bamboo holder, straight. Guided by fingers. Sap of tree used for colour. Then to Dewan para, (Magh), where we sat a long time + ragged with the women and children. Are very friendly. Men like Bengalis, but women in Burmese skirts + breast cloths. Bought a cloth. Found shuttle being used. Bought one. Then through [one word unreadable] flat land to Guimara village, on Guimara stream. On range saw lake (Majirakine), apparently formed by land slip. Offerings for misfortune on little platforms. Looked (5) at range to see if suitable for terracing. Too much sandstone, though there is a certain amount of slate. Mulatta is the thing. Ridge called Bhangamura here - the name of a precipice. It is West watershed of Chingri.

23/11/26 Walked to river,+ from near there took road to Ramgarh. Passed Palāg, a whole Magh village. In field in front of little bamboo temple was fenced area of beaten earth. 14 yds square, with 30 high poles. On each pole was a pagoda-like top of paper, with hanging ornaments of [one word unreadable] , + a [one word unreadable] by which a lamp was hoisted. Above the [one word unreadable] on each was a wooden bird, said to be a paddy-bird but exactly like a small carved hornbill (this is not hornbill country) of each pole [cf. also Mills 1922:13 f.]. These lighted in honour of ancestors, + offerings of rice, meat etc. made to spirits of ancestors for 30 days from 3/11, while crops are riping.

At Ramgarh had talk with S.D.O. Says Mong Chief often abroad, + only does one long tour in cold weather, to collect arrears of jhum rent + subscriptions. Has recently been begging for money to help him to repay the money he has embezzled. Got about Rs. 120 from one headman, but others refused to pay. Has also been demanding whole amounts from jhumias owners on ground that it was through his efforts that D.C proposal for cattle tax was turned down by commissioner in [space in manuscript]. S.D.O. says general complaint in that cases before chief involve heavy expenditure in bribes to his staff. Chief takes no interest at all in circle, + not only does not discuss matters with SDO, but even did not come to see him the only time he has visited Ramgarh since the

present SDO has been here. Never tours in hilly portion of circle. Tries to make headmen + peons realize jhum rent from people who do not jhum. Headman complain to S.D.O. that they dare not oppose chief.

Lack of continuity at Rangamati. Till about 7 years (6) age practice was to throw tour diaries away.

24./11./26. Has long talk with Manikchandra Tippera (really Kachari) + made bit of relationship terms in Tippera language of this area. He said that many years ago Dharam Baksh, Jubraj of Tripura married daughter of Mogul general, while living at Rangunia. He took his wife + child to Agartala, but his father would not receive him, on the ground that his marriage was contrary to Tippera custom. His father gave him a vague contract over a vague area, which is now C.H.T., + the Chakma Chief's family sprang from him. Chakmas all a mixed race.

Discussed with Stevens desirability of officers staying longer, + being trained before they take over. This S.D.O. (Narayan Mitra) is the fourth since 1922. D.C.'s also often changed. Impossible for chiefs to cooperate with continual new comers, + no one dare oppose the chiefs, as even if supported by British officials those officials often change while chiefs go one for ever.

25/11/26 Halted another day at Ramgarh. Discussed with Stevens falsity of dividing population into jhumias + plough cultivators. A very large number of latter plough as well, + pay both taxes. This accounts for increase of jhumias - people have come in + have taken up supplementary jhuming near plough on little hills wh. could never support a population dependent solely on jhuming.

Long talk with Kangcha-aong, headman of Ramgarh mouza. Took down bit of relationship from him. He says Maghs reached here three generations ago, + found the place nothing but jungle with a few roving Tipperas. Maghs came from Palaing river in Arakan, + settled for long time on Sitakund range. Then they came into present country, with Mong Raja as acknowledged head. I presume he drew his wealth from the Zemindaris in Chittagong District. (7) Then talked to Doyal Babu, an old Bengali Baptist. He told much the same story. Says Chakmas of mixed origin of Tippera + Mahomedan. Kalindi Rane examined Buddhism, Hinduism+ Mahomedanism, + settled on first. Knew nothing

of story of Jubraj marrying Moslem general's daughter. I am convinced that are of mixed origin. Essentially valley folk, + found almost entirely on banks always easily accessible to Mahomedan boatmen.

26/11/26. to Manikchhari. Had a talk with Mangalfru, a Chandragona Magh. Says they call Chakmas "Saok" because they used to be Mahomedans. "Ma" appears to be a feminine termination. Badnatali headman says Mong Chief away more than at home, + delegates his powers to his nephew, Kalacharani son.

I got a toy windmill from bridge at Alicharan. Notice five pipal trees in villages. Am told Maghs burn dead by stream, + then light lamp for seven days + make offerings to spirits under pipal trees. This offering repeated on anniversary of death. Offerings for dead always made with left hand.

Coolie work very light. Each man said to carry for Govt. in fairly busy place once or twice a year. Complaint: carried 3 to 4 times by some men.

Noticed the poorest Maghs I have seen. Found later they were the Chief's tenants.

Discussed sops for chiefs with Stevens. Thought of (1) Umbrella, (2) Chain of office with enamel plaque (3) Ghat (4) Guard of honour. (5) Title of Shawba.

Arrived Manikchhari for tea. Chief in vest, shirt + dhoti. Peons in red puggaree + chapruses like police, with "Mong Raja, Chittagong Hill Tracts" on them, + khaki coats. Had long talk with him. Knew the name of no ancestor before Keojachai I (1860-71). Said his family first came into the hills then. Said tribe (8) came from Arakan, + then from Palaing between Cox's Bazaar + Chittagong; this first certain site. Then to Sitakund. Then spread slowly into hills. Said only began to spread when Kukis retreated. Title of Raja conferred on him when minor by some commissioner whose name he does not know, (probably Mr. Lyall or Mr. H.J.S. Cotton). Only ancestral land of family in Bakshi Hat across Karnafuli, opposite Chittagong, + one at Mahamuni about 15 miles up stream fr. C'gong. His elder brother Dikhayong is said to have been passed over for chieftainship for incompetence. Dikhayong has a son Manorajari. Hdman of Nathanga. His daughter Neuma has a son Momfru, born 1913. This boy son of Kongla, son of Bohmong Chalafu.

Asked about Chakmas says they called called "Saok" in Magh, meaning "of mixed built". "Ma" is feminine termination.

Notable how little information available about his own family. Could give no details of early settlement holders.

27/11/26. Manikchhari. Maghs, Tipperas + Chakmas all oriented verandah of house to East to get morning sun. Maghs call soul of sick person by offering on post to evil spirit which has captured it. No record of any judgement by Mong Raja in any case. He admits hearing no evidence + recording no evidence for three or four years. All cases decreed ex parte, compromised out of court or dropped.

28/11/26. To Drung. Talk with old Hdman Barmnachhari + Tujuna, daughter of first Mong Chief, at Drung. Over that Chief's family only head of Palang clan, which happened to be most numerous of Magh clans (endogamous) which moved up into the hills during first half of 19th cent. Keojadai was son of Komjoi Damai (whose name Mong Chief did not know). No question of Komjoi being Raja of any kind. Keojadai given Mahal of his own clan, + of Tipperas: no one else to give it to. Then (9) later settlements amalgamated under him as biggest settlement holder. Other N. Maghs recognise him in no way whatever. In old days clan would not even eat together. Not as strictly endogamous as they were.

Hdmen complain Chakma Chief demanding money for son's marriage + threatens to cut off commission. Charges 18 3/4 % on overdue jhum rents from Hdmen. Hdmen delighted plough rents taken over.

29/11/26. To Toyichakma over the range at about 700 ft. Fine view. Not heavily jhumed, but clear example of how bamboos when jhumed simply go into adjuratum. A good few bamboos still left on banks of river. One remedy for waste would be to prohibit jhuming within certain distance of river land - say 1/2 mile. Most of road up the Lakshmichhari. Chakma Hdman at Drung complained that chief still raising money for son's marriage, + would sell up their property if they did not pay. At Toyichakma also complaints of raising money. Widows refused remission by chief's own orders, though this against custom, + column

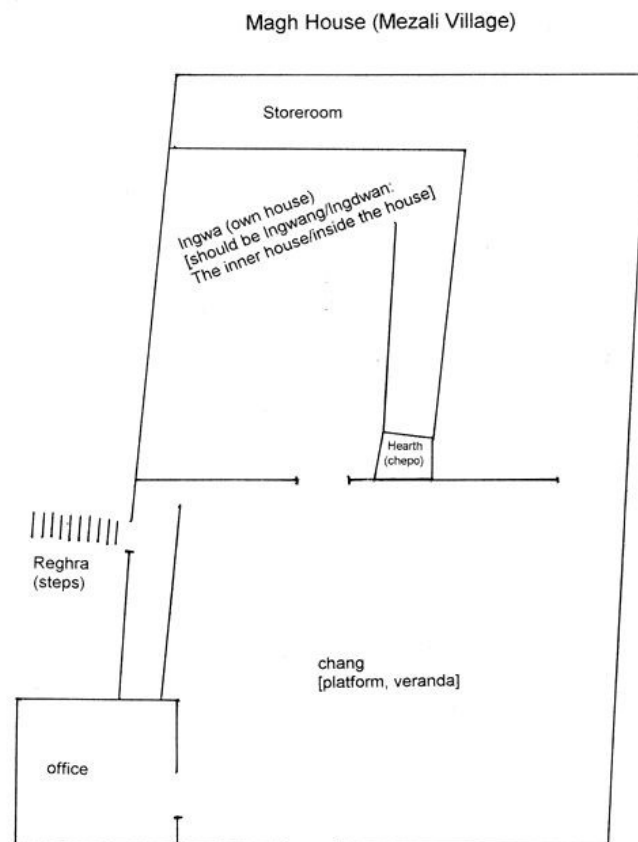
for remission of widows in chief's towzi, wh. has 46 columns!!!. His 10 % must be full, up with remission of karbaris, kisars [khisha] etc.

At Toyichakma (Chakma) an offering platform noticed thread exactly the Angami ones. Chakmas use fire thong + take oath on tiger's tooth, withering leaves, + river. Use diving test. They release scapegoat chicken for illness.

3/12/26. Talk to Chakma Chief. Dewans (Amu) were heads of septs (goza). Present chief of Wangza sept. Dharam Bux Mulima sept, Kalindi Khurekhuta sept. Mad chief of unknown sept. Four big dewans as follows- Dhugjuja Bhoga sept, Khujuja Thangu sept, Dhubana Mulima sept, Merabhanga Dhamai sept. Marriage both within + without sept. Chief admits not having visited whole of circle.

4/12/26. Conversation in Perkhar. Borua goza was bound to work.

-10-



for chief instead of paying tribute.

Macaranga denticulata is the tree for jhum.

(11) 7/12/26. To Chandragona. Talked to Hdman of Raikhali - intelligent man - Says Bohmong charges about Rs 40/- for letter of remission.

8/12/26 To Bandarban. Saw Ogafru, the eldest man in India, at Raikhali. He says he had a separate settlement of Rs. 60/- for 70 houses of the Kokoding'sa clan. He took Rs. 6/- a house from them. He says he paid no tribute at all to Bohmong, + owes him no allegiance. Another talk with Hdman. Saw another order of Bohmong to effect that people doing separate jhums are to pay double tax. Also order that each exempted person is to send in "a visiting fee" (Rs. 3/-), + a chicken + a bottle of liquor. These orders issued in Nov.

Had lunch at Chemi mouza. Krao village on way. Got two flutes, a wooden hair ornament, + a thing for rolling cotton. He had not had orders about separate jumias, + said visiting fee was Re.1/-, with fowl + chicken.

At Bandarban noticed dhan being husked in wooden husker. Saw Mrung headman in Bengali dress, but with large earrings, + hair worn to side.

Bohmong came to see us in evening, wearing Magh dress, with fillet round head, + umbrella, all, including his son, prostrated themselves, but two Mahommedan took not the faintest notice. He told me a Khonoma man had been here once. The burning place is now an immense mount of ashes.

9/12/26. At Bandarban. Inspected Bohmong's court. His tribal work was good on the whole. Difficult cases of other tribes settled according to their custom, with help of old men of tribe concerned. Satafru, eldest son, seemed to know definite tribal customs concerning cases, a compensation paid to parties. Civil work bad - unregistered bonds accepted + cases with excessive interest decreed. No register of fines, + apparently very few imposed. But costs probably excessive. No great delay in cases. Bad peons used, who loot. (12) Spent rest of morning with Satafru going into various houses. Very interesting. Found heddle loom

in use, though tension loom used in interior. Fine horn shuttles. S.[atafru] says used to be two kinds of bow - a cross by like Naga bow, + a long bow. None in existence now. Hornbill feathers used to be used for fans + ornaments, but not carried anywhere. Earth from nesting hole of hornbill + another bird called yamhong used as medicine. Dried fungus ground on stone + also used as medicine for sore nipples. S.[atafru] says tube bellows with feather covered pistons still used in some places, also that thorn fish trap in use. Seems obvious that Chakma is evil-genius of chiefs. The Bohmong inherited a chieftainship, the Chakma a human taluk. Chakma chief not respected by his people. Chanthwainfru came again in evening. I got a crocodile harp + horn shuttle from him. We went to Kyong + saw very ancient image of Buddha, said to be the first cast after his death. Gongs just like Kuki gongs. Magnificent wooden posts. Took photos of Mrs, Bondugi Kukis with hair combs, a Tippera boy + one Magh also of square leather shield of Bohmong, + round shield (prob. Mogul) slate spear produced. This Bohmong family regards Bandarban as their home. I think Bohmong ought to be deprived of powers as chief and reinvested with personal power.

S Maghs make fire with fire thong on certain ceremonial occasions. Sharp bamboos with snake patterns over doors are crocodile teeth to keep out evil spirits.

10/12/26. Bandarban. Talked to Mrung Hdman. Chief does not give letters of remission unless paid Rs. 10 - Rs.40, so Hdman have to pay tax themselves. Took photos of Bohmong. Procession priests Punya. Talk with Chanthwainfru. Maghs cut navel string with bamboo knife. Steel never used. (13) After birth buried in hearth. Dug up after three days; a portion kept by family in hollow bamboo + rest thrown away.

Took two Mro word list. Resemblance of numerals to Ao remarkable. They have no story of exchange of sun + moon, or of great darkness. Dinner with Bohmong. He says old ageratum makes quite a good a jhum, but that land is short. Bohmong's sepoy in red pugarree + havildar got up like S.I.

11/12/26. To Chekyong 8 1/2 miles. Hdman (Magh) says that old rate for remission was 10 -12 rupees, but that this Bohmong charges Rs. 30 - 40. Got some things in Hdman's house, for headache a little grid of

bamboo set up on stick. For [one word illegible] dead man a thing like Christmas cake of earth - this held together with bamboo matting, with pots + then light on top. Boys use stilts. On site of proposed new house a pole set up, + on top of it a rough model of bow with arrow pointing to the sky.

Land some distance from villages not jhumed out, but buffaloes do a lot of damage. Should be taxed. Really destroy jhum land. Jhuming in parts of Manipur ruined by buffalos. Impossible to fence as no stakes.

12/12/26. To Bali village, S.-Hangar mouza. 13 miles. A hard march mostly through streams. Bali a Mro village. Men with cloth round waist, which they take off to bathe. Red + white. Some boys wear belts of beads. Hair done in bun at side, Puggaree often worn. Large round earrings. Hair comb + bone pipe. Women wear small skirt, blue, worn double + open down left thigh. Also low belt of beads, + silver chain. Big houses, with fenced verandah, + store room at end. Roofs slightly hog backed. Indonesian loom, cotton bow with twanger, spindle for thigh. Posts for cattle sacrifice, but no forked posts here. When a man has done it he sets up against his house. Usual clay supports for pots on hearth. Many people have teeth stained black. Birds netted on saddles on ridge. Long fence with fall traps at intervals for rats coming off jhum. Roe traps far bigger the Naga. (14) Dead burnt. Leaves to shelter put over place of burning, + pot left on it. This near pipal tree. Calcined bones put in little house a few yards further back from stream. Clothes, drink, food, pots, + all things necessary also put in house. Metal vessels have holes cut in them. High bamboos with vessel rising from side of house.

Men wear home-spun coats, + have large double blankets for night. Same complaints here that Bohmong sells remission for Rs. 30-40. Mro clans are exogamous, but it sometimes happens that while clan A take a wife from clan B, clan B cannot take a wife from A. Took Four chains at random.

A Shimlung

B Chingnao

C Nerincta [Nirincha, Mills 1931:529]

D Shitnma

~~All are mutually exogamous, save that Chingnao cannot take a wife from Shimlung.~~

~~All men wear hair bun to left. Water carried up in gourds. Both sexes bathe naked, covering parts with hand. Women wear silver chain + belt of red beads over blue skirt.~~

~~13/12/26. To Khaitung 10 miles, along valley of Tak. Heavily jhumed + no bamboos left. Some Bengali cultivators.~~

~~Religious affairs of village run by Sera, old man of any clan.~~

~~Also acts as exorcist. Feasts of merit are (1) fowl (2) pig, (3) dog, (4) bulls or buffalos up to three in number. Forked posts not used but stacked stone usually pointed set up by sacrifice post. Sacrificer may make big house.~~

~~For epidemic pig + dogs sacrificed + genna called To ung kept, every one remaining in house + on verandah for 9 days.~~

~~No stranger may go into granary of house.~~

~~Say they are Buddhists, but Buddhism too faint to be. Noticed by anyone but themselves.~~

~~(15) Navel cord is cut with knife, not with bamboo. Baby dropped onto plantain leaf.~~

~~Valley heavily jhumed + all bamboos cut out by Bengalis on passes granted by Forest Dept. Winnowing fans like Naga, but smaller. Cook says he saw a man wearing orchid-skin necklace, but I did not see him. Women bathing naked in stream with man near. Quite proper.~~

~~Inheritance in male hand. Youngest son gets most. Marriage allowed in original clan if has split into separate kuchi~~

~~Thought about Chakma chief. If widow can inherit chieftainship might go to Calcutta lady!!~~

~~14/12/26. To Ghalangia Mukh 10 miles. Road along very broad stream, + then up to top of range, where is Trupu village, + then down through two more Mro villages. Trupu villages split by mauza boundary. A Lushai teacher in village. One or two Buddhist charms on posts. Lower Mru villages keep gayal, + sacrifice them. Place of sacrifice roofed over, but, but no stones set up.~~

~~Saw some Tipperas at Ghalangia Mukh fr. Khengu mauza. Puggarees, white homespun coats, waistcloths (home-spun) with black embroidered~~

ends + cowries at corners. Dao carried in this. Hair cut like Naga. Cylinders in lobes of ears, + half-moon ornaments through them. Sangu very liable to sudden floods. This undoubtedly due to over-jhuming + not holding up water. Soil under ageratum absolutely bare. Same old story here about no remission from Bohmong unless paid heavily for.

Saw good Mru golgotta. Dead-houses, + lean-to's all facing East. Over ashes under lean-to is put a piece of cloth, which is pegged down, + on this are laid dao, hoe, + other implements, with another piece of cloth over them. (16) Food + drink are put beside them. Some calcined bones are also put in dead-house, + baskets, food etc. is put there too.

15/12/26. To Ruma 12 miles by boat. Noticed how Magh houses all face E., even if this means facing away from river. Went into Hdman's house at Pulikha. Charmes written on bits of paper, pasted on slats suspended over door. Women often wear string above breast in which breast cloth tucked.

Considered position of chiefs. Chakmas are a folk without a history. Cart put before horse reg. Chiefs. They were not given mahal: they were too big, so much as have become big through mahal. Aggeratum is new problem + must be met by new methods. Came within living memory. Garos like it. Not bad for jhuming. Said to leave soil after 30 years, but what happens then is not known. (Boi).

16/12/26. Ruma. Two Tippera women in. Hair in big bun. Neck loaded with many strings of white + dark blue beads. Amulets above elbow of black beads. Spiked silver ornament on top of ear, + ornament in lobe as worn by men. Narrow red + brown breast cloth, with cowries at corners. Skirt to knee of black + grey in lines in middle, + brown + black at edge.

I don't think enough use is made of village hdmn - the natural leaders of people. Noticed did not come in Tippera case today. Stevens says very rarely given any service land to whom entitled under rule 46.

Tendency to be content with tribal chieftainship as unanalysed concept.

17/12/26. To Bandarban by boat. Stopped at Ghorao for lunch. Saw some Bonjogi Kuki women. White skirt with red line, + red + white cloth

tied over shoulders. Maghi women also often blacken teeth. Black coat, red breast skirt, + red skirt. Cradle rocked (17) with jerk of knee.

Real title of Bohmong is Bohmong Gri - Great Lord of generals-. Suggested Hereditary Bohmong Gri + Shawbwa of Bandarban as title. Eldest son must succeed. Sons called Thadaw.

Acc. to Magh custom elder may not have a joke with younger brother's wife. Great deference pd [paid] to mother's brother. In inheritance daughter gets 1/8 share, elder brother half share, + younger brothers what is left. Subjects call father as among Nagas. Bohmong called father by own sept (55% of septs) + are village of Kuki fugitives. Get first fruits + leg of game from them. Maghs used to be head-hunters. Buried heads after bringing home + greeting by women.

18/12/26. To Naraha. Before we left Bohmong's eldest son produced 6 flutes, a thorn trap, a long blow-pipe + dart, + 4 "crocodile teeth". Sent them to Rangamati via Chandraghona with Hari Magh constable. Remember that flutes should have piece of spalte of bamboo up to wax partition.



Talk with eldest son. Says this question of "calling father" has never been mentioned in any memorial because no one has even shown any signs of understanding it. Says first fruits were claimed from Mros + others who were not bound to give them: Mawson on hearing that were paid by Raigesa Maghs thought it unfair (not understanding it) + said "Why does not everyone able have to pay it". Naraha a village of 60 houses, the biggest Magh village after Bandarban. Saw some Banjugi Kukis + took their photos. Hair done in high bun of top of head. Metal pins. Small white waist cloth. Home spun coat. Embroidered headband + jhola. Small cornelian beads. Some men wear large red beads or yellow beads of what seems to be amber. Cost Rs 30-40 a string. (18) Consider

that D.C. should be called "D.C. + Political officer", + should wear political uniform on occasions on which the chiefs wear durbar dress.

In Maghi "Rwaza" means both head of clan + hd of village. Stevens says eldest son is [one word illegible]. That his statements require a grain of salt. Yet I shall back him for succession. He would go well on a court + certainly the circle could never be run with him in opposition.

19/12/26. To Jihram 10 miles. Considered idea that Armed Police should practice field exercises for a week in each circle in rotation + that chief concerned should be invited as guest of Govt. Have always been called on for transport in emergencies. Chiefs must also advise on numeral leases. Went to Nhara Mukh Tippera village. Men dress as described above. Women usually go naked to waist after marriage. Indonesian loom. Got very interesting shuttle + blow-pipe. House one big room, with sliding door, + narrow verandah back + front. After lunch at Jihram went straight on + saw Khyeng villages of Arachhari village + Kukiyaehari village. Villages on little hills above stream. Houses on piles as usual. One main room + small kitchen at side. Verandah in front. Divided into exogamous clans, with patrilineal descent. All property goes to sons, of whom youngest gets most. Buddhists. Very few now. Came from Burma before Maghs came. Payed tribute to no one + much resent paying through Bohmong. Poor mauza + grudge trouble + expense of going to Bandarban, with nazar to Bohmong + Rs. 3/- to clerk for writing receipts. Many men now wear Magh or Bengali costume, but real dress is string round waist, + white cloth with red embroidered end, worn as lungtha. Hair done in knot on left, like Mrs with bone pins, though many men now follow Bengali or Magh custom. Women were skirt + breast cloth of narrow red + white stripes + large white cloth with red embroidered end as puggaree. Rest of material (19) culture seems to be same as that of Maghs with whom they have been so long in contact.

Shuttle + loom Maghi. Saw a few Khyengs with exceptionally curly hair + almost negroid features, but community very small + this may mean foreign blood. Took word list relationship table down from Pilifru There seem to be definite traces of a dual system.

Sitting on house at end of street in Magh village. Remnant of "morung" [bachelors' house, cf. Mills 1922:24 f.].

20/12/26 To Rangamati. Chakmas put up three long streamers of white cloth hung fr. Bamboos at place on bank where they have burnt dead.

Plenty of time to think during long wade down Kaptai. Most consider accretions to Rajpariya clan with ref. to stability of Chakma clans.

What would have happened if we had taken jawa in N.W. Khonoma + Kacha Nagas, or Ghokwi or mahal of Melahomi.

Indonesian things are (1) House (2) method of cultivation (3) Loom (4) Fire-thong (5) Hearth (6) Patterns on clothes (7) Traps. Expected Indonesian type of chieftainship, + found it with Bohmong. Term "tribal chief" begs question.

Jhum tax. Originally in kind. Seem to see assumption that primitive. No evidence to show it was, + plenty that was not. (1) Collateral w. first fruits + leg of game. (2) No custom elsewhere (3) Specific exceptions (e.g. hunter) who would not be except if due to chief for subject as such. Realized fr. Jhumiyas: they were only people who grew cotton.

Think Chiefs might have Re. 1/- pay a year from foreigners' boats. Wealth of chief's subjects go to them + they pay least - only Rs. 2/- a year to Bazaar fund.

22/12/26. Rangamati. Talked to Chakma chief at tennis. He said each goza used to have a head called Dewan. Kalindi Ranee, + even before her time head ship was splitting up between brothers, + even daughters were (20) holding it for sons. Taxes collected by headmen, and handed to chief, keeping a share. The four dewans who carried on after death of mad Raja were (1) Dhurjya of the of the Buga goza, Kurjya of the Thunga goza, Dhabana of the Mulima goza, + Pirubhhanga of the Dhamna (?) goza. These were the four leading gozas. Goza of Mad Raja unknown, but father of Dhurjya (?) + Khurjya (?) had married daughter of his. Kurjya became chief. Rajpariyas not a true clan at all. Originally formed by contribution of men from every clan. Accretions grew, as duties came less. Endogamous, like all clans. If a girl marries a man outside her own clan the man gives a bigger fiest to her clan - in fact a fine. No one calls chief "father". Padre Davis says clan feeling still strong, + first question a Chakma asks a stranger is what his clan is. But very few men know who the head of their clan is. Even chief admits that mauza headmen are the only headmen left. When problem viewed against anthropological

background certain features wh[ich] before were merged stand out in clear silhouette.

Old records of 1835 frankly speak of farming + [two words illegible].

23/12/26. To Subalong. No sign of country being jhumed out. Yesterday I asked Chakma chief what his ideas on the duties of a chief were he seemed quite stunned, + said "To look after the welfare of the peoples, + we could be aggrandized." A delightfully naive answer.

The way the jhum-tax collecting has overgrown + taken the place of other chiefly duties is like a creeper which hides + finally kills a forest tree.

Story of mad Rajas descendant being revealed by a cobra is clearly of un-indigenous origin.

Am liable to be charged with giving advice regarding granting opportunities to Chief given in deliberate defiance of maxime regarding selection of unsuitable material for the manufacture of sell purses [the last three words are not clearly readable]. Emphasise quid pro quo tactfully.

(21) 24/12/Barkal. Chakma S.I. [Sub-Inspector] very emphatic that no loyalty felt for Raja. Says merely hated for extortion. Wang'sa small Goza. Raja does not look after people.

27/12. to Bhusanchhari. Saw old one-legged Bhairak Chandra Dewan of Rajparija Goza. Very sad at loss of power of Goza, which used to number over 900 houses, + hates being shut up in a mauza. Also says no loyalty felt for Raja. Says descent in female line contrary to Chakma custom, + all due to Kalindi Ranee. Says little or no loyalty for present Raja, who merely takes money, which headmen dare not refuse. Looked through old papers. Lord Ulich Browne's letter 29 of 12/11/68 to Govt. Bengal makes clear that K. Ranee merely went purdah to avoid interview with Lewin, that she refused to give way to Harish Chandra very def. that woman could never hold position of Chief, that claim of collateral branches on Dharm Bux's death were wrongly rejected by Govt. through ignorance of hill tracts. Kalindee called herself a Hindu widow in order to claim estates, and immediately afterwards built + endowed a Buddhist temple. Gobardhun adopted son of second wife of Dharm Bux's father

was prob. rightful heir, though there were other collateral claimants, e.g. was put in jail. W. Scone collector of C. complaint about Ranee's misdeeds as early as 1842. Hill people say Kalindi Ranee "sold them like goats to munsiffs + Bengali." Clear that Dewans + Roajas were original Chakma system. K. Ranee really got management settlement of capitation tax + estates in Chittagong from fr. Civil Court, claiming as a Hindu. Harish Chandra not born then. Proposal to move K. Ranee in 1868, but Harish Chandra frightened to take it on (i.e. no support for Ld. Ulich Browne's idea that he was rightful heir.) (Govt. letter 270 of 28/1/69.)

Mong Rajah Keojaphru died on 20/6/83. First man known as Mong Raja was Keojasyn, hd of Paiang'sa clan. Settlements of his clan mahal granted in 1848. About 1868 proposal made to place all Tipperahs under a Chief of their own but the man they chose had been implicated in murder, + nothing came of it. All: placed under Mong Raja In 1870 Nurabuddi (22) succeeded Keojasyn. It was only after he came to throne in 1871-72 that settlement of all finally given him. Government papers of that day make clear distinction between malguzar of clan, + tahsildar or zimbadar of those from whom he collected revenue. Keojaphru's brother succeeded in 1879. Affairs of circle under council of 3 till young Rajah able to manage affairs. Meanwhile Nurabuddi's widow set up claim, in imitation of K. Ranee. Counsellors quarrelled among themselves, + hopeless confusion arose. Palang'sa Maghs only small proportion of population. Manager appointed to manage circle through tahsildars. Keojaphru's widow also set up claim wh. was rejected. Succession granted to Nephrusyne, grandson of Keojasyne by his daughter Pomai. More or less elected Chief by people, his elder brother Dikha, giving way. About 13 or 14 years old then.

28/12/26. To Barkal. Saw some Pankhu Kuki men at Bhusanchhari, wore Bengali dhotis, but had hair shaved above forehead + drawn right back to small bun at back.

29/12. To Subalong.

30/12. Subalong. Went to Basanta Kuki village (4m). Crops had been pretty good + many new houses being built + at least two people

proposed doing mithan sacrifice. Saw quite fine wild mithans' heads. Pankhu with a few Bonjogi houses. They have different languages, but intermarry. Men + boys wear square lengta + homespun white coat, with a little red embroidery round the bottom at the back. Beads, some of dark red amber, + some cornelian, around neck. Strips of yellow orchid skin also worn by bucks. String of cowries round neck. Hair sometimes worn in bun over forehead + decorated with steel comb with red wool tassel, + sometimes in bun at back, with large iron pin. Women usually wear white skirt to knee with narrow red lines + sometimes black skirt. Upper part of body usually bare. Sometimes cloth wrapped round breasts + sometimes coat worn. Hair in bun. Big bone plugs or cylinders of bamboo in (23) ears. Round waist beads + brass wire. Latter probably original garment for very small girls wear it. Hair in bun at back. Boys with long hair done like Charley's aunt looks strangely effeminate. Houses big. Open porch + then big inner room, + verandah at back. All on piles. Rice kept in round bin in house. Trays over fire. Many joppas. Heads of mithan sacrificed on stand. Saw one old spear, like Ao spear. Got toy blow gun, cotton ginner, very simple shuttle, simple stick with conical head, + flutes. Gourd instruments not found. Took a whole pack of photos.

Kuki say Chakma Chief took Rs. 4/- a house from them for marriage expenses. Only paid because demanded. On way back stopped at Undrimachhari. Most friendly. Found shuttle like the Tippera one I got. Even girls friendly, + one, with little persuasion let me photograph her without her breast cloth. Say the crops are very bad. Karbari says he willingly gave Chief Rs. 10 for marriage expenses, + other houses Rs. 1/- to Rs. 2/-.

10/1/ Possibilities of gayal + cattle cross.

~~Life license for chiefs~~

~~Unlicensed cars~~

~~Guards on houses for chiefs on visit.~~

13/1. Magh woman when in seclusion after childbirth must use a gourd spoon. This custom even kept in Bohmong's own household, (23)

13/1

Must look up Hodgson JASB. I of 1853 [Hodgson, B.H., On the Indo-Chinese borderers and their connection with Himálayans and Tibetans, in: Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1, Vol. XXII, 1853]

Phayre J.A.S.B No 117 of 1841. JASB. 145 of 1844. Asiatick Researches Vol VI/229 [one word illegible] on p212 of Vol X of Part I of JASB of 1841 [one word illegible] means Man in Mro

(24)

Lewin particularly keen on Raojal system and wanted to have all names registered in his office (p.4 of Printed Selections) [Browne 1868, in Selections 1887:1 ff.]

7.1.1. The Itinerary of J.P. Mills in the Chittagong Hill Tracts

Mills covered, as he wrote, about 500 miles, mostly on foot, in the CHT, visiting villages and interviewing persons. This itinerary is based on the Tour Diary.

18.11.1926

Chittagong - Rangamati

19.11.1926

Rangamati

20.11.1926

Rangamati-Mahalchari → Singhinala [2 m east of Mahalchari] → Chingri valley → Limasuli (4-5 m north of Mahalchari, on west side of Chengri]

21.12.1926

Maischari

22.11.1926

Nunchari → Jadmaipara → Taimatai → Dewanpara → Guimara [between Mahalchari and Ramgarh mauza] → Lake Majikarine

23.11.1926

Palāg near Ramgarh →

25.11.1926

Ramgarh

26., 27.11.1926

Manikchari

28.11.1926

Drung

Toyichakma [9 m north of Rangamati] → Lakshnichhari

3.12.1926
Rangamati

4.12.1926
Perkhar

7.12.1926
Chandraghona

8.12.1926
Bandarban → Chemi mauza → Krao

9.12.1926
Bandarban

10.12.1926
Bandarban → Lairu

11.12.1926
→ Chekyong

12.12.1926
Chekyong → Bali

13.12.1926
→ Khaitung → Miza

14.12.1926
Ghalangia Mukh → Trupu

15.12.1926
→ Ruma → Pulikha

16.12.1926
Ruma → Aongajao

17.12.1926

Bandarban → Ghorao

18.12.1926

→ Naraha → Ohetsa → Kuki Palankhyong

19.12.1926

→ Jihram [→ Impu] → Nhara Mukh → Arachari → Kukiychari →
Kaptai

20.12.1926

Rangamati

22.12.1926

Rangamati → Dewanpara

23.12.1926

→ Subalong

24.12.1926

Barkal

27.12.1926

→ Bhusanchari

28.12.1926

→ Barkal → Bhusanchari [Sharulchari?]

29.12.1926

→ Subalong [12 m east of Rangamati]

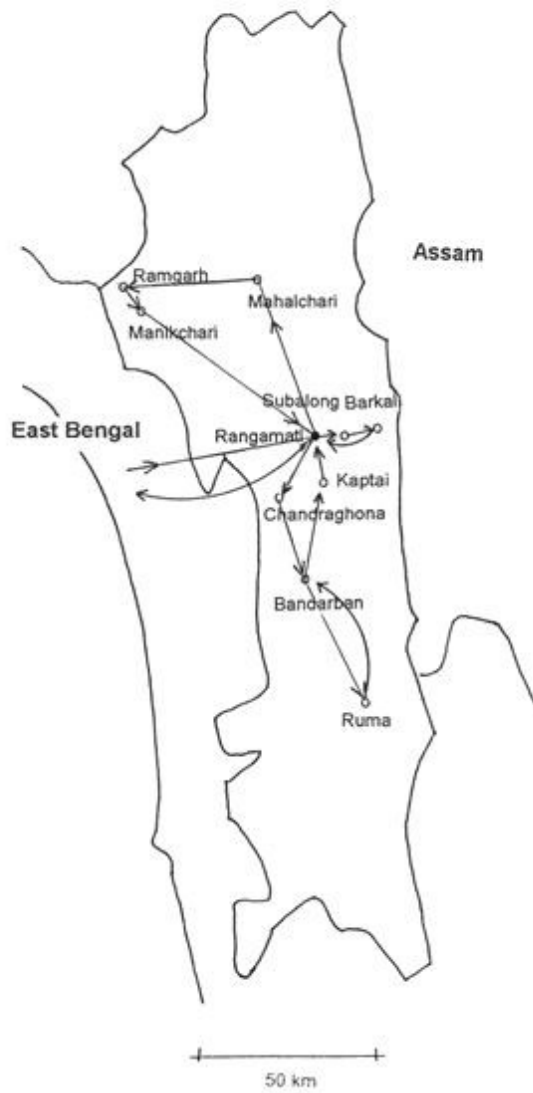
30.12.1926

Subalong → Basanta Kuki → Undrimachhari

12.1.1927

Rangamati

J.P. Mills' Itinerary in the Chittagong Hill Tracts



7.2. [The Oxford Manuscript]

Part I

INTRODUCTORY

The voluminous correspondence which exists regarding the Chittagong Hill Tracts is largely concerned with the relations between Government and the three Chiefs, the BOHMONG, the CHAKMA Chief, and the MONG RAJA, living in that area. Those relations have been far from happy. From the Chiefs Government has, as everyone who has discussed the question has noted, received sometimes entire lack of co-operation, and sometimes active obstruction, together with a flood of memorials containing extravagant claims and undignified appeals for money in return for which no useful assistance has either been forthcoming or offered [cf. Stevens 1925 (c), in: Selections 1929:522 f.]. Government on the other hand has viewed delinquencies with a leniency so great and long-suffering that the Chiefs have come to expect it as their right, and have sulked like spoilt children, rather than reformed their ways, when from time to time that leniency has been stretched to breaking point and they had to be rapped over the knuckles. The details of the dealings of Government with them since the distribution [district] was taken over are to be found in files which are readily available, and I do not wish unduly to lengthen my report by going over all the old ground. Mr. Ascoli summarises the administrative development of the district from 1860, when it was taken over, to 1918 in paragraphs 1 to 8 of his report [Ascoli 1918]. The present position of the Chiefs is summed up in Mr. Hopkyn's note of the 14th October 1925 on their status, and Mr. Stevens' note of the 15th April 1925. [cf. Stevens 1925 (b), in: Selections 1929:482 ff.]. In 1924 the collection of the so called abwabs by the Chiefs received the attention of Government, and in 1925 the collection of plough rents was taken out of their hands. The necessity for the serious step was beyond all doubt and made it clearer than ever that the chiefs were in danger of fast (2) becoming useless. But a non-independent chief is very far from necessarily being a useless person; he can be of the greatest assistance and value if proper use be made of his position and capabilities. I have therefore been instructed

“to consider the past history of the Chiefs, and their present position, and in the light of my experience of other tribal Chiefs advise the Bengal Government how the Chiefs in the Chittagong Hill Tracts may best be utilised in the administration, regard being had both to the interests of the people and the desirability of maintaining the dignity and influence of the Chiefs and preventing them from becoming mere figure-heads in receipt of certain emoluments.”

It has been considered that

“the main difficulty appears to be that a change from the tribal to a territorial system has tended to make the Chiefs unnecessary to the administration,”

but I am to advise

“whether having regard to their history and influence they can be given a useful place in it.”

Such is the problem which I have attempted to solve in this report, though I respectfully disagree with the opinion expressed that the change from the tribal to territorial jurisdiction is to blame, and feel sure that the root of the trouble goes much deeper. I do not think the problem is insoluble provided there is a real change of heart on the part of the Chiefs, and an entire change in the nature of the tasks they are to be asked to perform. No one could despair who, like me, numbers chiefs among his real friends, from whom he has received co-operation and advice which have time and again proved literally indispensable.

My proposals are that the Chiefs should no longer be employed as revenue collectors and petty magistrates. To these tasks, with their inevitable atmosphere of bookkeeping, rules, codes and inspecting officers, the chiefs are not suited either by character, upbringing, or position. They can be performed far better by subordinate officials. My desire is to see the Chiefs working as Chiefs, with (3) undiminished incomes and with an influence only bounded by their capabilities.

My proposals are based on: -

(1) A residence of two months in the Chittagong Hill Tracts where I toured some 500 miles, mostly on foot, visiting each Chief at his headquarters, and taking to all sorts and conditions of men.

(2) A careful perusal of all available files and literature bearing on the subject.

(3) Long and close dealings with chiefs in Assam.

(4) Some years' study of anthropology, with special reference to the culture of Indonesia.

Facts I have everywhere eagerly sought for. Opinions I have carefully considered with one regard to the information at the disposal of those who formed them. ↵

THE PRIMITIVE FOUNDATIONS OF CHIEFTAINSHIP IN THE CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS.

Anthropology rarely finds a place in Government files but it sometimes provides the key to a problem nevertheless. It certainly shows beyond a shadow of doubt what is the primitive basis of the Chieftainship we find here. The whole material culture of the tribes of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, under a superficial layer of Bengali and Buddhist culture, is purely and typically Indonesian. They have the typical Indonesian tension-loom, the typical fire-thong, the typical fish-trap lined with cane-thorns, houses, type of hearths, traps, method of cultivation, and so on.

To recognise Indonesian material culture was easy; to trace out the social structure required more care, the adoption of Buddhism having brought deep changes in its train. It was there to be found, however, and in the Bohmong's relations to his own clan and certain Kukis, for instance. I found a typical example of Indonesian chieftainship, such as I am entirely familiar with.

There has been a tendency in the past to discuss the (4) Chakma Chief and the Bohmong and the Mong Raja as if there were uniform members of a class. They are not, and I shall deal with each in turn. But underlying the position of each, though concealed at different depths, are the rights and status of an Indonesian Chief, and before dealing with them individually I wish to indicate the nature of these rights and status, my object being both to show the basic foundations upon which Chieftainship rests here, and to indicate how entirely divorced are these rights and status from any connection with anything in the nature of a "jhum" tax, the collection of which has so long been the principal task and source of income to the Chiefs. (To take an example, the Bohmong

collects the jhum tax and is regarded by Government as Chief throughout his circle. But his primitive jurisdiction is over a much smaller number of persons; over them it is very real). A subject of an Indonesian Chief calls his Chief "father". This is of fundamental importance. One does not ask a man who his Chiefs is, but whom he calls "father". A man may owe allegiance to a Chief for various reasons, through being born in the Chief's clan, through being protected in war, through receiving assistance in times of scarcity, and so on. As the term "father" implies, the relationship is reciprocal.¹

A Chief has just as clear duties towards a subject as a subject has towards a Chief. The subject must respect and obey his Chief, must call him "father," must give him an offering of first fruits from the produce of his fields, and a leg of all game he obtains from the jungle, must help him with labour when required, and with gifts when the Chief is celebrating some big ceremony. In return, the Chief must protect his son, must see that he has land to cultivate in security, must help him through times of scarcity, and must feed him when he works for him.

There remain to be considered the relations between a powerful Chief and his weaker neighbours of other tribes, who probably fear him, but do not love him. Here the situation is far more fluid and the ties more vague, and differences of opinion on either side are very common. A very weak group would probably place themselves definitely under the protection of a powerful Chief, and would become his "sons". He in turn is bound to protect them, and I have often known this duty most effectively carried out. A more powerful group would probably grudgingly allow an occasional present to be extracted from them, but would never admit any claims by the Chief to be suzerain. It is usually clearly understood that no alien group becomes "sons" of a Chief unless they agree to the position, though great pressure may be put on them to make them agree. Nevertheless a Chief can only claim what is given with

¹ Since writing the above I have read "Crime and Custom in Savage Society" by Mr. Malinowski in which he emphasises reciprocity as the basis of all service in primitive society, and maintains that there is no such thing in such society as an "absolute gift." It is the entire absence of any reciprocal benefits in connection with the Chiefs' share of the jhum tax, and the fact that other payments, such as first fruits, existed sufficient to recompense him for such beneficial services as he rendered to his people as Chief that constitute one of the strongest arguments against there being anything primitive or immemorial about the jhum tax."] (5)

at least outward willingness, and until he can make them agree he gets nothing, unless, of course, he raids and loots it, an action which changes the whole situation at once, for a group upon whom a chief makes war cannot be called the subjects of that Chief.

The terms "tribal Chiefs" and "tribal jurisdiction" (6) which are constantly occurring in official papers are, I submit, misnomers, and have possibly proved seriously misleading at times. They have given rise among officials without personal experience of this area to the belief that the inhabitants are divided into homogeneous tribes, ruled by three Chiefs, and in a recent publication of a department of the Bengal Government I even find a reference to the "hill people known as Chakmas, Mongs and Bohmongs" (!) Even the word "Chief" has given rise to the entirely erroneous impression that the Chiefs of the Hill Tracts in some way resemble the chiefs of India proper. The truth is that there are no tribal Chiefs in this district. The Chakma Chief is at first sight the nearest approach to one, but only as 'sarbarakar' of practically all the Chakmas, as was clearly stated in Government order No.295 of 21st January 1870. What his exact status is will be considered in connection with his history. Certainly the Magh tribe has no one chief, nor have the Kukis, Mros, Khyengs and Khumis, while such allegiance as Tipperas feel in their hearts they feel towards the Maharaja of Tripura. But there are clan Chiefs, representing the founders of clans, though the steady aggrandisement of the three principal Chiefs by the paramount power for whom they collected tribute has for all practical purposes extinguished the smaller clan Chiefs. Nevertheless each clan, as elsewhere in Indonesia, still in its heart of hearts regards itself as entirely independent of any other. The first question one Chakma asks another is "What clan are you?", and the Dewans, as representing the old heads of clans, have far more real influence than the Chief. One finds, the same clannish feeling among the Maghs. (7) Those Maghs of the Kokkadingsa clan, for instance, feel no loyalty and do not address as "father" the Bohmong of the Regretsa clan in whose circle they live, but respect old Ogaphru of Raikhali as their head [Bernot could not confirm this, 1967 a, 2:658]. Clans other than the Regretsa recognise the Bohmong as the greatest clan chief, but not as their own Chief, an important distinction. A realisation of the strength of clan feeling and the weakness of tribal feeling is essential to a true appreciation of the real status of the Chiefs,

and the way in which their Chieftainship differs from the military Chieftainship of nearly all Indian Princes. ↵

HISTORY OF THE JHUM TAX.

For years the Chiefs have maintained that their right to collect and keep a share of the jhum tax is inherent in their position as Chiefs, and there has been a strong tendency on the part of Government to accept this claim without analysis of the ground on which it is based. This question is so fundamentally important that I feel it will be well if I make clear at the outset the views to which most careful consideration has led me.

The only capitation tax or household tax which an Indonesian subject pays to his Chief is first fruits. To the assumption which I see so often tacitly made in files is that the jhum tax is some primitive tax of which the paramount power takes a humble share I ascribe much of the misunderstanding which has arisen with regard to the position of Chiefs. Not a shred of evidence do I find that it is anything of the sort, and I know of no Indonesian example anywhere of a tax of this kind. Everything tends to show that it was first raised when the Moguls demanded tribute from the tribes in the (8) hinterland. It is important to note that the tribute was originally paid in cotton, money payment not being substituted until 1789. Now the tribute of first fruits to the Chiefs also included cotton. One cannot believe that before he had to pay tribute to the Moguls a Chief received two separate taxes from each house, one wholly in cotton, and the other also including cotton; and one wonders what he could have done with so much cotton before he came into contact with foreigners to whom he could sell it. A long conversation, too, which I had with the Bohmong's eldest son, seemed to make it quite clear that the jhum tax was one due to a paramount power (first, possibly, the King of Arakan, and then the Moguls), and not to a clan Chief. Again in the "Wild Races of S.E. India," which contains a far fuller account of the tribes than does the "Fly on the Wheel," Lewin mentions hunters who do not cultivate as being exempt from this tax. They were exempt because they grew no cotton. Had it not been a collection of cotton for the paramount power but a primitive tribute due from every able-bodied man to his Chief as Chief, the hunter would have had to give some substitute. Those who collected this tax were in so

doing only exercising right of talukdars of human taluks. The practice grew up of selling and sub-letting them; this could never have happened had any immemorial and primitive Chiefly rights been involved. Indeed often the share which the Chief got was very small. For instance Kalindi Rani in 1872 sub-let 5,370 houses in human taluks to 108 Dewans for Rs. 5,516-6-3, while the Dewans' receipts were estimated to be some Rs.23,000/- (Printed Selections, p.80) [Edgar 1881, in: Selections 1887:80]. I am convinced that there is nothing primitive about this cotton tax, and that it is quite easy to see how it arose. The Moguls demanded tribute from the clan Chiefs, who agreed to pay it. They in turn (9) demanded payment from their men, doubtless telling them that a Mogul force would enter their country if the cotton were not forthcoming, a threat which I have myself known used elsewhere by unscrupulous persons with extraordinary effect. So the cultivators paid, with no possible means of knowing what the Mogul command was, or how much of the cotton stuck on the way. And the middle men got rich and continued to find favour with the Moguls, while the cultivators were squeezed harder and harder. We, seeking our own convenience, continued to farm out this tax, and even today the jhumiya pays four times our demand. One cannot help contrasting this district, where the jhumiya pays Rs.6, of which Rs. 4-12-0 never reaches the Government with the Naga Hills, where he pays Rs. 2 of which only -4- goes to the collecting agency.

In the early days the collection of the jhum tax was by no means entirely in the hands of the big Chiefs. Anyone who had households under his allegiance from whom he could squeeze tribute to the exclusion of anyone else applied for a mahal of them, and a number of small mahaldars arose. In 1792, for instance, the records show that the Chakma Chief and the Bohmong held between them half the jama of the district, and of these two the Chakma Chief was only a middle man between the Dewans and Government. By 1867 this collection by small mahaldars, who often simply bought a mahal in Chittagong and squeezed what they could out of the people by any means and agents, had become such a scandal and nuisance that Government decided to put an end to them. In 1875 the rights of all small mahaldars (10) were extinguished, apparently without compensation, and the Mong Raja, the head of the Palangsa Magh clan, was given the mahal of all outlying people in his area whom the Chakma Chief could not effectively reach,

and the Chakma Chief and the Bohmong shared between them the rest of the district, excluding the khas mahals. This division of the district into 4 blocks led inevitably to the abolition of such tribal jurisdiction as the Chiefs had held, and the substitution for it of a territorial jurisdiction, which had been recommended as early as 1847. It was adopted in 1873, but later relaxed, and a strictly geographical jurisdiction was not finally enforced until 1892. I cannot help feeling that the importance of this change has been exaggerated. In the old days the Chakma Chief for instance may have claimed allegiance from all the Chakmas in the world (even from any which might be living in Calcutta, as Lord Ulick Browne remarked in 1868) but I feel sure that he did not receive it, and I think the territorial circles not only placed under each Chief nearly all those from whom he had ever been able effectively to claim anything, but gave him equal jurisdiction over people of other clans and tribes who owed him little or nothing before. The Khyengs, for instance, a very small but ancient community, told me how they resented paying taxes through the Bohmong, whom they regard as a newcomer empowered by the British Government to lord it over them. They say he and his Maghs arrived in the hills long after they did, and that they never paid taxes or tribute to him till, without being consulted, they found themselves placed under his jurisdiction. I was also fortunate enough to meet Ogaphru, the last (11) survivor of the old petty settlement holders. He is one of the Kokhadingsa clan and emphatically denies any allegiance to the Bohmong in whose circle he lives. He also showed how very lucrative the position of a mahaldar used to be; he obtained from the Collector of Chittagong for a jama of Rs. 60 the mahal of 70 houses of his own clan, and he said he actually collected Rs. 6/- per house!

To sum up, the tribes of this area possess a typically Indonesian material and social culture. The ancient Chieftainship was a clan Chieftainship, under which a Chief was addressed as father by men of his own clan and such outsiders as he had specially befriended or protected. The relation was reciprocal, and "fathers" owed duties to their "sons", just as much as "sons" owed duties to their "fathers." This clan feeling and clan chieftainship still exists. The jhum tax was an innovation dating from the time when tribute was first demanded by an alien paramount power. To save trouble this power farmed the right to collect tribute from the individual household. The man who obtained a mahal

naturally squeezed as much as he could out of the ignorant people from whom he collected. Even now the jhumiya pays four times the Government demand. It is thus seen that the portion of the jhum tax which is taken by the Chiefs and headmen is not, as seems to have been supposed, something due to them from time immemorial, but the fruits of ancient extortion condoned by time. Naturally it was the heads of the more powerful clans who obtained the biggest mahals, and these were made still bigger by the merging in them of such smaller mahals as survived. These mahaldars thus became aggrandized and the collection of taxes became so much the more lucrative and important part of their work, that their true nature has been entirely (12) concealed from the Government, and they have almost ceased to function as real Chiefs at all. The rule which lays upon them the duty of administering their circles is an absolutely dead letter. Save for tax collecting they regard their position as a sinecure. Money, dignities and status they demand, but never the work which a Chief ought to do. ↵

ABWABS.

The discussion of the origin and real nature of the Chiefs' share of the jhum tax leads me to digress for a moment to deal with the so-called abwabs. Here I am convinced that the situation has been misunderstood. [cf. De 1921, in: Selections 1925:454 f.; cf. Wilkinson 1920, in: Selections 1925: 457ff.; cf. Sachse 1924, in: Selections 1925:462 f.].

The collection of abwabs was severely commented on by Mr Ascoli in his report, and matters were brought to a head in 1924 by the high handed exactions of the Bohmong. These led to the issue of Government letter No. 13 T. R. of the 28th April 1924 [Hopkyns 1924, in: Selections 1929:469] in which the Bohmong was reprimanded. The matter was again discussed by Government in connection with the resettlement of the jhum tax in 1925, and orders were passed in Government letter No.2405 L.R. of the 26th February 1926 [Hopkyns 1926, in: Selections 1929:538]. I do not think there is any call at the moment to modify these orders but the situation will require watching. In paragraph 53 of his letter No.1408 G of the 15th May 1925 containing his proposals for the resettlement of the jhum tax, the Deputy Commissioner says "There is not the slightest doubt that the Chiefs could never realize any additional moneys if they did not collect the jhum tax." [cf. Stevens 1925 (a) 1925 in:

Selections 1925:511]. This seems to me to be an overstatement, for I think that certain contributions would probably be willingly paid to the Chiefs by those who called them "father" that is to say, those over whom (13) they have ancient chiefly rights older than and unconnected with the jhum tax. But he is perfectly right in holding that the collection of the jhum tax by the Chiefs has given them far too much power to collect contributions to which they have no right.

I asked the Bomong's eldest son why his father had exacted first fruits from Mros and other people over whom he has no ancient Chiefly rights. The reason he gave rings true to my ears, and even if it be not true, the very fact that it was given teaches a moral lesson. He said that when the Bohmong of the time told Mr. Mawson that he always realised first fruits from his own clan Mr. Mawson, not understanding in the least how totally different was tie between the chief and his own clan and the rights given him by the Government over the other people of his circle, said " Why do you not treat everyone the same?" Knowledge of this blissful ignorance on the part of the authorities proved too great a temptation, and unwarranted exactions began in the hope that they would be acquiesced in.

The Chiefs in the past have consistently confused the issue. Sometimes they have openly claimed contributions to which they had no right at all, while at other times they have lost their heads and denied collecting abwabs which they not only did, as a matter of fact, collect, but to which they were entitled by ancient custom. When I asked the Bohmong's son why no one had ever cleared up this subject by explaining to Government the ancient chiefly relationship of "father" and "son", he frankly said that this had not been done because no representative of Government had ever by his questions shown any signs of knowing that such a basis of chieftainship existed, or (14) being likely to understand the real position if any attempt were made to explain it to him. The trouble has been, in this question as in others, that it has never been realised that the position of a Chief as collector of jhum tax differs in toto from that of a holder of ancient chiefly rights; the one he holds with regard to all the jhumiyas in his circle, the other only with regard to some people, all of whom may not be jhumiyas.

At the serious risk of over-riding my anthropological hobby-horse, may I comment briefly on the 'abwabs' which have been till recently

realized in this district? Throughout I have analogies from elsewhere in mind.

(1) First fruits. This was the ancient tribute of field produce to a Chief from his "sons." In this district the old Bhuddhist custom, which is still observed by the Bohmong, is that the first fruits were used for the big feast given by the Chief to his priests and people at the end of Wa (the Bhuddhist Lent). This feast is in origin a ceremonial eating of the first fruits.

(2) A leg of game. This is also an ancient tribute.

(3) Collections for exceptional social and religious functions. This is also ancient, being due to a chief from his "sons".

(4) Payments to the chief on visiting him. A very small present may have been brought in ancient times, but the present-day amount and the importance attached to it is nothing but an imitation of the practice of Indian zamindars. The really ancient custom, which still survives, I think, to a limited extent in this area, is that a visitor should receive a present. A Chief or other important man would be given a present when he visits someone, and is to (15) make a present in return when the visit is returned. These presents would be made and returned even when the person visited were not one of the Chief's own clan subjects.

(5). Contribution made on the wearing of ornaments by women, and shoes by men, and when a permanent plinth or permanent wall round a house is put up. At first sight this seems a very extraordinary type of contribution, and there must obviously be some memory in the racial subconsciousness to warrant it. I have seen it called a sumptuary tax. This term is misleading, as it implies that it is directed towards the suppression of excessive luxury. It is true that the Chiefs in paragraph 26 of their memorial on Mr. Ascoli's report [Three Chiefs' Reply, n.d., § 26, p.7] give this interpretation, but there is no evidence to show that this statement is any truer than the palpably false statement in paragraph 18, that the Chakmas are not imitating Hindu 'bhadrak'. A tax imposed by a Chief with the sole object of checking luxury would not win that minimum amount of consent which required to make collection possible. Really, I am convinced, it is a very interesting survival. Note that it is levied on two things, and on two things only –

the wearing of something, and the building of something, indicating a higher social grade. Now in the northern area of what is commonly

termed Indonesia Feasts of merit play an enormously important part in social life. A man does not increase his social status merely by acquiring wealth, but by spending it on these feasts. Each tribe among which the practice obtains recognises (16) a definite series; a man begins by sacrificing pigs, and then go on to cows, and then to gayal (*bos frontalis*).

After the giving of each feast of the series, the man may make certain definite additions to his house, and he and his wife, and sometimes his sons and daughters, may wear certain clothes and ornaments to which they were not before entitled. He must also, from the animals killed at each feast, give a present of meat to his Chief. Thus we get the same connection of a payment to a Chief and an improvement in dress and building. These feasts of merit are no longer given by members of the Hinduised and Bhuddhist tribes of this area, but I have not the slightest doubt that they once were, and even the hurried investigations I was able to make revealed them among the animistic Mros. I did not however have the opportunity of finding out what privileges in the way of dress and building they carried with them there. These facts leave no doubt in my mind that the present-day so-called sumptuary taxes of this area are in reality survivals of the feasts of merit on the old days. They are of course only due from a Chief's own "sons," and even from them they have not been demanded within living memory in some parts of the district.

I would repeat here that my note above is in no way intended to suggest that Government should issue any definite approval of the abwabs realized, on the ground that they are warranted by ancient custom, for any such approval would certainly be misused. Nor do I wish to imply that the amounts realized in the immediate past, even where some contribution is warranted by custom, have not been altogether excessive, or that (17) a demand which might be justified by custom in one circle would be similarly justified in another. My only desire is to place on record what seem to me to be the real facts about them. [↩](#)

THE HISTORY OF THE CHIEFS.

I have lightly sketched in this anthropological background in the hope that certain features of the histories of the Chiefs will stand out more clearly against it than they have hitherto done in previous accounts [cf.

Stevens 1925 (b), in: Selections 1925:482 ff.]. One is hampered, unfortunately, by the almost entire absence of any reliable wide-spread tradition. The ordinary man rarely knows the name of his great-grandfather, far less where he lived or anything he did. One therefore finds very few carefully preserved genealogies and family histories. What few exist however, together with recorded facts which seem to be undisputed give one, if due regard be paid to critical and careful interpretation, enough material to build up a history of each chief. The locus classicus for these histories is Mr. Oldham's note of the 17th July 1898 [2nd March 1898] on the Chief's memorial of the 28th February 1898 against the land Rules of 1892 and the mauza system. [Oldham 1898, in: Selections 1929:270 ff]. This note must always remain valuable. I have, however, expanded and re-interpreted the evidence available, and on some points the information at my disposal has led me to conclusions differing widely from Mr. Oldham's. It is perhaps hardly necessary to mention the the parganaites of the Santal Parganas with which Mr. Oldham compares the Chiefs of the Hill Tracts are ethnologically entirely distinct. The comparison is not an historical one but as administrative one. (18) ↵

THE BOHMONG.

The Maghs are an Indonesian people, with affinities scattered from Northern Arakan to Borneo and beyond. Of earlier migrations of the tribe little is known, but it was from Arakan, where they seem to have been known as "Talaings".²

From Arakan they entered the Southern portion of Chittagong District, whence they gradually moved up to their present home, pushing the Chakmas ahead of them as they came. Those of the Mong Raja's circle arrived later than those of the Bohmong's circle and differ considerably in culture. To one who has become used to Bengali atmosphere of the

² "Talaing" is a corruption of "Tai Luang" or "Greater Tai", a branch of the great Tai race. An American believes the Tai race existed in Southern and Central China as early as 2200 B.C. The first certain trace of them however is in Yunnan in the 7th century. This Tai kingdom was overthrown by the Moguls in 1234 A.D. They had however already begun to migrate South, South-West, and South East, and filtered through Assam, the Chindwin Valley and Arakan. This is the stock from which the Maghs are sprung.

Chakma and Mong circles, to visit Bandarban, the headquarters of the Bohmong, is to enter a new world. It is pure Burma, with yellow-robed priests, Bhuddhist temples and a populace clad in Burmese dress of all the colours of the rainbow. There Bengali culture is disdained as something alien, and all regard Burma as their spiritual home. This clear-cut and striking difference between the Bohmong's circle and those of the Chakma Chief and the Mong Raja cannot be too strongly emphasised.

Mr. Oldham deals curtly and, I hold, inaccurately with the Bohmong. His statement in paragraph 12 of his note [Oldham 1898, in: Selections 1927:277] that the Bohmong and the Mong Raja are neither of them members of heads of clans or administer a clan system is, frankly, wildly erroneous. If they are not members of clans one wonders what they are. They are further both the heads of clans. The Bohmong is undoubtedly the head, and the acknowledged head of the Regratsa clan; he is indeed (19) so described in the official darbar list. This clan is by far the largest and most important of the Magh clans in the district and its members outnumber those of all the other clans in the tribe put together. The Bohmong likewise is the most important of the three chiefs, and rightly so described by Captain Lewin (vide "A Fly on the Wheel," p. 211) [Lewin 1912:211]. His title is an older one than that of the Chakma Chief, and his clan a far more important one. I have recommended elsewhere that his seniority to the Chakma Chief be definitely recognised. How the impression arose that the Chakma Chief is the senior I have not been able to discover. No reasons are given by those who affirm it, and the idea is certainly subsequent to Lewin.

Since 1906 when Mr. Hutchinson compiled his "Account of the Chittagong Hill Tracts," the ancient records preserved by the Bohmong's family have been destroyed by fire. Fortunately however the information contained in them had been extracted, and there is no reason to doubt its substantial accuracy. About 1599 A.D. the King of Burma, assisted by the King of Arakan, conquered the King of Pegu, in return for which the King of Burma presented his ally with 33,000 Talaing prisoners and the son and daughter of the King of Pegu. The King of Arakan married the girl and showed favour to the boy, Maung Seo Pyn, making him Governor of Chittagong in 1614. In 1620 the young Governor attacked the Portuguese with their Bengali allies, and in reward for his gallantry was granted the

title of "Boh Maung" ("Leader of Generals") by his overlord, the King of Arakan. This is the title commonly written as "Bohmong." It was about this time that (20) the Talaings settled in Arakan – these Talaings, who are now known as Maghs, began to split up into the clans which we find existing to-day. That of Maung Seo Pyn was the Regratsa clan; in 1630 he was succeeded as second Bohmong by his son Mang Rai Phru, who in turn was succeeded by Hari Ngao in 1665. During his time Arakan was weakened by internal quarrels, and Hari Phru, left without support, lost most of his territory to the Moguls. He was succeeded as fourth Bohmong by his brother's son Hari Ngao about 1687. A new dynasty had meanwhile arisen in Arakan, and the King, Chanda Wijaya, came to Hari Ngao's assistance. Between them they defeated the Moguls and Hari Ngao was raised to the rank of "Boh Maung Gri" ("Great Leader of Generals"). The success against the Moguls was however short-lived, and Hari Ngao was driven back into the hills of Arakan where he died in 1727, and was succeeded by his grandson Kong Hla Phru. Kong Hla Phru made an attempt to regain his possessions to the west, but was not at first successful, and in 1756 was forced to retire again to Arakan. Hearing later that the power of the Moguls was waning, and that of the British was waxing, he again returned to his territories in the South of Chittagong District in 1774 and began to work his way up North along the Sangu valley. He died in 1811 at a great age, and was succeeded by his son Sataing Phru, who died in 1840. Thereupon quarrels broke out among the sons and descendants of Kong Hla Phru, and the country was constantly raided by Khumis and Shendus. Government eventually recognized Kong Hla Ngao as seventh Bohmong in 1847, but he was powerless to prevent raids, and the Hill Tracts were definitely taken over in 1860. In 1866, (21) Kong Hla Ngao, whose conduct had been most unsatisfactory, was made to resign in favour of his cousin Mom Phru, on whose death in 1875 quarrels broke out anew, and Lieut. Gordon was ordered to enquire as to the real custom regarding the succession. He reported that succession to the office of Bohmong was governed by fitness and age, and not by primogeniture. This finding was accepted both by Government and the Bohmong's family, and Sanaio (Tsaneyo) was acknowledged as ninth Bohmong. On his death in 1901, the succession passed to Chao Hla Phru and thence in 1916 to Mong Cha Ngao, and in 1923 to the present holder Keozan Phru, who is thus

twelfth Bohmong from Meng Seo Pym in the male line, and ninth holder of the title of Boh Maung Gri. He is therefore holder of a hereditary title of very considerable antiquity.

The Bohmong of the time undoubtedly paid a tribute of cotton to the Moguls, but when it was first paid, and what the amount was is not known. He held the Mahal of his own clan, and it was from them that he first collected it. Kong Hla Phru paid a tribute of cotton to the British, and this was commuted in 1789 to cash jama of Rs. 703 a year. By degrees the mahals of the other Magh clans living in the Southern half of the Hill Tracts were given to the Bohmong in addition to that of the Regratsa clan which he had held from the beginning, till the time was ripe to grant him the entire mahal of his present circle, and nothing outside it. This policy, long contemplated, was finally brought into effect by the Rules of 1892.

The chequered career of the Bohmong or Phru family makes clear how deeply ingrained and how important to the Magh tribe are clan feeling and clan rights. The connection between the Bohmong and the Regratsa clan is the one permanent feature of their history. More than (22) once the Bohmong was driven from the land he occupied, but he never lost his clan chieftainship, and when he eventually moved up from the South to his present home the Regratsa clan formed the bulk of his followers, other clans, notably the Palangsa clan to which the Mong Raja belongs, moving up into the Chittagong Hill Tracts by another route. To this day the Regratsa clan are "sons" of the Bohmong and it is through his rights as clan chief of the most numerous of the Magh clans that he has been able to extend his entirely distinct jhum tax collecting rights over other communities.

The present Bohmong is certainly rapacious and unscrupulous in the use he makes of his power. On the other hand he is undoubtedly a man and a Chief, and would, by his personality, stand out in any company. He is respected and probably feared; but I think he is also regarded, at any rate by those of his clan, with real loyalty, not unmixed with affection. Quite apart from his picturesque dress he is by far the most striking of the three Chiefs. Troublesome though he has been, and may be, he would go excellently if ridden on a curb by a man with good hands. He has six sons, and it is to be hoped that the eldest, San Htoon Phru will succeed his father rather than any collateral candidate, for he

is, after his father, easily the most capable and prominent man in Bandarban, though he is also a strong character who will require tactful guidance. He is well educated and intensely interested in his own people. Unlike the sons of the Chakma Chief he regards Bandarban, in the middle of his tribe, as his real home. He has not only studied his people on the spot, but has read round the subject, even quoting parallels from Borneo to me! (23) Such a man is so obviously the next Chief that if he be not appointed it is difficult to see how his circle can be administered with him in opposition. Further I am of the opinion that he is the heir indicated by the clan law of succession. "Age" and "fitness" are acknowledged to be the requisite qualifications. (vide Government letter No. 2549 P. of the 22nd February 1917) [Kerr 1917, in: Selections 1929:350 f.]. Fitness, San Htoon Phru, certainly possesses; doubts have been expressed to me whether he is qualified by age. These are, I think, groundless. "Age" does not mean "old age", for the clan custom does not contemplate a perpetual gerontocracy. It means "full years of discretion, "being in every respect the primitive Indonesian custom whereby, for instance, a minor would be passed over in favour of his uncle, simply because a minor's hands are feeble, but a capable son of full age would not be so passed over. ↵

CHAKMA CHIEF.

A Chakma, when asked the origin of his tribe, either says he does not know, or repeats like a parrot the modern tale that they are the descendants of Kshatriyas from Chamapanagar. I agree with almost everyone who has considered the question that this is a myth unsupported by any evidence whatsoever, and that they are of mixed origin. The basis of the tribe is Magh, almost certainly of clans left behind on one of the occasions when the Bohmong had to retreat from the Moguls and take refuge in Arakan. There is possibly a slight admixture of Tippera blood, due to intermarriage when the tribe moved up from the coast (24) into the Hill Tracts, but the main foreign strain, and that a very strong one indeed, comes from the Mogul army of the Governor of Lower Bengali and from Bengali subjects of the Mogul with whom they were in close contact while occupying the country round Cox's Bazaar during the latter half of the seventeenth century. As late as 1799, the greater part of the tribe were still living near the Naf river, and only a

colony had gone up the Karnaphuli (Asiatick Researches, Vol. VI, p. 227) [Buchanan, M.D., On the Religion and Literature of the Burmans, in: Asiatick Researches, Vol. VI, 1801]. Writing in 1841 Phayre, speaking of the Doingnak section of the tribe, says they are probably the offspring of Bengali slaves. (J.A.S.B. 117 of 1841) [Phayre, A.P., Account of Arakan, in: Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 10, 1841]. The name "Chakma" is derived from "Soak", the Maghi term for them. Soak, I have always been told, is a somewhat offensive term, and it has been variously translated to me as meaning "of mixed blood" or "of impure worship." Their underlying culture is purely Indonesian, and has nothing Kshatriya about it, but their foreign blood is shown by their features, their cephalic index, their national characteristics, and certain details such as the Muhammedan ornaments which the women still were are in their ears. This mixture of race has given them racial instability. Their original Maghi language has gone, a corrupt Bengali having taken its place, and their interesting Khmer script is fast going. At one time Muhammedan names were all the rage, as the list of Chiefs testifies and apparently many of the tribe at one time embraced Islam. But their conversion was never thorough, and in the time of Rani Kalindi it was felt that they must have definite religion of some kind. So in 1873 she issued orders that they were to be Buddhists as they were originally, and this they are in (25) a mild way to this day. Nowadays they all have Hindu names and have adopted a good deal of Hindu culture. They are divided into a number of originally endogamous clans or gozas, which show a constant tendency to split up into sub-clans. Each clan, with the exception of the Rajparias is named after the place or man whence it originated, descent being strictly in the main line. The head of a clan was called a Dewan or, by the Taungchengya Chakmas, Amu. These gozas with their heads are important, for they can be no doubt that a struggle between them and the Chiefs went on throughout much of the later history of the tribe. It was a struggle between an ancient clan Chieftainship and a new type of Chieftainship founded on the right to collect tribute in the name of, and supported by, an alien paramount power.

The account of the Dewans given by Mr Oldham in paragraph 14 of his letter No. 1136 N.T. of the 19th August 1891 [Oldham 1891, in: Selections 1929:221 f.] is correct. They do not derive their position from

their relationship with the Chief. It was because of their position as heads of clans that the Chiefs intermarried with them, with a view to consolidating their power as Chiefs. An account of the former importance of headman is given on pp. 90 and 91 of Hunter's Statistical Account, and Lewin gives a clear description of the Dewans and the goza system on page 67, 68 of his "Chittagong Hill Tracts and the Dwellers therein."

I have spared no pains to unravel the history of the Chakma Chieftainship. In the days of Kalindi Rani, things were simpler; that intensely practical woman (26) confined her attention to cold fact, and in the inscription she set up in the Mahamoni temple she recognised no Chief earlier than Shermust Khan, the sixth before her late husband. Yet the present Chief, the second after Kalindi Rani, signs himself "45th Chakma Raja," so greatly has the antiquity of the line increased! This has made investigation most difficult, for the truth has deliberately concealed. Outside aid has been called in to invent a line stretching back to an Aryan invasion of India, and Burmese histories - records as fantastic as Burmese art - had been rifled for sentences which might be twisted into references to the Chakmas. I was told that the only reliable accounts of ancient Chakma Chiefs existed in two "old manuscripts" of which I was given "true copies." The copies are, alas, written in modern Bengali, and the originals were not forthcoming. Yet these two records, fakes though they largely clearly are and often inconsistent, contain a modicum of historical truth and some very interesting admissions as to the true state of affairs. It is definitely stated, for instance, that Chakmas were of mixed blood, and admitted men and married women of any race. This mixed population must gradually have become stabilized and fairly homogeneous by intermarriage within itself. Being in the main of Indonesian (Maghi) stock, it retained the indigenous system of clans (gozas) each under a tribal chief (Dewan). They collected the tribute, but paid it to a middle man, who was never a tribal chief, and at first was not even that Chakma. It is these middle men who are now called "Chief" by Chakma historians, but they are to be clearly distinguished from the Bohmong (27) and Mong Raja, who are clan Chiefs as well as tribute-collecting Chief. So divorced has the Chakma Chief always been from his tribe and its clan Chiefs that I can find no evidence that any of them,

except for one short period, ever lived in the Hill Tracts till the father of the present Chief was ordered to do so.

The early history, as recorded, consists mostly of a list of names, embellished with a few miracles. It is significant that the first "Chief", of whom there seem to be any authentic record was a Bengali, and was known as "Bengali Sirdar": He married a Chakma woman, who, in present day history has been given as a father a Raja who was found and brought out of the jungle by a white elephant. Evidently the Chakmas were at this time in the unpleasant position of buffer tribe between the Maghs of Arakan and the Moguls. After the death of Bengali Sirdar, the Maghs overran their territory and they retreated into the hills. Some years later they emerged again, and Bura Boma, who was probably a plains Magh, became "chief", or in other words tax mahaldar. He married a Chakma woman, who, as usual, has been provided with a Raja father. Bura Boma's son was Satna Boma, better known as Mad Raja. Probably he tried to obtain some real power and set himself against the Dewans of the clans. He and his relations were all murdered, and his remains are supposed to have been thrown into the sea at Pagla Mora, a place on the coast south of Cox's Bazaar. At this time the Magh under the Bohmong of the time were exerting pressure and the Chakma began slowly to move up from the coast into the country they now occupy. The death of the "Chief" left the clan (28) system free to function, and the power was concentrated in the hands of the Dewans of the four most powerful clans – the Mulima, the Dhamai (or Dhabin), the Bugya and the Thurjya. It was they who continued to collect the tribute, and enjoy such privileges of Chieftainship as abwabs and compulsory labour. No subsequent Chief down to the time of Kalindi Rani was more than a middle man to whom the Dewans handed a share of their collections to be passed on to the paramount power. It was because of the power of the heads of the four big clans that Dharam Bux Khan to a small extent and Kalindi Rani systematically, increased the number of Dewans and succeeded in turning them into a class instead of holders of an office. Our creation of the mauza system completed their ruin and made an entirely artificial chief supreme, though this does not have been realised at the time.

For some years after the death of the Mad Raja, the Dewan dealt direct with the paramount power, but it was felt that an intermediary would be

convenient and the post went to a member of the Mulima clan. He was probably the first Chakma Chief who was a Chakma. All the early Mulima chiefs had Muhammodan names, and almost certainly embraced the faith of their Mogul overlords. Some Chakmas hold that these Chiefs were descended from the line of the Mad Raja, but the ordinary sane account is that the Mulima line was a new one. Certainly it is the first line of which the goza clan is known; indeed one well educated Chakma told me that the goza of no chief before Dharam Bux, the great grandfather of the present chief, is known.

Very little is known of the early Mulima chiefs. The first seems to have been Chaman Khan, who lived about 1650. Another called Jalol Khan or Fateh Khan paid tribute to the (29) Mogul Governor of Chittagong about 1715. Kul Fateh Khan near Ramu is called after him. He was followed by his son Shermust Khan, the first Chief recognised by Kalindi Rani. Shukdeb, the adopted son of Shermust Khan, obtained settlement of the cotton tribute mahal from the British in 1757, though it is not till 1772, the year in which the company "stood forth as Dewan" that this mahal appears as a regular item of revenue. Shukdeb was succeeded by Sher Dowlat who died in 1776. According to one account, he was assassinated and he, not Satna, was the Mad Raja. I prefer the earlier date. There was however pretty clearly a period of confusion at this time. The Maghs, under Bohmong Kong Hla Pru, were re-establishing their power in the South, and this pressure hastened the hitherto gradual migration of the Chakmas into the hills. Touch with the British was lost, raids were encouraged by the Chakmas, and it became necessary to take punitive measures.

Here I must digress for a moment. It was during the time of the early Mulima Chiefs that the Rajparia clan was created. At first 150 men were taken indiscriminately from various clans and made into a small labour and protective force for the Chief. In return, these men were granted remission of contribution to the cotton tax. The duties were so light, and remission from all taxes so highly esteemed that this small body grew into a clan, called the Rajparia clan, as the custom grew up of members of other clans attaching themselves to it of their own free will. They increased so rapidly that by 1883 they numbered one-sixth of the whole tribe. At this time they waxed fast and kicked, and not only demanded

complete remission of all taxation and compulsory labour, but refused to render their due service to the Chief.

In (30) his letter of the 24th August 1883, the Deputy Commissioner reports that they “had long ago withdrawn all the allegiance from the Raja, and refused to obey him in any way.” It was therefore decided to tax them, but this was done in the face of fierce opposition and appeal to the Government of India. The existence of an artificial clan of this kind throws much light on the true nature of the Chakma Chieftainship. The present Chief does not regard himself as head of any of the old clans - even of his own Wangsa clan - but of the Rajparias. Had any of his forebears been clan chiefs, they would have had their own clan to call on for labour and protection. It was because the Chieftainship stood outside the clan system that this special force had to be created. This clearly distinguishes the Chakma Chief from the Bohmong and the Mong Raja. This point the Chiefs obscure when they lump together the Rajparia, Reqratsa and Palangsa clans in paragraph 7 of their memorial of the 28th February 1898. Mr. Oldham points this out in paragraph 17 of his note of the 17th July 1898 [Oldham 1898, in: Selections 1929:278 ff.], but the same mistake is deliberately made again in paragraph 98 of the Chiefs’ memorial on Mr. Ascoli’s Report [Three Chiefs’ Reply, n.d., § 98, p.33 f.].

To resume the historical outline. A Chief Jan Bux appears about 1782, but he also encouraged raids on the plains, and had to be punished. He made his submission to Mr. Irvin about 1787, and the tribute was raised. Up to 1789 Jan Bux paid his tribute to a relative called Ranu or Ramu Khan, who in turn handed over the cotton to a tax farmer in Chittagong. In that year however Government made a direct settlement with the Chiefs and his tribute was altered from 500 maunds of cotton to a sum which is variously stated as Rs. 1,872/- (31) and Rs. 2,224-4-4. His son Tabbar Khan succeeded in 1800 but died next year and was succeeded by another son Jabbar Khan who was in turn succeeded by Dharam Bux Khan in 1812. A letter of Mr. Halhead, the Commissioner, dated the 21st April 1829, may refer to this Chief or to an intermediary. He says that-

“the tribute is guaranteed by a third party, resident in our territory, who alone was responsible. He is merely an agent or mukhtear or medium of communication between his constituents and the authorities. He is not the ruler of the clan he represents, and has no control over the members of it.”

Mr. Halhead was clearly writing of someone whom he knew personally and the letter, if it still exists, would throw light on the period. Captain Lewin quotes it on page 59 of his "Wild Tribes [Races] of S.E. India." [Lewin 1870:59]. About 1819 the Taunchangya section of Chakmas, who had retreated from the neighbourhood of Naf-river to Arakan during the years of confusion, migrated again and entered the Hill Tracts, evidently not liking the rule of the Raja of Arakan, who refers to them in a letter of the 17th June 1787 to the Chief of Chittagong (Lewin op.cit. pp.74 sq) [Lewin 1870:74 ff.]. They, however, refused to acknowledge Dharam Bux as Chief, and most of them returned.

Dharam Bux Khan died in 1832, leaving no son, but three widows, of whom the eldest was Kalindi Rani. This masterful woman at once set about consolidating her power. Knowing that her position might well be questioned by the British on one hand and her own tribe on the other, she lost no time in arranging her defence on both flanks. Of the means she employed to hoodwink the British an interesting account is contained in Lord Ulick Browne's letter No. 24 [421] of the 12th November 1868 [Browne 1868, in: Selections 1887:2 f]. She first lodged a claim in the Judge's Court, Chittagong, to the sole management of the estates in that district on (32) the entirely false ground that she was a Hindu widow. The necessary order was passed on a summary proceeding and in complete ignorance of the facts. Having obtained the management of the landed estates, she appropriated to herself the monopoly of the jhum tax, getting Gobardhan and the other collateral male heirs put in jail on a charge of rebellion and riot. This effectively stopped their mouth both then and for the future. The English were so completely in the dark as to what went on in the Hill Tracts that they did not deprive her of the power she had usurped; probably they did not greatly care what happened as long as the tribute was regularly paid. But she knew that her own tribe would never acknowledge that she had any right to the Chieftainship; since they could not be deceived, they had to be coerced. She was clever enough to learn from history, and realised that, if the old clan system had once been strong enough to cause the assassination of the Chief the same thing might happen again. She therefore followed with vigour the policy already initiated by her husband Dharam Bux, of weakening the power of the heads of the clan. This she did by creating new Dewans so that the term "Dewan" soon

ceased to be the name of an office and became that of a class, as it is now. Further to protect herself she surrounded herself with Bengali advisors, giving them a strong interest in her retention of power by granting them human taluks in her tribe from whom they were allowed to extract as much as they could. This marked the beginning of years of such oppression as the Chakmas have never known before or since. Bitterly did they complain that they were “sold like goats to munsiffs and Bengalis.” Nor were her relations with the English any better. There is no need to go in detail into the long list of her misdeeds. It suffices to say that save for the capture of some sepoy (33) during the Mutiny, she was a continual thorn in the side of Government until her death in 1874.

The death of Dharam Bux Khan without a son and the suppression by Kalindi Rani of the claims of such collaterals as they were brought to an end and the line of Chiefs of the Mulima clan. Government therefore felt it incumbent on them to select a successor to Kalindi Rani, who naturally could not be expected to live for ever, and finally chose Harish Chandra, the son of Gopinath Dewan one of the three headmen of the petty Wangsa clan, who had married Chikanbi, also known as Menaka, daughter of Dharam Bux by his junior wife Haribi. The choice was therefore an entirely artificial one and in no way dictated by Chakma custom, for the Wangsa is an insignificant clan, and inheritance through the female line is contrary to tribal custom. Since Harish Chandra’s mother could not herself inherit the Chieftainship according to Chakma custom, it follows that she could not hand it on. I think Lord Ulick Browne is wrong in describing Harish Chandra as the rightful heir in his letter No.2.A. of 12th November 1868. No precedent can be found in authentic Chakma history.

Probably the Chakmas were only too glad to accept Harish Chandra or anyone else in place of the oppressive Rani. Harish Chandra was born in 1841, seven years after the death of Dharam Bux, and after his selection as the future chief was educated and brought up as a ward of Government. In 1868 the proposal was made that Kalindi Rani’s flagrant misrule should be ended by deposing her and putting Harish Chandra in her place. The latter was however far too frightened of her to agree to this, or even suggested it, and the matter was dropped (vide Government letter No.270 of the 23rd January 1869) [Eden 1869, in: Selections 1887:7 f]. (34) Harish Chandra therefore did not become chief

till her death in 1874. The title of Raja which he was granted was a personal one. Hitherto Kalindi Rani had lived at Rajanagar, and it was not till he became Chief that Harish Chandra “was compelled to leave Rajanagar and live among his subjects at Rangamati by the Government,” as it is naively put in the printed history issued under the authority of the present Chief. Residence among his own people was no more to the liking of Harish Chandra than it had been to that of Kalindi Rani (vide Commissioner’s letter No. 206 H of the 23rd July 1883) and I doubt not that the tendency which made such an order necessary is as strong as ever, and that the present Chief would, only too readily exchange Rangamati for Chittagong as a place of residence.

The reign of Harish Chandra was an inglorious one, and reflects no credit on his upbringing as a ward of Government. The administration report for 1881-2 says of him –

“in his present position is in no way superior to that of a stipend-holder, possessed of no influence, and thoroughly despised by his people.”

Finally his drunkenness, incompetency and contumacy exhausted the patience of Government and his deposition was ordered in letter No.121 P. D. of the 23rd April 1884 [Peacock 1884, in: Selections 1929:214]. In view to the fact however that he could not possibly live long, these orders were suspended for some months. Before the expiry of that period, he paid the penalty of his excesses and died on the 23rd January 1885.

When Harish Chandra became utterly incapable of acting as Chief, Government decided to put it in two Dewans as Managers. They were chosen by a free vote of the privileged Dewans of the tribe, and it is interesting (35) to note that Nil Chandra and Trilochan, who were elected by an overwhelming majority, were of the Mulima and Dhamai clans – the two old powerful clans. Nil Chandra was the most influential Chakma of his day (far more influential than the puppet Chief), and being the nephew of Dharam Bux, must really have possessed a good claim to the Chieftainship, had he put it forward. Later in life I believe he and Trilochan both proved very troublesome.

Bhuban Mohan Ray³, the present Chief, was a minor at the time of his father's death, and was, like his father, brought up as a ward. In 1897 he was made Chief and granted the personal title of Raja.

Raja Bhuban Mohan Ray is in character both obstinate and weak, both clever and short-sighted. He will persist in some ill-founded claim long after he has been told that Government cannot recognise it, but he is as clay in the hands of his brother-in-law Krisna Kishore Dewan of the Mulima clan, an older man than the Chief, whom the Chiefs supports and allows him to live in his house. It is the Chief (or his brother-in-law) who has always inspired the perpetual joint memorials which have been the invariable reply of the Chiefs to any proposal for reform. The other Chiefs have, I believe, signed them without grasping their contents, and the present Bohmong for one greatly regrets having done so. Yet the Chakma Chief has never been able to see that co-operation with Government and attention to the affairs of his people would have paid him better than appeals for money and dignities, and memorials rendered valueless by the inaccuracy of the statements they contain. He is unpopular with his own (36) tribe, as Chakmas of position have told me in private conversation. His people say that he takes no interest in them, and they only regard him as a troublesome individual who takes their money. My own efforts to induce him to talk reasonably about the welfare of his people failed entirely; he always dropped the subjects at once. To my direct enquiry as to what he really thought suitable duties for a Chief he naively replied "to look after the welfare of the people, but we should be aggrandised." He was always eager to talk about dignities and the smallness of his income as compared with what he deserved, but never about duties. He regards the Chakmas merely as a mine to be worked for his benefit; and his vanity is beyond belief. I can find no record that he ever on any occasion aided Government with any valuable advice. Though not the persistent absentee the Mong Raja is, he spends far more time in Chittagong district than any Chief could afford to spend who really administered the affairs of his circle. Most of his jurisdiction he has never even visited. His love of Bengali culture has

³ Ray is not really the family name. The late Chief was Raja Harish Chandra, Rai Bahadur. This seems to have been turned into Raja Harish Chandra Ray Bahadur. On the strength of this he later claimed that his name was Harish Chandra Ray, and his title Raja Bahadur vide his memorial of January 1884.

antagonised the respectable and conservative elements in the tribe. He lives in Bengali style, entirely surrounded by Bengalis, and he keeps his women purdah, contrary to Chakma custom and he has married his two eldest sons to Bengali ladies, a thing unprecedented in the tribe. He does not even know the Chakma writing. He told me himself that he considered Bengali culture the ideal, and ignored my remark that such culture contained no place for Chiefs. As Mr. Geake expressed it in 1915, his main desire appears to ape a Bengali zemindar.

This Bengali culture, so strongly fostered by the Chief and by the Rangamati High School with its purely Bengali staff and curriculum, is thoroughly bad for the tribe, not (37) because it is Bengali, but because it is alien and unsuitable. A generation of idle students is growing up, eager for clerical posts which do not exist, and probably unfitted for the hard life of the Hill Tracts. Captain Rattray, whose knowledge of Ashanti is unrivalled, in the Colonial Office Report for 1921 says that there the people are at the parting of the ways,

“one path leads, I believe, to the unrest and ferment we see on every hand among the peoples whose institutions we have either deliberately broken down or as deliberately allowed to decay. The other path at least leads to some surer hope, because it has landmarks which the genius of the people will recognise, and which will keep them upon the road when in difficulties... Among the younger generation there is a tendency to ridicule the past. A youth who has passed the 5th, 6th or 7th standard, and who by clerical work earns a few pounds a month, and is dressed in European garb, in his heart despises his own institutions and his own illiterate elders. But he takes his cue from the European, whom his be-all and end-all it is to copy. I firmly believe that once the Government and Political Officers are seen to take more interest in his ancient customs, and are seen to encourage such

customs and institutions as are good, the younger generation will themselves follow suit, and come to realise that they should not throw away their priceless heritage.”

These words, with very few substitutions, could be applied to the Chakma tribe. The Chief's eldest son, Nalinaksha Ray, was educated in Calcutta, and is a youth of poor physique. I saw little of him, as during much of my visit he remained at Cox's Bazaar for reasons of health. He struck me as being a vacant and negative young man. He does not know the Chakmas, and they do not know him, as he has spent little time in the

Hill Tracts. He was asked to carry on Court work during his father's frequent absences, but the only trace of his work I have been able to find is one adjournment order in one case; there may be other orders, but they cannot be numerous. His father encourages his inertia and reluctance to do any useful work, and on 1st May 1926, for instance, asked the Commissioner not to appoint him as an assessor, as he (38) could not be spared from Rangamati – though as a matter of fact he is often away on pleasure for long periods at a time. The real reason, of course, is that the Chief considers all work to be beneath the dignity of a "Yuvaraj." He has so far shown no signs of taking any interest in the people, and his marriage to a Calcutta lady will not improve the matters. It remains to be seen whether he will ever be fit to be Chief.

Certain points are clear from this outline of Chakma history, unreliable though the earlier portion is. Whether the earlier chiefs were foreigners or Chakmas, their line came to a dead end at the assassination of the Mad Raja. We can therefore disregard them in estimating the status of the present chief, whose claim to be "45th Chakma Raja" is meaningless. After the death of the Mad Raja, the heads of clans selected their own "Chief," whose sole function was to hand on their tribute to the paramount power. The post went to the Mulima clan and probably grew in importance. This line came to an end at the death of Dharam Bux Khan in 1832, and there followed by the usurpation by Kalindi Rani. The Chieftainship of her successor Harish Chandra was an artificial creation by the British. The present Chief is the second of this line.

The Chieftainship of the Bohmong has been seen to be based on the old clan Chieftainship, though greatly aggrandised by the lucrative privilege of collecting tribute for a foreign power. The Chakma Chieftainship has sometimes been opposed to, and sometimes fearful of, the old system of clan Chieftainship. Doubtless it was the power of his clan which enabled a Mulima man to obtain the tribute monopoly after the death of the Mad Raja, but every Chief since has based his power solely on that monopoly. Lewin in his report of 1867 says that Rani Kalindi's headship of the Chakmas is (39) contrary to custom [Lewin 1867, in: Selections 1929:22], and arose from the custom of regarding the Chieftainship as a taluk which could be bought and sold, and disposed of by a court. The true situation was recognised by Government, who as early as 1870 stated clearly in Order No.295 of the 21st January that

“ the Lieutenant -Governor declines to recognize the claim of Kalindi Rani to a permanent settlement or to any status higher than that of “sarbarakar”, and also wishes her to be informed that if she is obstructive or falls short of her duty , he will not hesitate to remove her from her sarbarakar-ship as she has already been warned” [Eden 1879, in: Selections 1929:46 f.; The Selections 1929 give a slightly different text].

There is little trace now among the Chakmas of the old clan Chieftainship – the measures of Dharam Bux and Kalindi Rani were too effective. No Chakma now recognises any such position, but curiously enough one sees traces of attempts to usurp its privileges by the modern mauza headmen. In a sense the mauza, among the Chakmas, is beginning to take the place of the clan. The clans, for instance, are no longer strictly endogamous, and a man is not fined if he marries a woman of another clan, but he is required to pay a fine in the form of an addition to the marriage feast if he marries a woman of another mauza.

This weakening of the clan Chieftainship among the Chakmas has made easy the monopolising of the cotton tribute by one man. To this day the Chakma circle contains nearly all the Chakmas and comparatively few members of other tribes. By written agreement between the Bohmong and Rani Kalinidi in 1869 a boundary was laid between their jurisdictions. This gave some Chakmas to the Bohmong and some Maghs to Kalindi Rani. Later in 1872, when the Eastern Frontier was extended as a result of the Lushai campaign, a considerable addition was made to the territory under the control of Kalindi Rani. When the jurisdictions of the Chiefs were eventually confined within territorial limits, the circle boundaries only defined the area within which each chief was actually collecting the (40) jhum tax. Finally the granting in 1913 of the control of the Maini Valley to the Chakma Chief brought a considerable number of members of other tribes under his influence. Yet his circle still is, and always has been, the most homogenous of the three, and it is this, combined with the absence of any rival clan Chiefs that has enabled his predecessors for so long to hold an absolute monopoly of jhum tax collection which contrasts strongly with the gradually acquired monopolies of the other two Chiefs.

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THE MONG RAJA.

Possibly Mr. Oldham's note of the 17th July 1898 [Oldham 1898, in: Selections 1929:276] was written hurriedly. Certainly his paragraph 13 on the Mong Raja contains an amazing number of erroneous statements. He says for instance that the Maghs of this district do not form clans. The truth is that the clan system is the very foundation of their social fabric. These clans are endogamous (though not as strictly as they were), and I was even told that in the old days members of different clans could not eat together. Mr. Oldham further says that the Mong Raja has nothing to do with any clan subject [Oldham 1898, in: Selections 1929:275 f.]. He has everything to do with such a system, for it was as clan Chief of the Palangsa clan that the ancestor of the present Mong Raja first obtained the tribute mahal of that clan, and it was because they held the biggest clan mahal of that area that his successors were granted the monopoly of what is now the Mong Circle on the extinction of the smaller mahals which had existed. In official papers the Mong Chieftainship is sometimes referred to as something modern and artificial, and quite different from the other two Chieftainships. This is incorrect. A consideration of the (41) facts shows that the Mong Chieftainship is older than the new line of Chakma Chiefs created when Harish Chandra was selected as Chief, and no more artificial than the Bohmong's Chieftainship. Both the Bohmong and the Mong Raja trace their position back to clan Chiefs who were the heads of the principal clans of their areas, and who were gradually granted a monopoly of other and smaller mahals under the policy of concentrating all tribute in the hands of the principal clan Chief of the area. The two cases are strictly parallel, the only difference being that the Palangsa clan has never attained anything approaching the numbers and importance of the Regratsa clan, and that the conversion of the head of the Palangsa clan into a monopolist mahaldar of the jhum tax was more deliberate and took place later than in the case of the Bohmong.

The Maghs of the Mong Circle are of the same stock of those of the Bohmong's circle. They did not however enter the hill tracts by the same route as did the Regratsa and its companion clans. Instead they travelled north from the neighbourhood of Cox's Bazaar and settled first on the Sitakund range. Having exhausted the jhums there they came straight across into the hills and now occupy the portion of the Hill Tracts

bordering on Tripura State. They found the low hills they entered sparsely populated by the Tipperas, and were able to spread themselves over the country till Kuki opposition put a limit to any further advance. This split from the southern Maghs and no longer sojourn in country inhabited by Bengalis has led to a very slight difference in dialect between the northern and the southern Maghs, and extensive substitution of Bengali for Burmese dress by the former. The northern Maghs seem to have reached their present home about three generations ago. The two estates of the chief in the (42) Chittagong district lie on the route of migration.

The area occupied by the northern Maghs is remote from the Chakmas, and whatever claims the latter may have made, they were never able to enforce them. There being in the first half of the 19th century no one of sufficient influence to obtain the jhum tax mahal of the whole of that area a large number of small mahaldars sprang up. The largest mahal was then that of the Palangsa clan. Whether, had the area been independent, that clan would every have brought all the smaller clans and scattered Tipperas under its control in the ordinary course of events it is impossible to say; at that time the Maghs were comparative newcomers in the area and had had no time to work out their destiny.

The original home of the Palangsa clan, from which it takes its name, is the Palangkhyong in Arakan. From there Mrachai led his people about 1782 and settled in the Matamuri Valley. He was given the cotton tribute mahal of his clan. On his death in 1787, his grandson Saileng succeeded to the Chieftainship of the clan and to the cotton mahal. In 1793 the tribute in cotton was changed to one of money. Saileng was succeeded by his nephew Khedu, who left the Matamuri Valley with his clan and settled on the Sitakund range. He died in 1800 and was succeeded by his son Konjai. In his time the clan again migrated, and entered the Hill Tracts. On Konjai's death in 1826, the Court of Wards administered his estate and tribute mahal till his son Keoja Sain took over in 1840. It is said that Keoja Sain was accorded the title of "Mong Raja" "by the voice of the people" in 1848 (vide letter No.765 G of the 9th December 1892 from the Assistant Commissioner, Chittagong Hill Tracts). He was given the mahal of his clan for 10 years, and this (43) settlement was renewed at intervals. It 1862 it was first proposed that some of the smaller mahals should be combined with that of the Mong Raja (vide Captain Graham's

letter No.101 of the 18th November 1862 to the Commissioner) [Graham 1862, in: Selections 1929:7], and in 1867 Capt. Lewin reports that he has so settled some [Lewin 1867, in: Selections 1929:20]. There was considerable hesitation however in granting the Mong Raja the mahals of other tribes, and the claims of the Tipperas to a mahal of their own was seriously considered, but as the only man proposed as mahaldar by them had been implicated in a murder, the project fell through (vide letter No.544 G. of the 11th September 1883 from the Deputy Commissioner to the Commissioner).

In 1870 Keoja Sain was succeeded by his son Nurabaddi, and next year all small mahals of that area were finally given to the Mong Raja. In 1872 Nurabuddi, partly as compensation for loss of river tolls and partly as reward for services rendered in the Lushai campaign, was granted a permanent reduction in his jama of Rs.153, which is still enjoyed by the present Chief. Nurabuddi died in 1879, and was succeeded by his brother Keoja Phru, who died in 1883, leaving no male heir.

Thus, as in the case of the Chakma Chief, Government was faced with the alternative of finding a successor or of abolishing the Chieftainship. The Chief's family and the clan selected Thuraong, second son of Pomai, daughter of Keoja Sain. To this choice Government agreed, and passed over the claim of Dikha, Thursong's elder brother. Thursong's name was changed to Nee Phru Sain, and as he was a minor, the property and mahal were placed under Government management. He was installed as chief in 1893 and still holds this position. He does not possess the title of "Raja, the word "Raja" in the appellation "Mong (44) Raja being a corruption of a Maghi word.

I fear he does even less credit to Government as a ward than do the present Chakma Chief and his father. He is a kindly man, and generous to a fault – not greatly caring with whose money he finances his generosity. Beyond that there is little good to say of him. At the time of his assumption of the Chieftainship the Commissioner was doubtful whether he had sufficient strength of character to carry out his duties. Time has proved how well-founded were these doubts.

As his court work, for instance, shows, he is utterly incapable. He is surrounded by Bengali clerks (who complain bitterly that their pay in months in arrears) and leaves all work in their hands and in those of his nephew Apurna, a most obnoxious young man. Even when Mr. Stevens

and I were there I noticed that the Chief appeared as little as possible, and on the least excuse would get up from the table and leave clerks to give us any information we wanted. He is absent from his circle half a year or more; when I went to Manikchari in November he had been there only for a few days since May. He takes no interest at all in the affairs of his circle, and does not even trouble to call on the Subdivisional Officer when he visits Ramgarh. He occasionally tours, but his tours are arranged with the sole object of begging for money. In the cold weather of last year he made a long, leisurely tour with this purpose; he requested headmen to collect what they could to help him to repay the money he had embezzled from Government, and also four annas a house on the ground that it was he who recently persuaded the Commissioner to disagree with the Deputy Commissioner's proposal for a cattle tax. He however obtained very little money. He did not tell me what touring he intends to do this cold weather. He is himself by far the least oppressive of the Chiefs, but just as he is too weak to extort money (45) so he is too weak to prevent his underlings from doing so.

As one would expect from his character his sins towards Government have been those of omission rather than of commission. As he readily spends, or allows his hangers-on to spend, any money which comes into his hands regardless of whether is required for payment to Government or not, he is perpetually short of cash wherewith to pay his jama. In 1913 he was given Rs. 15,000 compensation for the granting of control of the Maini Valley to the Chakma Chief instead of to him, though the whole evidence seems to show that neither Chief had any legitimate claims to it whatsoever. This put him on his feet for a time, but he was soon badly in arrears again and in his letter No.41 T.R. of the 13th April 1918 the Commissioner reported the he was a habitual defaulter, and in their letter No. 836 P of the 30th May 1918 Government gave him a serious warning, and told him that if he did not fulfil his duties satisfactorily he would be removed from office. This letter, curiously enough, seems to have been entirely overlooked when the question of his embezzlement of the plough rents came up in 1922. A systematic examination of accounts of all the circles was made in 1923 and 1924 and it was shown that the headmen had embezzled some Rs. 40,000 of Government money and the Chiefs some Rs. 30,000 of which the Mong Raja was responsible for the greater part. It is quite likely, I think, that he did not get the money

himself, but through sheer indolence allowed his staff to purloin it. It was a direct result of these defalcations that the Chiefs were relieved of the duty of collecting the plough rents in 1925. The Mong Raja has no heir. (46) ↵

SUMMARY.

These brief historical notes have, I trust, shown the basis upon which rests the present position of the Chiefs. Lewin has often quoted a saying in his report of 1867 that –

“in the first instance the authority of the Chiefs was paramount, and subsequently our ignorance subverted this authority in some measure.”

Five years’ further experience however brought him to the precise conclusion which I have reached independently, and in his letter No. 532 of the 1st July 1872 (Printed Selections p.15) [Lewin 1872, in: Selections 1887:15] he says –

“In the first instance undoubtedly their rights only extended to the men of their own clans, but as their position became assured and their power consolidated they collected from other and weaker tribes and villages.”

In the pure Magh Chieftainships of the Bohmong and the Mong Raja we find the ancient clan Chieftainship still alive, though overgrown with accretions due to their positions as collectors of the alien jhum tax. The Bohmong however possessed the oldest title in the Hill Tracts, and is the head of by far the largest clan. In the case of the Chakma Chief the old clan system is dead, and he is nothing more than the inheritor of the jhum tax mahal of a tribe of mixed origin, and of such other communities as have from time to time been added to his sphere of influence.

All authorities agree that in the past the Chiefs haven been cruel and oppressive, and have rendered small service to Government. Capt. Lewin says he found the people of the Hill Tracts “ground down by ignorant, narrow-minded chiefs; harassed by litigious, lying Bengali usurers, and oppressed by constant dread of the Lushai and Shendu raids.” (47) Never were the Chiefs able to protect their people from external enemies, and it was for this reason we were compelled to take over the Hill Tracts. It is true that, in the words of Sir George Campbell’s

resolution of the 21st August of 1873 “Government recognises in the chiefs only a delegated power to collect the tax (i.e. the jhum tax.) on its behalf” [Bernard 1873, in: Selections 1887:25], but we are to blame for delegating that power too readily to persons of whom Mr. Oldham says in his note of July 1898 –

“these Chiefs are altogether unfit to be trusted with the rights and property of the people of their jurisdiction” [Oldham 1898, in: Selections 1929:294],

Later in the same note he sums up the situation as follows:-

“The more we...for the convenience of administration, followed the course of dealing with a single person, the more we aggrandized that person, and led him to destroy the minor rights and representatives on which his power was really built, and which he could only afford to disregard with our power to lean on” [Oldham 1898, in: Selections 1929:296]

Nearly twenty years later the Commissioner in the report sent with his letter No.191 T. G. of the 12th June 1917 [De 1917, in: Selections 1929:360 ff.] severely criticised the Chiefs. It was this report which led to Mr. Ascoli’s valuable enquiry [Ascoli 1918]. The latter in paragraph 143 of his report unsparingly but justly sums up the situation in words every one of which applies with equal force today. To Government they have given no assistance or advice, but have submitted claim after claim for money they have done nothing to earn, and privileges they have never deserved. To their people they have given stone when they asked for bread.

So much for the history of the Chiefs. Many and great though their faults may be, one cannot but feel that some of the blame must fall in Government, for not only has Government deliberately aggrandized them without insisting on any administrative assistance (48) in return, but two of them, and those the two most neglectful of the people and their duties were brought up and educated as wards of Government. There must be something very wrong in the upbringing of boys who grow to man’s estate with no inkling of whatever of that which is summed up in the words “noblesse oblige.” ↵

[7.3.] [The Oxford Manuscript]

Part II.

PROPOSALS REGARDING THE CHIEFS.

From this melancholy story of rapacity and failure in the past, I turn to the future. The whole blame, as I have said, does not lie on the Chiefs. Government has paid, and the Chiefs have been allowed to pay, far too much attention to their activities as tax-gatherers to the neglect of the services they owe to their people as Chiefs. The rules give them the wide duty of administering their circles. No one can deny that they have entirely failed to carry out this duty; on the other hand, no one has ever made prolonged and consistent efforts to make them carry it out. Administration cannot wait, and it has always been tempting to carry it on with very little reference to them, for their laziness and lack of interest in anything but the acquisition of wealth has made co-operation well nigh impossible. They, on their part, have consistently demanded more money and more privileges, never more work. But, however useless they may have been in the past they cannot be ignored, and there is no reason why, if they take the opportunities offered them, they should not be as invaluable parts of the administration as Chiefs have been and are elsewhere today. It is a big "if," I admit, and involves a complete change of heart on the part of the Chiefs, such as can hardly be hoped from them at once, but it is an "if" which cannot be avoided and must be faced. You must lead the horse to the water, even though you cannot make him drink. A clue to their future conduct will be afforded by their reaction to such orders as Government may pass on this report. Will the Chiefs cheerfully accept such orders for the good of themselves and their people, or will they make yet another addition to the dreary series of memorials?

My proposals fall into two parts.- (2)

First, I propose that they should be relieved of certain tasks to which, as the past had shown, neither their status nor character and upbringing fit them.

Secondly, I propose that they should be offered certain duties such as will benefit them as Chiefs, such as no one can carry out better than can a Chief, and such as Chiefs are performing to the enhancement of their own reputation, the good of their people, and the assistance of Government. In

addition, I propose not only that the ample emoluments they at present enjoy should suffer no diminution so long as the Chiefs justify their existence by carrying out the duties assigned to them, but that they be granted such additional marks of distinction as their future position will demand. ↩

COLLECTION OF JHUM TAX.

Under the present system the Chiefs collect the jhum tax through the mauza headmen, who retain 25% as their commission. The Chiefs then pay their jama, which is 25% of the tax less certain remissions, to Government, keeping the remaining 50%. The first duty of which I consider the Chiefs should be relieved is the collection of the jhum tax. This is by far the most important proposal I have to make, and the foundation upon which I have based my hopes and my schemes. My grounds for this proposal are various. Much of my report has been directed to showing that the collection of the jhum tax is the duty of a tax farmer, and in no way that of a Chief as such; that the tax is an alien thing, and that the income which the Chiefs draw from it is nothing but stereotyped loot, first gathered under threat of intervention by an alien power, and condoned by time. This discussion was only intended to show the position of the Chiefs in its true perspective, and I have only dealt with the matter at length (3) because no situation can be judged until it is analysed. I do not wish to stress this point as a reason for believing the Chiefs now of the collection of the jhum tax. Their share of it was undoubtedly originally the proceeds of sheer extortion but the practice has equally certainly been condoned by time. They have for years regarded their share as a perfectly legitimate source of income, and two of them have been brought up as wards of the British Government to expect and enjoy it as a rightful heritage. To turn now and say that they have all along been collecting it in sin would be unthinkably unjust.

The grounds for my proposal are other than this, and are set forth below:-

(1) Under the present system the Chiefs are always in a state of financial uncertainty. They do not know whether their next jama will be increased or not, and they are ever on the look out for new sources of income. This leads to undignified appeals for financial concessions, entirely unbecoming persons of the status they claim, and to what can

only be described as wrangles between them and Government about that most sordid of all subjects – money. My proposal is to give them assured incomes dependent only on the carrying out of duties well within their capacities.

(2) As long as they collect the tax, well nigh every administrative reform affects or may affect the Chiefs' incomes. This places in their way a temptation which few men could withstand, and it makes it practically impossible for them to give unbiased advice on any change proposed. A perusal of old files reveals ample examples. Plough cultivation, which has immensely (4) increased the wealth of the Hill Tracts, was at first actively opposed and later ignored by the Chiefs, simply because they thought (wrongly as it happens) that it would entice away a certain number of jhumiyas, from whom they got more profit than they did from plough cultivators (Vide Hunter's Statistical account p.92) [Hunter 1876:92]. An attempt was made to buy their co-operation by the monetary concessions granted them under the Rules of 1881 [Cotton 1892, in: Selections 1929:237 ff.]. The price proved too low for their tastes and was raised by the Rules of 1892. Even this did not prove enough, and their commission was later again raised. Again, the khas mahals which were proposed in 1868 as a refuge for those persons who preferred not to live under the control of chiefs to whom they owed no ancestral allegiance were abolished by the Rules of 1892. This was a retrograde step which merely added to the Chiefs' incomes and gave them as unwilling subjects not only those who had moved to these mahals as places of refuge from their oppression, but people such as the Khyengs, who, without being consulted on the subject at all, found themselves compelled by order of Government to exchange immemorial independence for the control of a Chief of an alien race. Again in his letter No. 1335 R. of the 4th July 1925 the Commissioner [Roy 1925, in: Selections 1929:485 ff.] says he cannot advocate an insurance fund for the benefit of jhumiyas because the Chiefs, since their elimination from the agency for the collection of plough rents, are in a hostile mood and might misrepresent the nature of the fund.

One more example will suffice. When asked his opinion regarding the re-settlement of the jhum tax in (5) 1925 the Chakma Chief recommended that the tax should be increased, giving as a reason "the rise in the price of all necessaries" which had let Government to increase the salaries of its

employees, and which made it “advisable that his income should also be increased so as to allow him to keep pace with the increasing economic difficulties.” He is the richest man in the district, and if he feels the pinch of rising prices, what will be the effect on the poor jhumiya of the same increased cost of living combined with a 20% rise in taxation imposed with no other object than that of giving the chief money to squander? This objection he curtly forestalls with the remark that the increase of taxation “will not be felt by the people.” Such biased advice is neither helpful to Government nor creditable to the Chief. My proposal is to remove the temptation to give such advice in the future by making the incomes of the Chiefs independent of reassessments, reforms, or administrative changes.

This ground for a change from the present system I cannot but regard as overwhelmingly cogent. Unless it be made, any efforts directed towards progressive administration for the good of the people are liable to be hampered if the Chiefs think that there is the least chance of their financial position suffering from them. Of course, advice from a Chief which is obviously not disinterested can be ignored, but for a Chief repeatedly to give advice which he knows to be only as “try-on,” and for Government to be compelled on every occasion to disregard it makes all mutual confidence and co-operation impossible. Further, even if a Chief’s advice be ignored and some reform which seems to be against his own financial interests be introduced in the face of his (6) opposition he will, as has happened in the past, attempt to make it unworkable in the hope that it will be withdrawn in despair, and his success is likely to be the greater the greater be his influence, and consequently, if that influence were rightly directed, his potential power for good.

Were these first two grounds the only ones which could be advanced for the transfer of the collection of the jhum tax from the Chiefs, I should feel amply justified in advocating it. But there are other strong grounds. (3) My third reason is the oppression and extortion connected with it. This is the reason which would appeal most strongly to the ordinary villager, and I say without hesitation the every jhumiya in the district would welcome the change I advocate. From personal information derived direct from the people I have satisfied myself that this oppression and extortion is really serious.

Each chief has his own methods; as recently as April 1924 the Bohmong was reprimanded for demanding an unjustified abwab along with the jhum tax. Unabashed he is still trying to realise money to which he has no right. This year he issued written notices to headmen to say that if one family has two separate jhums in the same mauza they must pay double tax. This is of course quite illegal. At the same time he issued orders that all persons who had remission of tax should send in to his punyaha (ceremonial reception of taxes) a hazar, a chicken and a bottle of liquor. The hazar expected was from Re. 1/- to Rs. 3/-, so that the Bohmong loses little by remitting (7) revenue, the only loss being shared by Government and the headmen. Not only does he do this, but he sells remission of revenue. This complaint was a bitter one, and one which I heard wherever I went his circle. No man may have remission of revenue who does not get a written order from the Chief to that effect, and for such an order the Chiefs charges anything from Rs. 30 to Rs. 40. This is keenly resented, for though the pernicious practice of selling remissions of taxation was introduced before his time the present Bohmong has more than doubled the price. Even a widow, who is by custom excused from payment of the tax, still has to pay it unless she can raise the money to buy remission. A karbari (village headman) is also entitled to remission by custom and mauza headmen complain that they have to pay their karbaris' tax themselves since the Chief insists on getting either the tax or the price of remission, and the karbaris refuse to pay a tax for which they are not liable. Besides this the mauza headmen have to pay hazar to the Chief when they bring in the tax, and even Rs.3 to his staff for the receipt. If any jhumiya fails to pay his tax the Chief does not go to the trouble of formal proceedings against him. Instead a "dhamai" (das-holder) is sent out, who sells the man up and gets what he can for himself and the Chief. In one case I noticed a poor widow, who had naturally been unable to purchase an order of remission, was sold up. She had practically nothing in the world, and all the dhamai got was a rupee for himself. The dhamais are nothing but a permanent staff of professional bullies, and are a pest and (8) terror to the circle. They are paid low wages which they supplement as best as they can; they insult the headmen and loot what they can get, while nothing can be done to them since they are the chosen vessels of the Chief [Stevens 1924, 25. January 1924 (a): in: Selections 1929:463 f.; Stevens 1924 b, in: Selections 1929:464 ff.; Clayton 1922, in:

Selections 1929:468; Hopkyns 1924, in: Selections 1929:469]. I consider they should be disbanded at once.

The Chakma Chief is not the bluff brigand the Bohmong is, and his methods are less direct, though no less effective. He prefers to use the headmen of his circle as his instruments of extortion. For instance in December 1925 he demanded through the headmen Rs.4 a house from all in his circle, both jhumiyas and plough cultivators, as a contribution towards the expense of his son's weddings. Since he inspires very little love or loyalty many refused to pay, though a few did probably pay willingly. He therefore this year issued demands for what he is pleased to call "arrears of marriage subscription." Headmen whom I saw were in great trouble saying that if they do not get the money out of the cultivators and pay it in, the money they pay in as jhum tax will be credited to the Chief's marriage subscription account, and they will have the arrears of marriage subscription debited to them as arrears of jhum tax. On such the Chief charges 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ % interest, without any legal justification at all. His accounts against the headmen of his circle, which I have seen, pass the wit of man to understand, and it is clear that according to them the average headman is always in debt to the Chief, and always must be [Roy 1925, in: Selections 1929:495]. The Chief persists in acting as if he had sublet each mauza to the headman on a fixed jama, and tries to make the headmen responsible for the amount, running him in his own court for whatever he assumes to be the arrears. This practice was commented on by the Commissioner in his letter (9) No.1335 R of 4th July 1925 [Roy 1925, in: Selections 1929:495], and is now forbidden by the Rules, but the Chief still attempts to realise old arrears in this way, and his accounts make it quite impossible to discover what arrears are old and what are new. I have seen cases in which headman A having been dismissed for misappropriation of taxes collected, the Chief has claimed the money misappropriated by A from headman B his successor. Unless headman B opposes the claim (thereby running the risk of incurring the enmity of the Chief) he must either pay the money out of his own pocket or squeeze it out of the jhumiyas who have already paid their tax once to headman B [must be A]. With claims of this sort and mysterious additions of interest the running accounts kept by the Chief show such chaos that no headman can either get clear or know for what year he is in arrears. One of the latest orders of the Chakma Chief is that no widow is

to be granted remission of tax, though widows are expressly exempt by custom, as recently certified by the Chief in writing to the Deputy Commissioner, in accordance with Rule 42 (5). The reason he gives is that he cannot afford to grant them remission, since Government allows him only 10% for remissions. The Commissioner's order in his letter No.2258 R of the 12th November 1925 to the Deputy Commissioner laying down that the exemption of persons belonging to the exempted classes is automatic are merely ignored by the Chief, though his attention has been drawn to them. Needless to say such persons as his khishas, who are his agents and spies in the villages are granted remission without demur; it is the widows (10) who are too feeble to protest effectively, who are penalized. His staff, too, makes money out of the jhum tax. His tauzi with its 46 headings (!) cannot be filled up by any headman who is not a fairly skilled clerk, and the Chief's staff fill it up for the headmen and charge absolutely exorbitant sums for so doing. The rate given me by headmen was Rs. 7 for the smallest tauzi.

The MONG Raja is too feeble and ineffective to be oppressive, though his staff make what they can. He has been trying to make the headmen realise jhum tax from persons who do not jhum, but without great success. Such demands as he makes for money he usually makes in person, often to find them treated with the contempt they deserve. There is of course no objection whatever to the payment of abwabs by persons who wish to give them. What is objectionable is that the jhum tax collecting machinery is used to extort money from persons who are neither liable nor willing to pay it.

(4) The present system makes impossible the position of the headmen upon whom depends the mauza system to which Government is definitely committed. As the Commissioner says in his letter No. 1310 R of the 5th July 1924 "the longer we maintain the Chiefs between the Government as landlords and the headmen, the more difficult it will be to get the best work out of the headmen who admittedly are the most important factor in the revenue system" [Cook 1924, in: Selections 1929:470]. No man can serve two masters, especially when one master looks to the good of the people and is always liable to transfer, and the other thinks only of his own pocket and is (11) permanent. It is too much to expect that a headman should definitely burn his boats by refusing to aid a Chief in his extortion and so offending him, for the Deputy

Commissioner who would support and protect him is to be transferred sooner or later, a stranger hampered by lack of local knowledge taking his place. The Chiefs' attitude towards the headmen system is clear from the candidates they often support, bad characters who would be nothing but tools in their hands.

(5) The change I suggest would also allow certain harsh anomalies to be done away with. For instance the tribes such as the Kukis and Tipperas live on the crests of ranges, jhumming the slopes on either side. It sometimes happens therefore, where a range forms the boundary between two circles, that a man's house may be in one circle and his jhum in another. Under Rule 42(6) he has to pay double tax, viz., one to the Chief in whose circle he jhums and another to the Chief within whose circle his house is. This rule may be an easy way of avoiding disputes between Chiefs but it is unfair on the jhumiya, who pays double for single value received.

(6) Much needed relief cannot be granted under the present system because it would directly affect the incomes of the Chiefs. In times of scarcity total or partial remission of jhum tax is an obvious remedy. Were this applied, the Chiefs would protest on the ground that it involved direct loss to them, just as during the scarcity of 1916-17 the Chakma Chief objected to the remission of plough rents in parts of his circle. The present system, too, is (12) insufficiently elastic to admit of temporary relief to persons who may urgently need it. I have myself frequently had to grant individuals remission of jhum tax for a year on the ground of temporary illness, damage to crops by wind or hail, destruction of crops by elephants, ruination of sown land by landslips and so on. Such remissions are never granted by Chiefs but would be granted by Government, the Deputy Commissioner being empowered, as he is elsewhere, to grant them promptly and without reference.

(7) The most cherished mark of appreciation shown by Government of the fine work done by the Naga Labour Corps in France was the granting to all its members of remission of jhum tax for life. The financial benefit to the individual is small, but the glory is life-long. No such reward could be given here without strong protests from the Chiefs who would lose more money than would Government. That the relieving of the Chiefs of the duty of collecting jhum tax would be immensely popular there is not the shadow of doubt. It is equally certain that it would be legal. Government

has always rightly maintained that the Chiefs have no rights in the soil and are only jhum-tax settlement holders during the pleasure of the Government. I have already quoted the important resolution of 1873 which lays down that Government recognises in the Chiefs only a delegated power to collect the tax on its behalf. Again Government Order No.1581 of the 24th July 1878 defines the position of the Chiefs as belonging to "a superior class of tahsildar" [Mackenzie 1878, in: Selections 1887:54]. This is unquestionably the correct view of their position as jhum tax collectors, which differs in no way from that of the smaller settlement holders. These had (13) their settlements abolished solely on the grounds of administrative convenience, and apparently without compensation. Such compensation as I recommend should be given to the Chiefs is only proposed in view of the special position they have acquired. Such claims as they have to it is a moral and in no way a legal one.

It remains to consider when this change should take place. In my opinion it should be brought about at once and should not await the end of the present settlement. The longer it is postponed the longer will reforms be blocked, and oppression and extortion continue, while the Chiefs will almost certainly attempt to make hay while the sun shines by squeezing their people harder than ever. On general principles too, if a thing ought to be done the sooner it is done the better.

There seems to be no legal bar to an immediate change. The old settlements have, I believe, always been regarded as revocable at will, and the first thing that caught my eye on glancing through an old list in original was a note to this effect opposite the entry of the Chakma Chief's jama. It is only of recent years that a ten years settlement has become the rule. The jhum tax settlements with the Chiefs never seem to have done more than bind Government not to raise the jama during the period of settlement. Even the Chakma Chief has himself shown only within the last few months that he sees nothing sacrosanct in the ten years settlement, for, fearing that some reforms inimical to his financial interests might follow the recent report of the Conservator of Forests he wrote to the Deputy Commissioner offering to relinquish the present settlement and substitute a perpetual one on the same jama. If one party to a settlement can relinquish it at will so can the other, and the Chakma Chief regards it terminable on one ground (14) he cannot deny that I is

equally so on another. Finally it is hardly necessary to remind the Chiefs that any income which Government might grant them in view of their status and in return for services rendered would be entirely on the good will of Government. Should they therefore obstinately continue to put their own interests before those of their people, and should they, by maintaining on legal grounds that the settlement cannot now be brought to an end, succeed in delaying a reform which is clearly most necessary, they can hardly expect lavish treatment in 1935.

I am aware that the change I advocate is contrary to the opinion expressed by his Excellency Sir John Kerr in April 1925 that the collection of the jhum tax had been in the Chiefs' hands from time immemorial and should not now be taken out of them. I feel however that possibly His Excellency had not full information as to the true nature of the tax at his disposal. Unless the change be made I feel that no increase in the usefulness of the Chiefs be looked for, and if their usefulness be not increased there can be no grounds for granting them new dignities and privileges. The possibility of this serious step being shown to be necessary was clearly foreseen in No.6 of the Proceedings of August 1926 on the re-settlement of the jhum-tax. [↔](#)

CHIEFS' COURTS.

My second proposal is that the Chiefs be relieved of their Magisterial powers as Chiefs, retaining their powers as headmen of their khas mauzas, and that powers as honorary Magistrates for the trial of criminal, civil and tribal disputes be granted to any individual Chief who at any time, after due enquiry, proves fit to hold them. With the possible exception of the Bohmong none of the present Chiefs show any sign whatever of being fit (15) to exercise such powers.

For the last ten years, the state of the Chiefs' Courts has from time to time been noticed, but the question has never been seriously tackled. In 1916 the Chiefs asked for increased powers but were told that this could not be considered unless they put their houses in order and submitted to inspection, vide Government letter No.881 P.D. of the 23rd May 1917. Nothing was done however to carry out either of these conditions. In 1918 Mr. Ascoli found the Courts still unreformed [cf. Ascoli 1918, § 117 ff, p. 86 ff.]. As a result of his report, the powers of the Chiefs were more clearly defined. It is only recently however that any proper inspection of

the Chiefs' Courts has been carried out; indeed that of the Chakma Chief's Court had not been completed when I arrived at Rangamati. It is ten years ago now that the Chiefs were first urged to improve their methods, but they have done nothing. I have seen all three Courts and am voicing the opinion I heard expressed in the villages when I say that they are scandalously oppressive. Endless delays and endless extraction of money were the grounds of complaint everywhere. Fortunately the Courts are not busy, as the honest man who has a grievance which he wishes promptly settled avoids them like plague; the emphasis with which one sometimes hears an opinion expressed on the Chiefs' Courts is almost amusing. They are ordinary only resorted to by three classes of persons –

(a) inhabitants of the Chief's mauza for whom it is their headman's Court;

(b) persons who have claims which they think another Court might not recognise, or who hope for special treatment, and who, themselves being bear at hand, know they can harass a distant defendant by endless adjournments with their attendant journeys; and

(c) persons whose tribal disputes are transferred by the Deputy Commissioner to a Chief for a settlement. (16) ↵

THE CHAKMA CHIEF'S COURT.

The Chakma Chief had objected strongly to a proper inspection by the Deputy Commissioner, and in view of what the inspection revealed I am not surprised that this attitude. There is nothing of the swift, patriarchal methods about his procedure, which is unbelievable dilatory, and this in spite of the emphasis laid by the Rules on the expeditious disposal of cases. Cases are often adjourned twenty times or more, and go on month after month, in some cases involving journeys on foot totalling over fifteen hundred miles for each accused. The end of such a case is often a fine of Rs. 5 or less, unless the Chief has managed to order someone to forfeit bail, which he pockets. But this is not the end of the expenses of the parties. There are in addition process fees payable to the Chiefs, living expenses while on the journey and in Rangamati, and never-ending petty payments to the Chief's Bengali staff who charge a fee on no fixed scale every time they put pen to paper. The Chief makes no effort to be present on the dates he fixed for hearing, and records show that he is often absent

three or four times running on dates fixed. In one case alone at least nine out of some thirty adjournments were due to his absence. More may have been due to this reason but this I could not ascertain as, following the practice of his Court, clerks had granted adjournments without recording any grounds at all. This practice of endless adjournments is in itself gross oppression, and is further quite unnecessary. I have myself tried thousands of hillmen's cases of an exactly similar type, and doubt if more than 10% have ever gone beyond one hearing. Not only (17) are the most frivolous complaints admitted (since the more cases the more money comes in) but the Court is habitually used by the Chief's near relations and office staff. They are all moneylenders and can obtain decrees with machine-like regularity, and with no trouble to themselves since the Chief allows those of them who find it inconvenient to come, to appear by agent on the ground that they are "respectable gentlemen," the defendant having to appear in person. Comment is needless. Worse still is the practice of complainants to carry on their own cases; a not infrequent complainant is the Chief's brother-in-law Krishna Kishore Dewan, who deals with cases during the Chief's frequent absences in Chittagong, so that in one case in which he was both complainant and, for the time being, judge, he was able to order the attachment of the defendant's property for his own benefit. The Chief also does not hesitate to act simultaneously as complainant and judge, and without any consideration of evidence attaches his own sub-tenants' property for such rent and damages as he chooses to claim. In one case he claimed in his own Court and awarded himself 25% damages for rent only a few days in arrears. Not only does he pocket all criminal fines which he levies, but also nearly the whole of the damages he awards in tribal cases. For instance, he takes 75% of the damages due to the injured party in divorce cases. This is grossly unfair and is improper and contrary to custom. The whole essence of a trial by custom is that the only question to be decided is what damages, if any, are payable by one party to the other; all thoughts of prisons and an external power which can extract and take fines have to be entirely dismissed from the mind. This is the immemorial method I have found (18) elsewhere and the one which I have adopted in the countless cases I have heard. My position has been not that of a Court, but of a mediator between two parties. ↩

THE BOHMONG'S COURT.

What few records the Bohmong keeps seem to show that his Court is the least bad of the three. But certain things need drastic change. He is far more prompt in settling cases than are the other two Chiefs, and he seems to settle tribal cases with the custom of the tribes concerned, and to award such damages as are due to the aggrieved parties instead of pocketing them himself. But the costs he allows are altogether excessive. Of many things too no record is kept. For instance he undoubtedly realises rent most harshly through his staff of dhamais, but there is nothing on paper. In Civil cases he admits claims on unregistered bonds bearing excessive interest. The distance of Bandarban from any registration office may excuse the lack of formality, but one cannot excuse the claiming of interest in excess of Rule 7. Many claims are recorded as "admitted", but the papers containing the admissions and decorated with thumb impression fill me with the utmost suspicion, since I have myself seen that the Bohmong is not above obtaining thumb impression of the edges of blank sheets for other purposes. Better though the Court may be than those of the other Chiefs, it is bad enough; and this is particularly to be deplored since there is no Subdivisional Officer in his circle to whom aggrieved persons can apply. (19) ↩

THE MONG RAJA'S COURT.

Finally there is the Mong Raja's Court. The inspection of this gave me a little trouble as, with masterly inactivity, the Chief failed for some hours to produce any registers at all. When they were eventually found they revealed little work done. There are no criminal records at all, nor is there anything to show that in any case of any kind he has either heard a witness or recorded a decision. Incredible though it may seem he admitted to me that he had neither heard a witness nor come to any judicial decision for three or four years, at any rate. This is partly due to his laziness and incompetence, and partly due to his prolonged periods of absence from his circle. Such cases as are brought in his Court are invariably recorded as being withdrawn, compromised, or simply dropped. Few villagers apply. One such told me that a case in the Chief's Court would drag on for two years and would involve an expenditure of Rs. 400 to Rs. 500 in bribes and expenses. This is probably an exaggeration but it shows the opinion held of the Chief's Court and

explains why moneylenders find a complaint lodged there a useful method of squeezing money out of their victims. The unfortunate persons sued cannot appeal as no decision is ever reached – all cases remain indefinitely sub judice till they are withdrawn or compromised. Relatives and clerks of the Chief use his Court as do other moneylenders, and he admits claims of any sort, whether on unregistered bonds or barred by limitation. If the case be not withdrawn it is “compromised” on a document which often includes outrageous interest. A poor defendant finds it cheaper to admit defeat than to go on with a case which he knows will never be decided on its merits, and in which his statement will never be recorded. I could find no record (20) of any trial at all. I trust the above firsthand descriptions will suffice to show that the present Chiefs are unfit to exercise the judicial powers they now hold. A good Chief would make a good honorary Magistrate and the time may come when it will be desirable to confer those powers on one or more Chiefs. But at present the Chiefs should in my opinion only exercise the judicial powers of headmen.

The changes I suggest would cause no inconvenience. Apart from cases deliberately lodged in their Courts with the object of harassing the opposite party, most of the Chiefs’ cases come from their own khas mauzas. These they would continue to deal with, with the ordinary powers of headmen. The Deputy Commissioner and his Subdivisional Officers would themselves settle tribal disputes brought to them on appeal from headmen. Very few are brought, largely, I think because of the practice of transferring them to the Chiefs for disposal. This is undoubtedly unpopular, because of the expense and delay it involves for the parties. While I was in Rangamati a man whose case had been transferred to the Chakma Chief months before came in to see if something could not be done to bring it to some sort of conclusion; one party, exasperated at the way he had been needlessly dragged to Court time after time, had assaulted the other party. Further I frankly think it most desirable that the Deputy Commissioner and his Subdivisional Officers should try tribal cases. Nothing teaches one custom so well as cases turning on it, and knowledge of custom is valuable beyond all words to anyone administering a backward tract. A man too who brings a tribal dispute to the Deputy Commissioner presumably does so because

he wants it settled by him, and a British subject would seem to have a right to have his case tried in a British Court. (21) ↩

DUTIES TO BE SUBSTITUTED.

Relief from tax-collecting and Court work is not intended to give the Chiefs time for idleness. Rather it is meant to leave them free for other duties which, if properly performed, will keep them fully occupied. To describe these duties is not easy; to use general terms is to incur the charge of vagueness, while to be precise is to risk seeming to omit what is not specified. It will be well therefore to give a broad description first and then to make clear my meaning by definite suggestions, which are intended as examples only. A Chief has a duty towards his people and a duty towards Government. By leading the one and advising the other he can prove himself a strong link in the chain of administration. The methods followed in Sarawak, which has an Indonesian population, may serve as an example. Speaking of the almost miraculous progress which has been made without any undue disturbance of indigenous customs Mr. Hose says –

“but this result has been attained only by a carefully considered policy by which the people and their Chiefs are constantly kept in touch with the administrators by sympathy and consultation. In this way the co-operation of the people has been obtained in the Government of the country, and the leading Chiefs and influential men have thus been harnessed into the work of progress and responsibility.”

My experience has been precisely similar. To me Chiefs have been eyes, ears, hands and feet, keeping me closely informed of all that goes on, ever ready with sound advice, and, when such advice resulted in orders, conveying them with speed and seeing that they were carried out. They have been as ready to consult me as I have been to consult them, and I could know that their voice was the voice of their people. For they were the leaders of their people, and in that lay their value. For instance when Volunteers were wanted for (22) the Naga Labour Corps for France there was no issuing of notices which no one would have understood. Instead the Chiefs were called in and talked to, and their questions answered. Then they, full of enthusiasm, went home and brought men. They did not send their men, but insisted on accompanying them or, if they were too

old, that a relation should go. It was all the natural procedure, and there was no shortage of recruits, but without the co-operation of the Chiefs the result would have been very different. Again it was decided to introduce irrigated terraces among the Sema tribe who had outgrown their available jhum land. It was the Chiefs to whom the project was proposed, and it was they who first made terraces. Any other method would have seemed unnatural to the people, and the opposition which such a novel method of cultivation naturally encountered from a conservative tribe would never have been overcome. As it is, persistent effort backed by the co-operation of the Chiefs has made the scheme a great success, and the Semas are now definitely saved. For such work the Naga Chief gains little in the shape of material reward. His principal rewards are the social precedence and deference accorded him and the satisfaction found in the exercise of authority. The Chiefs of the Hill Tracts will, it is proposed, continue to enjoy their large emoluments as long as they act as Chiefs. A good Chief must [~~needs~~] possess knowledge and influence of a kind which can come to no official. I propose therefore that they be asked, in return for what they receive, to place their knowledge and influence unreservedly at the disposal of Government, and to give continual and active assistance and advice, both on (23) the broader questions of general policy, and on all those smaller details which together make up the administration of the district. This is their natural duty and one which no one has such opportunities as they have of carrying out well. ↵

EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC DUTIES.

The duties I have broadly outlined above are, as I have tried to show, inherent in the office of Chief. As examples of how they can be exercised are not far to seek in this district where there are many problems calling for the immediate and combined attention of the Chiefs. The short list I give is, of course, in no way exhaustive, and could be extended indefinitely. ↵

AGRICULTURE.

(1) The first and main problem is that of agriculture. Since it is the sole means of livelihood of the vast majority of the people and the source from which the Chiefs have always drawn their very considerable incomes it is only right that they, if they wish to justify their claim to be the leaders of

the people, should take far more active interest in it than they have hitherto done. An Experimental Farm has been started at Rangamati on their representation of the difficulties of the jhumiya arising from the deterioration of the jhums, but up to date they have taken no interest in it. Close though it is to his home the Chakma Chief has never visited it, and Santals have to be hired to work it because none of the hillmen for whose benefit it was founded will condescend to such a menial occupation. Agriculture here is without doubt in a parlous state. There is practically no more available plough land, and the greater part of the people must always, as now, live by jhuming. Even (24) plough cultivators make small jhums in addition if they find suitable land near their fields. Important though jhuming is it never seems to have been considered scientifically. Always in papers I seem to find a sort of implication that it is a makeshift mode of cultivation, unworthy of serious attention. Lewin even hoped eventually to stop it. This is one of the few mistakes to be found in the records he has left us, and one must blame the times in which he lived; Englishmen do not jhum and in the sixties and seventies of last century English customs, were considered model ones, and we were very busy "raising" savages to our own standard by the distribution of flannel waistcoats and chemises, and in trying in general to destroy their culture and substitute for it a caricature of our own.

Jhuming is very far from being a makeshift business. In certain places, of which the hills of this district are one, it is the only possible method of cultivation. Its only real rival for hillsides of any steepness is the method of irrigated terraces, but this requires certain conditions of soil and water supply which are not found here. Dry terraces in this sandy soil would not, I fear, retain enough natural moisture to give a good crop, and would produce a soil as quickly exhausted as that of an ordinary jhum.

It is also an inherently good method of cultivation. For some years I have lived among a thick and prosperous population supported entirely by jhuming where the villages are all large and permanent, and where the same hillsides have been cultivated for on unknown number of generations without any sign of deterioration. (25) In the Chittagong Hill Tracts the slopes are quite definitely being jhumed out. The same land is being jhumed too often and the trees left are insufficient for regeneration. This is plain to the eye. Never have I seen such bad jhums as I have seen here. It is sometimes argued that figures seem to show there is no

shortage of land. If one subtracts the forest reserves, the plough land and the estimated area under periodic jhum from the total area of the district one finds that about half the total area is left. It is considered incredible that such a large portion of the district should be useless for any kind of cultivation. Observation however leads me to regard the figures as substantially correct; there are very large areas entirely jhummed out, and rendered useless – possibly for ever, certainly for many years; there is a large area consisting of the banks and beds of rivers and streams; there is steep ground; there is grass land; there are blocks neglected because they are large enough for one or two year's jhumming, but not enough for a rotation; there are a few areas definitely abandoned for one reason or another; there are odd bits of land everywhere; there are villages, gardens, paths and roads; all these added together might well make up half the district. I am of the opinion that the area of jhum land required to support a given number of persons has been greatly underestimated e.g., by the Commissioner in his letter No. 1335 R of the 4th July 1925 [Roy 1925, in: Selections 1929:485 ff.].

Further, the weed *aggeratum* which made its appearance here some 30 years ago has spread with astonishing speed. The land here is not as it was a generation ago, and it may be that new methods are needed to meet a new situation. I (26) have in an appendix indicated what seem to be suitable lines of experiment. The experiments suggested are perfectly simple and I would suggest that each Chief be asked to have similar ones carried out over a series of years near his own home and under his own personal supervision. The land he can get for nothing and the labour will only cost him a very small sum which he can well afford for the good of his people. To make each a small grant would be an insult to men of their means, and would only introduce that atmosphere of the cash ledger which has detracted so much from the smoothness of their relations with Government in the past. If the Chiefs take up this work with vigour there will be created a valuable little experimental station in each circle, which it will be one of the principal duties of the District Agricultural Officer to inspect, and the Chiefs will have personal experience and knowledge to assist them in pressing upon the adoption of any innovation of proved utility. What is wanted to spread improved methods is persuasion, not orders. It should be the aim of all concerned to carry the reform through without any orders at all. Orders are easily passed, and persuasion is

uphill work, but orders will inevitably create suspicion and will be interpreted as aimed at the restriction rather than the improvement of jhuming.

(2) Another problem is that of jungle produce. Bamboos give a good jhum, but repeated burning kills them out, and bamboos are commercially valuable. On the other hand a man cannot substitute bamboo cutting for jhuming as a means of livelihood, or he will find himself in sore straits when the bamboos seed and die over large areas. Also bamboos are only commercially valuable only where they can be extracted with reasonable ease; they are not everywhere worth preserving. It might be possible to reserve (27) definitely a strip of fixed width along either bank of certain streams down which they could be floated. These strips should be reserved for the sole use of the inhabitants of the mauza in which they are situated, since it is they who have given up the land for them and will look after them. There must be no question of the Forest Department giving passes for outsiders to cut from them, or of their controlling them in any way. Again, the Bengali competes with the jhumiya by cutting, on the strength of a pass from the Forest Department, bamboos on land required for jhuming. Bengalis are particularly troublesome because they do not select bamboos, but fell an area clean, and, as anyone who has ever had anything to do with bamboos knows, a clump which is entirely cut down often dies. Might they not be required to cut from places shown him by the mauza or village headman? The Chiefs could be asked to find out exactly what is happening in their circles and advise. They could later assist in enforcing any measures decided on.

(3) There are also additional sources of income for the agriculturalist to be looked for and experimented with. Lac, which is such a source of wealth to the Assam jhumiya ought to do very well here. I know of no source of seed lac near enough for it to be brought direct to Rangamati, but some could be brought to Chittagong and set there, and from there rushed up in the day to Rangamati at the first hatching. Once it was established at the farm the local supply would be assured, and, some Mikirs could be obtained to demonstrate the method of cultivation. This, though eventually most lucrative, is tedious in its early stages, and it would be slow work persuading (28) the local jhumiya to undertake it. Here again it will lie in the power of the Chiefs to do most valuable work

both by exhortation and remonstrance at their own experimental stations.

Another plant which might be tried is hill pan. It is grown on land too steep for jhuming, and is of considerable commercial value. I know Naga villages which make at least half their income out of it. What little is grown here seems to be of an inferior, coarse kind. The best hill pan is regarded as superior to that grown in panbaris in the plains.

(4) Cattle and buffalos are now kept in numbers far in excess of those required for ploughing, and are nothing short of a pest. They are left untended and do a vast amount of damage to crops on the unfenced jhums, for, aggeratum having smothered all tree growth, the jhumiya can find no stakes at hand wherewith to make fences. Hardly less is the damage they do to young bamboos, but this is apt to pass unnoticed, since no one will bring a suit for damage to no-man's property. Buffaloes, further, not only damage crops and bamboos, but in time make jungle useless for jhuming; there are places in Manipur State laid completely waste by them. Here the cattle problem is becoming really serious, and in this too the Chiefs might advise and assist. ↵

CATTLE BREEDING.

The cross of gayal with cattle gives a heavy beast, and crosses are themselves fertile. As the hill tribes with which I am familiar do not drink milk I am only familiar with the use of the these hybrids for beef. But there is no reason why they should not give good milk and be useful for the plough. The Chiefs could make experiments. They could also be given stud bulls to look after and hire out. ↵

EDUCATION.

The Chiefs do not at present concern themselves in any way (29) with the education of their people. The Chakma Chief used to be a member of the Committee of Rangamati High School, but resigned after the issue of Government's order on the plough rents. Yet once they have been brought to realise their position and the true needs of their people there is no reason why they should not give useful advice.

It is rather pathetic to remember that Macaulay supported the arguments in his Minute by pointing to the civilizing influence which the teaching of Western European culture had had on Tartar Russia! Yet even

now education is only too rarely a “drawing-out” of what is already in the people who are being taught, and often means nothing but thrusting down the throats of one race the indigestible mental food of another. To speak the blunt truth and to say that the only conceivable legitimate object of education is to make those taught more fitted for their environment is to risk being accused of uttering a platitude which tactlessly omits all mention of Matriculation examinations and University degrees.

What the Hill Tracts require is far more and far better primary education imparted through men of the district, and the abolition or drastic reform of Rangamati High School, the only High School in the district. Mr. De in the last paragraph of his report sent with his letter No. 191 T.G. of the 12th January 1917 [De 1917, in: Selections 1929:364, 368] says that the present method of education here is wrong; the Matriculation examination of Calcutta University is not a desirable goal; where the conditions differ from the plains, schools should differ. Mr. Ascoli again, in paragraph 27 of his report appeals for a complete change in the educational system [Ascoli 1918, § 27, p. 22]. Though no notice has been taken of these considered opinions I can but strongly endorse them, and the view of the present Inspector of Schools, with whom I have discussed the matter, agrees in general with mine.

The staff of the Rangamati High School is almost entirely (30) Bengali and the teaching wholly so. The boys have everything done for them and refuse even to keep their own compound and quarters tidy. The more respectable the boy the thicker the cotton wool in which he is wrapped. For instance the sons of the Chakma Chief, the Civil Surgeon and the Head Master are excused all games rougher than Badminton. The technical class is a farce. The strapping youth who attend it are not expected to lift any plank which could be described as heavy and even asked that a menial might be employed to sharpen their tools for them. The magnum opus which a student submits as proof of his skill at the end of three years desultory training is usually either a badly made ruler or on inkstand. Far more importance is attached to the English class, where Rupert Brooke’s poems were being taught about the time I left Rangamati.

On this institution, which not only in no way fulfils the needs of the hillmen but does immense positive harm by inculcating idleness, a sum is

spent almost equal to that spent on all the Lower Primary Schools of the district put together. I would suggest that it be either abolished or entirely altered in character and made more like these Mission Schools in which boys are made to use their hands as well as their brains. Most of the construction and repairs could be done by the pupils after a little instruction; the wood work is very simple and the bamboo walls are only what the boys ought to help their fathers to make for their houses in the holidays. They should be taught carpentry by a practical carpenter and learn to turn out useful things. All weeding and clearing round the School should, of course, be done by them. Further the School should be linked with the Experimental Farm - an (31) important point - and what amount of jungle clearing, weeding and reaping is required there should be done by the boys under supervision, while they learnt meanwhile the why and wherefore of the experiments which are being carried out. If any boy considers this course of instruction too strenuous and beneath his dignity he can seek an education elsewhere.

It will be argued that the scheme would hamper preparation for Matriculation. I would meet that by ceasing to make Matriculation the goal. Hill boys cannot compete with Bengalis in the type of learning which Calcutta University demands and they and their parents have wasted much time and money in attempting to do so. Not only do they obtain no posts outside the district but they hold nothing approaching their share in it - simply because in filling posts the efficiency of candidates is judged by the Calcutta University examinations they have passed. Could not Government consider the case of this district solely on its merits and in selecting candidates waive hard and fast qualifications as has been done in backward tracts elsewhere? For instance in the Naga Hills Naga clerks are selected on general fitness, and compounders, by special order of Government, are trained in the hills and are not allowed to go down to the plains to be turned into foreigners. In the Hill Tracts some training might be devised for candidates for the Forest Department, for instance, as well as for other departments. If Government could banish from the mind the educational system of the plains of Bengal, where conditions are entirely different and sanction a special scheme suitable to the district, the High School would cease to be an alien institution and a gate leading to nowhere, and would become a place where hillmen could be trained to be useful to their own people. (32) ↵

EXCISE.

(5) Excise is another matter which demands their attention. Opium smuggling for instance, is rife in the Bohmong circle, but with the aid of the information he could doubtless collect, and the expulsion of foreigners who are known to be smugglers under a Rule such as I suggest later, much could be done to check it. ↵

GAME PRESERVATION.

(6) Game preservation is another subject which should appeal to them. No real interest ever seems to have been taken in this. Poaching has been universal for so long that very little is now left outside the forest reserves. But there is still a small stock of bison, sambhur, serow and barking deer, which would soon increase if game laws were strictly enforced. Frankly I consider the number of guns in the district altogether excessive and the amount of powder allowed to each licensee is exactly four times that which I have been accustomed to see permitted. The guns may nominally be held "for the protection of crops," in reality they are used for the destruction of game in and out of season. This assertion can easily and legally be tested by calling in all the guns for the months when there are no crops to be damaged. If this order be obeyed without a murmur I am wrong. Last, but not least, gunshot murders are unpleasantly frequent in this district. ↵

COMPULSORY LABOUR.

(7) Compulsory labour in the district also seems to require further regulation and re-organisation, and here too the Chiefs could help first with their advice, and later with their influence. I have ventured to make certain suggestions, based on my own experience, in an appendix attached to this report. ↵

COMMUNICATIONS.

(8) Communications might also engage the attention of the Chiefs. (33) By this I do not mean the simple task of asking for more roads to be made by the P.W.D. at Government expense. By far the greater volume of foot traffic is and always will be on village paths. These could be greatly improved. At present for instance, anyone who finds it convenient to do

so does not hesitate to block a path, apparently without any protest from those who use it - they meekly have to find the best way round they can. Further there are many streams which are unfordable after heavy rain. This temporarily isolates considerable areas and causes great inconvenience. Nowhere have I seen the cane suspension bridges stretched from tree to tree across streams with which I am so familiar and which have so often found invaluable. Things were not so in Lewin's time, for he speaks of the abundance of cane in the district, and of the bridges made of it (vide Wild Races of S.E. India p. 28) [Lewin 1870:28]. Now cane has been practically exterminated except in the forest reserves by the hillmen themselves, who, with their usual shortsighted eagerness for whatever they may want at the moment, have been in the habit of gathering the young shoots to eat as vegetables instead of letting the plants grow and seed. No cane means no bridges. To meet the shortage of cane required for bridges in one heavily jhumed area of the Naga Hills I established small cane reserves under the care of the Chiefs. The same might be done here, seed being obtained from the Forest Department. Once some cane has been grown the villagers could be put to make bridges by their own labour for their own use. ↩

CONCENTRATION.

The tendency is for some tribes in the Hill Tracts to split up into very small communities. This is only possible because British control has put an end to raids by enemies (34) from outside, so that mutual protection is no longer necessary. The motive which induces a man to go off and make a separate village with two or three companions is usually nothing more than a desire to avoid rendering either assistance or obedience to anyone. It is to be deplored from every point of view. Not only does it make any sort of control very difficult, but it is a comparatively modern innovation which tends to destroy the old village system, and also leads to haphazard and wasteful jhuming. In some areas I know it is definitely prohibited, but probably it would be difficult to enforce such orders here. In that case a graduated scale of jhum rent might be imposed, after consulting the Chiefs. This is a method of checking the splitting up of villages which obtains in some areas. I would suggest that an extra Rs.2 per house be levied on all villages of five houses and under, and Re.1 per house on all villages of less than eleven or more than five houses. This tax

would be in no wise unjust, for if a man did not want to pay it he would only have to attach himself to a village of reasonable size. [↩](#)

PROSPECTING LICENSES ETC.

(9) Nothing has given me more anxiety at various times than the question of granting prospecting licenses for oil and minerals in areas occupied by a primitive people. Arguments about “developing the resources of the Empire” are all very well, but what really often happens is that land which used to grow food for poor jhumiyas as is made to produce dividends for rich shareholders instead, the jhumiya being compelled to overwork more than ever the land which is left to him. Often jhuming has to be stopped not only on the land leased to the oil company, but on all land anywhere near it, so great is the risk of fire. Further the moral effect in a (35) district of a large number of highly paid single men is often forgotten, but is nevertheless sometimes revolting; I need not describe in detail what I know. I have always contended, not without success, that licenses and leases should not be granted just because they are asked for. In future the Chief concerned might be asked to advise on the desirability of granting any prospecting license applied for, and the Deputy Commissioner, without being formally bound by the Chief’s opinion, should hesitate before he overrides a recommendation to refuse such an application. Where land is taken up compensation should be paid, and here too the Chief should be consulted. All this district, outside the Reserved Forests, is treated as Unclassed State Forest, though, by some curious omission, all of it has not been so notified. What this term really means I have never been able to discover, but cases occur of compensation for land taken up being refused on the ground that it is State Forest. How a mere declaration can abolish the periodic jhuming and occupancy rights of the inhabitants of a district is difficult to grasp.

Even the few examples I have given of duties which might fall to the lot of the Chiefs would provide enough occupation to make them busier and far more useful than they are now, for it should always be insisted that what is wanted is the personal assistance of the Chief, and not that of someone sent as his deputy. Further it cannot be too clearly pointed out to them that their duties will not cease, but will only begin when they have given advice on some policy. It will be for them to assist materially in carrying out that policy, and they will be able to (36) achieve this only

by touring and personal inspection; the very worst method is that of serving written notices broadcast and leaving the crop to look after itself.



MONETARY COMPENSATION.

Though I am convinced for reasons I have attempted to make clear, that the jhum tax, being an alien thing, has nothing to do with ancient Chiefly rights, and that the share which the Chiefs keep represents nothing more or less than tribute which the old mahaldars wrongly extorted by the vicarious power of their overlords and never paid in, it would in my opinion be unfair to deprive them without warning and without a chance of earning it of money which we have so long allowed them to receive. My proposal therefore is that the whole of the jhum tax save the commission of the headmen be received by Government who would collect it through the mauza headmen, and that Government pay the Chiefs a yearly income not less than that which they now receive from it, this income being paid on the perfectly distinct understanding that while it will not fluctuate with jhum tax collections, it will be diminished or even cut off altogether if the Chiefs do not perform the simple and suitable duties which I have suggested for them. Obviously they cannot expect to be paid allowances equal to the salaries of high officials in return for nothing. If they will live among their people and work they will enjoy a position of wealth and dignity. If they cannot or will not be useful it is difficult to see what other course is open to Government than that of ceasing to pay them their allowances and dispensing with their services. Should things reach this stage Government might well cease to take the Chiefs' share from the jhumiyas, since the burden was originally one unjustly laid on them. Thus the diminution or cessation of (37) the Chiefs' allowances would mean relief of taxation, and there would be no question of the jhumiya being taxed for something he did not receive. It remains to consider the amount payable to each Chief under this scheme, i.e., his present income from jhum tax. In 1925 in order to calculate the jama which should be demanded from each Chief they were asked to state the number of families of jhumiyas in their circles. The Chakma Chief gave a figure obviously short of the truth, the Bohmong a figure based on a misunderstanding, and the Mong Raja some valueless figures. The Chiefs' statements being unreliable I base my calculations on the

figures arrived at and accepted by Government. As the Chiefs' share is double that of Government their incomes from it may be reckoned as twice their jama before the reduction of remissions, less the costs of collection. These last I have taken at a considerably lower figure than the obviously exaggerated one given by the Chiefs. The figures will be as follows:-

	CHAKMA	BOHMONG	MONG
Number of assessable families	9162	7397	4172
Chief's share of tax ...	22905*	18267-8	10430
less cost of collection	1500	1500	1500
DIFFERENCE	21405	16767	8930
or in round figures	21400	16800	9000

* this includes the income from the Miani Valley, which is not in the Chakma Chief's circle. He has only been granted control of it, and it might be advisable to settle his claim by payment in a lump sum of Rs.15,000, the amount which was paid to the Mong Raja, reducing his yearly income accordingly.

The Chiefs declare that there are large arrears outstanding and it would not do to let these drag on for years. The simplest method would be to call for full statements from each Chief and deal with the claims in the ordinary way. Many will probably be found to be groundless and many unrealisable. Money realised could be handed to the Chief concerned. (38) If it be thought desirable to let the Chiefs have still further emoluments I recommend that they be allowed to realise a rupee a year from all Bengali traders' boats entering their circles, establishing toll stations or collecting the money as they found most convenient. Since my proposals involve their being placed over all in their circles and not only over jhumiyas I do not see why the traders should pay nothing towards the upkeep of their status. These traders give rise to a great deal of work and make enormous profits, yet the only tax they pay (unless they build a house or shop) is Rs.2 a year to the Bazaar Fund, and they can well afford another Re. 1/- and even then will only pay half the tax paid by the infinitely poorer jhumiya from whom they draw their wealth. This concession would certainly be greatly appreciated by the Chiefs. It would

be no new tax, for it is probable that in the old days all foreigners entering the hills had to pay something to the Chief. To restore it would prove practically to the Chiefs that though they have been relieved of certain duties there is no desire to destroy their power and influence, provided neither are unjustly used. ↵

DIGNITIES.

My impression is that in the course of years the Chiefs have come to feel - though the feeling may never have taken definite form - that Government regards them as faintly ludicrous figures, and even when most polite it puts a hand before its mouth to hide a smile, that they are looked upon as unnecessary, and that the Rules are vague as to their duties because they are meant to have no real duties. I believe that it is partly a reaction against this almost subconscious feeling that has led them to put forward such (39) pretentious claims, and to expend their entire energies on the acquisition of private gain. The boaster is usually he who fears he may be thought little of, and energies which find no outlet in one way will find it in another. It may be too late to remedy the situation during this generation, for we are dealing not with pliable youths but with three middle-aged men of set character - rather tragic figures for all their faults. But the attempt is worth making. I have therefore proposed that they be offered duties which will give them ample scope and which no one could carry out quite as well as a Chief can. If they undertake them they will be free from any financial anxiety. While performing the duties of Chiefs I feel most emphatically that they should be treated with the punctilious and friendly courtesy due to that office. Below are some suggestions which are intended to focus that courtesy. They are slight things in themselves, but to my mind important pieces of ritual. The rite often begets the dogma, the dogma the faith, the faith the actions. Chiefs who are treated as Chiefs are more likely to realise and act up to their position than those who are not.

(1) To mark the that, according to my proposals, the Chiefs will cease to be mere parts of the revenue system I would suggest that all questions regarding them be dealt with by the Political Department in future, instead of by the revenue Department. I would further suggest that the Deputy Commissioner be designated "Deputy Commissioner and Political Officer of the Chittagong Hill Tracts" and that he be instructed to

wear political uniform at all functions at which the Chiefs wear durbar dress.

(2) Whenever a Chief makes a formal visit to Rangamati he should be received with a guard of honour of the Armed Police. The Bohmong and the Mong Raja dislike the place and rarely come. As for the Chakma Chief it would be as (40) wearisome for him as for the police if he were received with a guard of honour every time he came across the river from his home. It would be sufficient if certain occasions were laid down on which a guard of honour would be provided. The Chiefs will not know at first what to do in the presence of such a guard; this can be easily remedied by the Deputy Commissioners giving them a little private instruction to prevent their floundering in ignorance or feeling embarrassed. When the Bohmong and Mong Raja visit Rangamati or when the Chakma Chief occupies his house in the bazaar a small guard of armed police might be offered them for their houses. Such an offer is always made as a matter of courtesy to the Maharaja of Manipur when he spends a night in Kohima.

(3) At small expense an arched gateway of teak could be constructed at the top of the pukka ghat at Rangamati, with a path at either side, but which would be opened only for the Governor, high officials and the Chiefs. The idea in my mind is that of the Marble Arch on a very small scale, that is to say some central gate which is only opened for privileged persons.

Under Rule 42(9) only jhumiyas are liable to render labour to Chiefs. Why a Chakma who happens to take to plough cultivation, for instance, is relieved of this very light duty I do not know. It appears that the restriction of the Chiefs' labour rights to jhumiyas dates from the time when the word "jhumiya" was synonymous with "inhabitant of the Hill Tracts." In view of the wide jurisdiction of the Chiefs I would suggest that they be given the same labour rights as those exercised (41) by a Government servant under Rule 42A. The amount of labour used by the Chiefs is very small indeed and this alteration will make no practical difference to the individual inhabitant of the district. It will however show the Chiefs that there is an end of the tendency which has shown itself in recent years of regarding their duties as practically confined to the jhuming portion of the population. The right I suggest should, of

course, be purely personal, and not shared by the Chief's relations and employees.

(4) I would suggest that Government give to each Chief a suitable State Umbrella. The Mong Raja does not appear to possess one, and those of the other two are frankly in need or renovation. I would also suggest that each Chief be given a plaque suspended from a handsome gold chain to be worn round the neck and bearing on it his coat of arms in enamel. The details can be ascertained from their notepaper, the exact wording depending upon the orders passed with regard to their titles. The Chiefs seem to be well-supplied with tulwars, so I do not suggest that any more be given them. The gifts of Government should be held as regalia of the Chieftainship and not as personal property.

The Chiefs should be excused the formality of renewing their arms licenses and should be granted life licenses for such arms as they possess.

The Chiefs should be placed on the list of those entitled to use P.W.D. Inspection Bungalows in the Hill Tracts. At present they ask permission, which is, of course, always granted to them.

(5) The uniforms of their retainers should certainly be regulated. Those of the Chakma Chief are distinguished (42) by a red and yellow puggaree, but those of the other two Chiefs are identical with those worn by untidy constables, and no villager could easily distinguish them from each. The uniforms of the retainers of all the Chiefs should be smart, distinctive, and approved by Government.

If there be no legal objection it would be a compliment to permit the Chiefs to own unlicensed motor cars for use in Chittagong and the neighbourhood. A board with a coat of arms or title (e.g. Chakma Chief) would take the place of a number plate. ↩

TITLES.

This is a thorny question, I deal with each Chief in turn.- ↩

THE BOHMONG.

Of recent years the Chakma Chief has come to be regarded as in some way the senior Chief. This is not the fact, and I can imagine no reason for this assumption that he is senior to the Bohmong, save that since 1925 he has collected jhum tax from a slightly larger number of houses, and enjoys the personal title of Raja, the significance of the Bohmong's older

and more important title being overlooked because it happens to be a Burmese one. Lewin states (Fly on the Wheel p.211) [Lewin 1912:211] that the Bohmong is the most important Chief, and in my opinion he is undoubtedly right. My history of him has I trust made it clear that his title is a more ancient one than that of the Chakma Chief, and that he is to this day far more a Chief in the ancient sense. The seniority of the Chakma Chief seems to date only from about 1873, when Harish Chandra was granted the title of Rai Bahadur. Though I have, to avoid the use of unfamiliar terms, spoken of him as the Bohmong throughout this report, his correct title is Boh Maung Gri ("great ruler of generals"). The title of Boh Maung, I see no reason to doubt, was originally conferred on his (43) ancestor Meng Sao by the King of Arakan about 1620, and that of Boh Maung Gri on Hari Ngao about 1700. From him the present holder of the title is directly descended in the male line and is the twelfth Boh Maung Gri. The title is without doubt de facto an hereditary one, and I propose that it be made so de jure by its recognition as such by Government. The title is a high one and its holder should rank above non-ruling hereditary Rajas. The correct designation for his sons and the one actually in use is "Thadow" I think that this should be used officially for the sons of the present Bohmong and for surviving sons of deceased Bohmongs. The present Bohmong has taken to calling and signing himself Raja. He is thoroughly Burmese and dislikes this title, but since the Bengalis in Chittagong do not understand the significance of his proper title he feels compelled, he complains, to adopt something which they will understand. I would propose to meet this difficulty by conferring upon him a title borrowed from the Shan States, whose Chiefs seem to hold positions very analogous to his, and are also of the Tai Race, adding the title "Shawbwa⁴ of Bandarban."

to that which he already holds. This title seems entirely suitable and would be readily understood. In brief therefore by proposal is that the Bohmong be designated "Hereditary Boh Maung Gri and Shabwa of Bandarban." His sons would be designated Thadow, but the Bohmong's title would not necessarily be inherited by one of them but would follow the Chieftainship. He would be recognised as senior Chief in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and elsewhere would rank above non-ruling

⁴ I find more than one spelling of this title. The Government of Burma could advise which is recognised as correct.

hereditary Rajas. There would be no difficulty in the immediate future (44) in finding a suitable successor. ↵

THE CHAKMA CHIEF.

With regard to the Chakma Chief the position is that he is a man of unbounded conceit, and though he only holds the personal title of Raja, he has of his own motion attempted to make it into a hereditary one. Even when writing officially to the Commissioner he now speaks of his eldest son as Yuvaraj heir apparent and has dubbed his other sons "Kumar." To these titles they have of course no shadow of right, though it is true, as Mr. Oldham points out in his letter No. 735 C. of the 22nd July 1895 to the Legal Remembrancer, that the present Chief and his brother had the title of Kumar by courtesy only. There is nothing to show that the present Chief was ever called Yuvaraj. It is open to Government either to place the seal of their approval on the assumption of the Chief, or to remind him definitely that his title is a personal one. In any case I feel the situation should be regularised, either by confirming by courtesy the title which their father has conferred on his sons, or by forbidding them the use of that to which they have no right. I find nothing to warrant the confirming of a hereditary title on the present Chief. His history has shown how far inferior his position is to that of the Bohmong either from the point of view of antiquity or of real Chieftain rights. Apart from his position as Tahsildar, hallowed by time though it may be, he has nothing, and the tribes regard him, some with dislike and some with indifference, as nothing more than a person who collects taxes and unpopular abwabs. Up to the death of the Mad Raja certainly some and possibly all of the so-called "CHIEFS" were not Chakmas at all. There is no evidence either that any of them were even called Raja in their lifetime. There followed an interregnum during which the (45) heads of four clans divided the power between them. Eventually a man of the Mulima clan succeeded in the whole capitulation mahal, but he was never more than the intermediary who conveyed to the paramount power the tribute collected by the Dewans. This arrangement lasted till the time of Kalindi Rani, who drew from the tax a very small profit compared with that of the Dewans. She managed to usurp the Chieftainship by posing as a Hindu widow, thereby obtaining an order from the civil Court at Chittagong, who were ignorant of the true situation, authorising her to

manage her husband's property. The Chieftainship should have been continued in the Mulima clan, but Government wrongly rejected the claims of Gobardhan and other members of collateral branches of the late Chief's family (Lord Ulick Browne's letter ZA of the 12th November 1869). In default of anyone else Government decided to confer the Chieftainship on Harish Chandra, a minor of the petty Wangsa clan, and a son of Dharam Bux Khan's daughter. Thus a new line began of a new clan. The personal title of Raja was conferred on Harish Chandra, but there is no evidence that any previous Chief ever held any title at all. He died leaving two minor sons, the elder of whom is the present Chief, on whom also the personal title of Raja was conferred on his coming of age and taking over the management of his affairs. Not only does the past history show no grounds for conferring an hereditary title on a family which has only held the Chieftainship for two generations, and which has never treated the tribe as anything but a source of income, but there is little hope of any grounds for such a title appearing in the immediate future. The Chief's eldest son is a youth who has lived too little with his tribe to know (46) or care much about them. Contrary to Chakma custom he has married a Calcutta lady, so that his children will not even be pure Chakmas. It is likely that he, and still more likely that his eldest son, will never be either capable or desirous of performing any of the duties of a Chief other than that of drawing the emoluments attached to the office. I do not therefore recommend the creation of an hereditary title which he would automatically inherit. If on his father's death Government sees good to invest him with the Chieftainship, a personal title can be conferred on him then.

Partially Burmese though the tribe is in origin, so imbued is the Chief with Bengali ideas and culture that no Burmese title would please him. Should Government desire to emphasise his position as Chief by a change in his style I would suggest the title "Raja Bhuvan Mohan Ray, Chief of Chakmas." For reasons given above I do not recommend the addition of the word "hereditary" before "Chief," He would rank after the Bohmong in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. ↩

THE MONG RAJA.

I recommend no alteration in the title of the Mong Raja, as apart from his utter incompetence he does not even pretend to take any interest in

the affairs of his circle, which he regards only as a source of income out of which he spends as much of his time as he can. Further he has no direct heir, so that it may be found advisable to abolish the office on the death of the present holder. The title "Raja" which he has assumed is no title at all, but a corruption either of an improper Maghi nickname or of the word "Rwaza" [rwa:ca:], meaning "headman." I recommend that the appellation "Mong Raja" be allowed to stand in its present form.

In view of the fact that the three Hill Tracts Chiefs are descended from Chiefs who were certainly (47) semi-independent, and have always held a position distinct from that of the zemindar class of Rajas, I would propose that a new class be created for them in the in the Civil List under the heading of "Hill Chiefs" and placed next to and above that of Raja (personal). It lies with Government either to recognise the title of Boh Maung Gri as deserving separate and higher classification, or to place the holder of it at the head of the proposed class of Hill Chiefs, with a note to the effect that his title is an hereditary one. ↩

SUCCESSION AND INHERITANCE.

There seems to be no good reason for adhering to the practice obtaining in the past by which Government does not nominate a successor to a disputed Chieftainship till the death of the holder. The death of the late Bohmong gave rise to a whole crop of disputes. No successor had been nominated and the present holder was away from Banderban. A relation who did not succeed had to be put in to hold charge for a few days, and as it was a time when revenue was coming in he undoubtedly made as much hay as possible during the brief spell of sunshine. I would suggest that in future a successor be nominated, subject to good behaviour, during the lifetime of a Chief. This will permit of the question being considered at leisure and will avoid an interregnum with its subsequent squabbles.

A connected question is that of the destination [distinction] between the personal property of a Chief and property attached to the office. Disputes have arisen in the past and are very likely in the future. In my opinion each Chief should be asked now to declare in writing what property is attached to the office. This declaration should be irrevocable by any later Chief, i.e., no property, whether land or regalia, inherited as Chiefly property by a Chief can be sold by him or willed away from the

Chieftainships. Any Chief would of course be at liberty (48) to add to the Chiefly property inherited by himself, and such addition would likewise require an irrevocable declaration. ↵

FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS.

There are certain other points which require notice, in that they directly affect both the Chiefs and the people. ↵

CONTINUITY OF ADMINISTRATION.

Nothing has struck me more forcibly in this district than the lack of continuity of administration from which it has suffered. At times officers have been posted here for long periods, but there have been interregna marked by frequent transfers. No officer left any transfer notes, without which a newcomer is in the dark as to what reforms are on hand and what work requires special attention; each new head of the district was left to work out his own salvation. Even tour diaries, which are most valuable records, were till recently destroyed after two years. The result has been that no one knew what his predecessors had done or thought. At Ramgarh I find the same state of affairs. Officers who are entirely unsuited to and hate the work follow each other in quick succession. As to how they are selected I have no information, but the man I found there regards it as a penal station and fills in his time with as little trouble as possible to himself till his longed-for orders of transfer shall come. The Subdivisional Officer who joined in December 1926 is the fifth since 1922, and in writing to the Deputy Commissioner he first complains of the difficulties of touring which he foresees, and then proceeds as follows :- "It is not particularly inviting for a newcomer to be told that the station to which he has been posted is a penal station. Yet it is what my predecessor has told me. I have done nothing to merit (49) this. Actually it is found that from June 1922 to December 1926 four Subdivisional Officers have changed hands, and I am told that all had to break their heads to get away." This quotation gives, without further comment, sufficient indication of the keenness and efficiency that he is likely to display in his work. These ever-shifting officers can at best only assist the Deputy Commissioner in routine matters. They can never gain either experience or influence in their subdivision. The hilly areas are left untoured and only the easiest journeys by road and boat are undertaken.

As an example of the lack of influence of Subdivisional Officers I found that on the rare occasions when the Mong Raja visited Ramgarh he did not even think it worth his while to call on or see the Official who should be his closest adviser, and with whom he is jointly responsible for the administration of his circle.

This lack of continuity not only tends to leave the Chief without any embodied administrative experience from which they can seek aid, but partly accounts for their lack of close touch with the officials of the district. It must seem rather laborious waste of time to make friends with a new man who know nothing of local conditions and who may be gone tomorrow; it is much more tempting to trade on his inexperience. The people also suffer, and I was urged when I was in the district to ask Government to transfer Officers as infrequently as possible. This is a request I have heard voiced scores of times elsewhere. There is nothing a hillman dislikes more than "always having a new Sahib." The rogues profit, for a newcomer can sometimes be imposed upon. But the honest man may find his protector suddenly whisked away. Nothing had, I am convinced, assisted the Chiefs more in their oppression than frequent transfers. The protectors of the people have been temporary, but the Chiefs are permanent and ever ready to deal with anyone who has drawn upon them the wrath of a departed official. (50)

Therefore I recommend that transfers be as infrequent as possible; that the Officials be carefully selected, and when the right man is in the right place that he be allowed a free hand and his decisions upheld whenever possible. The habit which is growing especially among the Chakmas of appealing against every order as a matter of course is obviously not one which can be encouraged without undermining the influence of the man on the spot. If an Officer cannot give sound decisions the Hill Tracts is no place for him. In the last paragraph of his book "The Chittagong Hill Tracts and the Dwellers Therein" Capt. Lewin exactly describes the type of man which will always be needed for this district [Lewin 1869:118].

A man who is kept for a long time in the Chittagong Hill Tracts ought to have no more ground for complaining that he is in a backwater than has a man in the Secretariat. There are problems here to provide ample thought for the keenest minds the Province can produce, and there seems to be no reason why this District, like similar districts elsewhere, should not be recognised as leading to higher things. ↩

BANDARBAN.

It was, I understand, the intention of Government to make the Bohmong Circle into a residential subdivision, the project being abandoned in 1923 owing to temporary financial stringency. I most strongly recommend that this project be revived without delay, and a carefully selected Subdivisional Officer posted at Bandarban itself which is an excellent site; Chandraghona, which was proposed at one time, is on the extreme edge of the circle and quite unsuitable.

There is far more necessity in my opinion for a Subdivisions Officer at Bandarban than there is for one at Ramgarh. The area is too remote and difficult of access to be effectively administered from Rangamati, and the Deputy Commissioner can only tour in it at intervals. The result is that it is (51) hardly administered at all, and there were until the last year or two large communities which had never been visited by any Officer within living memory. This arrangement is not fair on the Bohmong. He is a man (and his sons are like him) who might make an excellent administrator if he had a guiding hand. Without it he cannot but go astray. All the guidance he obtains is from the Deputy Commissioner on his occasional tours, for the journey to Rangamati is a difficult one for a man of the present Chief's age, and he feels so out of place in the Bengali atmosphere of headquarters that he never comes in except on the occasion of the Governor's visit. What he requires, and what he is entitled to, is an Officer at hand to whom he can turn as a friend for advice.

A Bengali officer would not be suitable for this particular post; not only did I arrive at this conclusion from my own observations, but I was spontaneously approached and asked to request Government not to place the Burmese Maghs under a Bengali Officer, as such a man would inevitably seem to them the embodiment of a racial culture with which they had nothing in common. The post would be an ideal one for a young Civilian. He would have most interesting work, not only among the Maghs but among tribes about whom far too little is known, as well as opportunities for sport. He could be sent there after a period of training at headquarters, and could remain there for a few years till required to take over the district. If he were urged to learn Maghi, and say one other tribal language would stand him in good stead later. If the climate were found too trying in the hot weather he could be posted to Chittagong for a

couple of months, where the Collector could doubtless find ample work for him, and where he could keep his knowledge of plains revenue procedure polished up. In urging this correlated posting of the Deputy Commissioner and Subdivisional Officer with a view to the latter in due course following the (52) former I am only advocating a system which has elsewhere worked well for years where, as in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, the work of administration requires specialised knowledge.

A very strong desire was expressed to me that the Governor should visit Bandarban. A cold weather visit would be enormously appreciated. The journey is easy and the place fascinating and infinitely more typical of the Hill Tracts than Rangamati. There is a great wish that the Governor's visits should not be confined to the Chakma Chief's circle. ↵

THE MAUZA SYSTEM.

There can be no question of abandoning the mauza system. Government is committed to it, the people are getting used to it and an immense amount of time and trouble has been expended on it by local officials. One is however continually being reminded that it is a purely artificial arrangement, unsupported by any indigenous custom. The success or failure in each mauza depends on the character of the headman. Sometimes he is the natural and obvious leader of the people; sometimes he emphatically is not. In selecting a headman the Deputy Commissioner is guided by his own opinion, that of the Chief concerned, and that of the people of the mauza. He undoubtedly fails to receive from the Chiefs opinions of the standard of soundness which he has the right to expect. In some cases the right man is recommended by the Chief, while in others ulterior motives come into play. Sometimes a Chief will recommend a man in whom he sees a useful tool for extortion, at other times he will put forward the name of a relation desirous of "otium cum dignitate" whom he would otherwise have to support. I fear too that there is little doubt that Chief's recommendation is sometimes bought by the highest bidder. In other cases the recommendation appears to be entirely haphazard. To take an instance which I saw in the (53) Bohmong's circle, the Chief, having no knowledge of the respective merits of two candidates for the headmanship of a Magh mauza, sent out a Bengali peon to hold a local enquiry; in due course the peon arrived back with a blank sheet of paper decorated with thumb impressions

which purported to be votes for one of the candidates - which one, only the peon knew, for there was no candidate's name on the paper; on this the Chief made his recommendation. In the election of a headmen honest well-informed recommendations by the Chiefs would be most useful, and I think they might reasonable be reminded of this and requested to mend their ways.

The people of the mauza express their opinion at a sort of simple election. Each candidate comes in with his supporters and they are counted. This method seems eminently unsuited to the people. It is often the man who is merely most feared who gets most votes (one candidate whom I saw was supported by the large majority of voters, and secretly backed by the Chief; he was a man who had only escaped being hanged for murder by the suppression of evidence; he was not appointed). In Part XII of his report Mr. Ascoli discusses the mauza system. It has vastly improved since he saw it, but I emphatically agree with him that more use should be made of the village headmen, who are the natural, indigenous leaders of their little communities, though I do not recommend anything so cut and dried as the formal pan chayats he proposes. The opinion of the mauza with regard to the election of a new headman could however be far better ascertained by privately consulting each village headman in it (on the clear understanding that his opinion would not be divulged) than by counting the heads of a small mob. Lewin fully realised how valuable the village headmen were and proposed having all their names registered in his office (p.4 of Printed Selections) [Browne 1868, in: Selections 1887:4]. Since then they have been unduly neglected, but they do more quiet work and (54) get less for it than anyone else in the Hill Tracts. In theory under rule 42 (1) the mauza headman collects the jhum tax, receiving in return for his toil a handsome commission and the right to call on the jhumiyas for labour; in practice the headman of each little village collects the rent from his people and brings it to the mauza headman. Many, if not most of the petty cases are settled by the village headmen, and never get as far as the mauza headman. In theory, under rule 46, the village headman, as a village official, is entitled to a share in the service land in return for his services; in practice such land has only been granted to a very few of them, the mauza headman getting the lion's share. I consider that the village headman, who are the leaders of the little communities, selected by the

people of those communities themselves, and are a natural institution of immemorial antiquity, should be made far more use of, not only as advisers when a new mauza headman has to be selected, but in all matters concerning their people. The village headman, for instance, should invariably be asked for his opinion when tribal dispute is being heard, and indeed in any case where people of his village are concerned. He will know what the feeling of the village is, and in my opinion the feeling of the village is rarely wrong, for they are judging people whom they have known from their youth up. In return for this he should get his full share of service land and should be protected against any usurpation of his position by some nominee of the mauza headman. Such a practice would not only bring all communities into closer touch with the Deputy Commissioner, and make for the smoother working of the mauza system, but it would help to protect the rights of all such minorities as those of a single Mro village in a Magh mauza, or scattered Magh villages in a Chakma mauza. (55) ↵

RECORDS AND DIARIES.

The very essence of my proposals is that by-gones should be by-gones, and that the Chiefs should be given an absolutely fair chance of justifying their position and earning their incomes by the performance of definite duties. They should be given clearly to understand that the duties are real and not nominal, and that due note will be taken of whether they perform them or not. To this end I advise that the Deputy Commissioner be instructed to prepare and forward to the Political Department through the Commissioner a careful confidential half-yearly report on each Chief, showing clearly what assistance he has been asked to give, and what he has actually given, and how he has behaved in general. Of this the Deputy Commissioner will file a copy with his own confidential papers. This will ensure the keeping of an accurate record of the doing of each Chief. The absence of such a record is at present a severe handicap to a newcomer, who is dependent on opinion and casual references to be found in files. If this deficiency in accurate and detailed record be not made good in the future it may prove unfair to the Chiefs, "for the evil that men do lives after them..." If my proposal regarding emoluments and the duties upon which they will depend be accepted, such a record will be essential, for without it Government would be seriously

handicapped should the question ever arise of depriving a Chief of his income. Another practice I would recommend is that an extra copy of the Deputy Commissioner's tour diary should be sent to the Governor direct, the other copy going through the usual channels. This is most valuable in areas like the Hill Tracts where the duties of the Deputy Commissioner are largely political. The diaries keep the Governor informed of everything that is going on, and enable him to call for any further information he may require. (56) ↵

EXPULSION OF UNDESIRABLES.

In paragraph 80 of his letter 83 C of the 5th February 1919 [Oldham 1898, in: Selections 1929:296 f.] the Commissioner in forwarding Mr. Ascoli's report agrees with Mr. Ascoli and the Superintendent that definite powers should be granted to expel undesirable persons from the Hill Tracts. No orders however appear to have been passed by Government on this proposal. In Assam the Chin Hills Regulation is in force in all hill districts. Either that regulation should be applied to this district, or the rule proposed by Mr. Ascoli should be brought into force. Not only is it needed to deal with opium smugglers and habitual criminals who find the hill people an easy prey but to enable foreigners who intrigue against the Chiefs to be dealt with. Only this year a priest from Arakan entered the district and stirred up opposition against the Bohmong and the high priest of the temple at Bandarban. He has gone now, but has left much trouble behind him. When I was in the circle feeling was running very high, and at Christmas, the Bohmong received an anonymous letter threatening his life. Had the rule proposed been in force, the Bohmong would have reported the Bohmong would have reported the foreigner's arrival and he could have been turned out as soon as he had shown his hand and before he could have done much have done much harm. ↵

THE CHIEFS AND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

The more branches of administration the Chiefs are in touch with, the better. If therefore it were ever decided to send the Armed Police for a week's field work in the cold weather to each circle in turn, it would be a compliment to the Chiefs to invite a son or near relation of each to attend the camp of exercise as guests of Government (I fear the present Chiefs

are hardly young enough to attend themselves). Should the Armed Police ever be called out they would be dependent on local transport, in the provision of which the (57) Chiefs, as in the past, would be required to assist. Guests attending the camps of exercise would obtain useful information as to how arrangements worked in practice.

When, too, officers of the Forest, Public Works, Education and other departments visit the district it would be well if they arranged to exchange calls with any Chief at whose headquarters they might be. Such a practice would continually remind the Chiefs that they too are part of the whole machinery of Government. ↩

GENERAL SUMMARY.

Wholesale embezzlement of plough rents in the Chittagong Hill Tracts compelled the Government in 1925 to issue orders relieving the Chiefs of their duty of collecting these rents, and made it clearer than ever that the Chiefs were in danger of becoming highly-paid figure-heads who performed no useful function. I have therefore been directed to enquire into their history and status and to advise as to what part they may be given to play in the administration which shall be both suitable to their position and beneficial to their people.

The problem set me I have attempted to attack from a new standpoint, discussing first the basic nature of Chieftainship here, and then attempting to indicate to what extent it has been warped and smothered by later extraneous influences and accretions. Having thus cleared the ground I have submitted proposals which are aimed at giving the Chiefs a perfectly fair chance to perform useful work that is well within their capacities, in recognition of which they will enjoy certain emoluments and dignities.

The first part of my report is historical. It is clear that both the underlying culture of this area and the indigenous foundations of the Chieftainship are of the type commonly called Indonesian. The collection of the jhum tax, (58) despite the exclusive stress so long laid on it, has nothing to do with the primitive rights of the Chiefs, but is the direct result of demands for tribute made by an alien power. In taking a share of it Government is not receiving a portion of something to which the Chiefs have immemorial rights; it is the Chiefs who have always retained a share of a tax they collected solely in behalf of the paramount power of the

time. I have given a short history of each Chief, an opinion on his personal character and a note on his presumptive successor. Analysis has shown that while the Chieftainships of the Bohmong and Mong Raja still have their roots in the old clan system, that of the Chakma Chief has for long depended solely on his relation with the paramount power as monopolist collector of the jhum tax, being not a modified clan Chieftainship as in the case of the Bohmong and Mong Raja, but something additional to the clan Chieftainships which the Dewans hold among the Chakmas.

My proposals are contained in the second part of my report. The most important is that the Chiefs should in future be relieved of the duty of collecting the jhum tax in view both of the way in which administration has been hampered by the fact that they are at present financially affected by every change, and of the very serious abuses which have arisen. The second duty of which it is proposed they should be relieved is that of trying cases as Chiefs, their powers as headmen being still retained by them. In support of this an account is given of their Courts. In place of the duties from which they are freed it is proposed to give them other duties, no less extensive, and more suitable to their position and character. These are described in general terms, and detailed examples are also given. Provided they take up the responsibilities offered to them it is proposed that they should receive an income not less than their present one, and that certain dignities be accorded to them. Their titles (59) are examined with a view to regularising them, and to restoring to the Bohmong the position of seniority which he enjoyed in Capt. Lewin's time, which his ancient title demands, and from which he has apparently been allowed to slip by error. Finally certain recommendations are made on aspects of district administration which closely touch the Chiefs. [↩](#)

[Appendices]

Appendix A [Subtenant's Lease]

To show the contrast between the treatment which the Chiefs have in the past demanded from Government and that they consider suitable for those in their own power I give below a translation of a subtenant's lease from the Chakma circle. The fact that no Court would enforce its harsh terms does not affect the attitude of mind it reveals, but actually the Chief does attempt to enforce some, at any rate, of its terms in his own court. To the tenant it gives no security of tenure, and to the Chief the right to demand supplies to an indefinite amount on any occasion without payment.

To....

This etnami patta for ... of land within the undermentioned boundaries is granted to you on receipt from you of an etnami kabuliyat, at an annual rent of

(1) You shall pay this fixed annual rent according to instalments in default of which you will pay 2 annas in the rupee compensation. All rents to be paid by 22nd March each year, otherwise you will not be able to object to my realising 4 annas in the rupee compensation for arrear rents, which is recoverable through the courts by attachment of your moveable property and that of your successors. No objection will be allowed.

(2) On the occasion of a marriage, sradh, or any other occasion, on demand from me of curds, milk, fish, and such other abwabs as goats, fowls, khay, kharcha, rations, paltar and begar, you will supply the same otherwise I shall realise their value from you as part of the rent. No objection will be allowed.

(3) You may not sell the land without permission.

(4) If land becomes salt, dried up or eroded by the river, or if you are ousted from it, or if hashila land becomes khilla you will not receive any remission of rent.

(5) This gives you no title to any river, stream, dheba or mine which may be found on the land.

(6) You may not dig a tank in the land without my permission, and if do so, you will fill it up again at your own expense.

(7) If within the terms of this settlement any unreclaimed land is brought under cultivation you will get remission of rent for it for one year, after which the ordinary rent will be paid.

(8) When required to do so by the Raja or his representative (2) you shall immediately without any objection surrender the land to him on receipt of compensation by him, and shall receive proportionate remission of rent.

(9) You may not object to enhancement of rent on expiry of the present settlement.

(10) This settlement is in force from ... to ... after which you shall obtain resettlement on a rent fixed by the Raja.

(11) On breach of any of these conditions your resettlement will be cancelled. [↩](#)

Appendix B.

SUGGESTED AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENTS.

The problem of the poverty of the jhum land in the Chittagong Hill Tracts is largely the problem of the weed commonly known as aggeratum, which rapidly takes possession of all abandoned soil. It is sometimes forgotten that since this weed is a newcomer it involves a new problem. It has so covered the face of the land in this area that were the forefathers of the present jhumiyas to revisit their old home they would hardly recognise it. It is popularly supposed that high winds brought the seed from Assam about 1897. Very little is as yet known of its effect on the soil though there is the belief which has yet to be verified by experiment that after 30 years it abandons any place where it has established itself. Bamboos find it hard to content with, but my own observations entirely confirm the opinion of Forest experts that malatta (macaranga denticulata) quickly gets the better of it. The latter is a quick-growing tree with heart-shaped leaves which is very plentiful in the Hill Tracts. It is vaguely asserted that aggeratum for noy give a bad jhum. The Garos are said not to object greatly to it and I have found the same feelings among Nagas. But the exact knowledge which is so desirable is not yet available. Personally I am sure that the fallen leaves of malatta give a far better mould than do those of aggeratum, and the former has the additional advantage of not killing out bamboos. This tree, I feel, may be the key to the problem of jhum regeneration, and I strongly urge that scientific experiments should be made with it. Mr. Ascoli in paragraph 17 of his report [Ascoli 1918, § 17, p. 16 f.] discussed the relative merits of aggeratum and malatta and urges that scientific experiments be (2) carried out. He says indeed that Mr. Harris is instituting such experiments, but there is no knowledge of them in this district, and if they were ever instituted they apparently joined the thong of useful reforms which had passed before into oblivion.

The present methods of jhuming in this district also require investigation; they are doubtless very ancient, but this does not mean that they are ideal, especially in view of the altered conditions brought about by the comparatively recent introduction and spread of the weed aggeratum. Even on the lower range of the Naga Hills, where the soil is exactly similar to that of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, a non-shifting and far

heavier population has been for many generations entirely supported by jhuming, with a sufficient surplus of crops to ensure considerable comfort. The interference is that jhuming methods of the Nagas, where they differ from those of the tribes of this district, are the better. The Naga uses all available land in order that, having jhumed a block he may be able to leave it under jungle for as long as possible, a rest of from seven to ten or twelve years being aimed at; he combines with his fellow villagers to jhumi in as big a block as possible so that it can be encircled by one ring fence and can be more effectively protected from birds and animals than on scattered plots; he sows his rice and his cotton in different fields; and, most important of all, he sows each block for two (and occasionally for three) consecutive years, at the same time cutting a new block each year, so that each year he gets a crop from a new and from an old block, that from the latter often being the better of the two. The tribesmen of the Chittagong Hill Tracts on the other hand, merely to save themselves (3) trouble, jhumi the land near their village far too often, and tend to neglect the more distant land; the villager often jhums in isolated patches without any thought of co-operation; he sows rice, cotton and vegetables simultaneously in the same drills, being content with a light crop of each as it ripens; he only uses a piece of land once before temporarily abandoning it, thus giving a five-year rest to a plot after one crop where a Naga would give a ten year rest after two. Scientific experiments should be made to test the relative value of these two methods of jhuming. It may be objected that all instruction is bound to fail because the local jhumiya, unlike the Naga, does not own his jhumi land as private property, so that no one is going to take the trouble to conserve a piece of land without someone else is going to use. This argument is altogether a valid one for I find that among the tribes here it is clearly understood that a man who has jhumed a certain piece of land has the first option of jhuming the same piece again, and can claim a fine from anyone who tries to forestall him.

In order to investigate the points I have touched on, I would suggest that experiments on the following lines be carried out at the Rangamati Experimental Farm. A number of equal and similar plots of convenient size should be marked out on the little ridges near the fame and jhumed and sown as follows:-

First Year

Plots 1 and 2	with rice only
Plot 3 and 4	with cotton only
Plot 5	with rice and cotton mixed

Second Year

Plot 1 and 3	with rice only
Plot 2 and 4	with cotton only
Plot 5	with rice and cotton mixed

In the second year also five more plots, 6-10 should be cut and (4) sown as plots 1-5 were sown the first year.

Third year

Abandon Plots 1-5 and cut new plots 11-15. The same experiments as were carried on the in the second year can now be carried on plots 6-10 and 11-15.

In all cases the proportion of yield to the seed sown should be noted and the experiments should be repeated year by year for a considerable time, to lessen the chance of their value being vitiated by exceptional seasons. The plots which are being used for the second time in succession should be weeded and sown as early as possible, before the corresponding crops are sown on the new plots. All plots under cultivation should be weeded four to six times between sowing and harvest. The rate of growth of aggeratum should be noted, and since the history of each plot will be known, information as to the value or otherwise of aggeratum of all ages as a jhum-coverer will be automatically collected. Similarly an area should be divided into plots and sown with malatta. First its rate of growth and effect on other vegetation should be noted, and then its value as a jhum-coverer as compared with aggeratum.

There being no time like the present I would suggest that the experiments at the farm be begun this year. It is important that the work should be done under close supervision by schoolboys or by local jhumiyas called in for the purpose on days when labour is required. If Santal labour be used the experiment, however successful, will be

scorned by the local jhumiyas as having been carried out by foreigners employing different methods from his own; he will be only too eager to find objections to anything intended to make him change his ways; his ideal is to live as long as possible on poor but easily grown crops and borrowed money. In this attitude the Chakma Chief (5) unfortunately has hitherto strongly supported his people. In acknowledging the receipt of a copy of the note of the Conservator of Forests in which the absolute necessity for a reform in the jhuming system was clearly shown, he wrote on September 11th last as follows:-

“I do not find adequate words to express what will be the disastrous result if jhuming be regulated or prohibited. It will completely ruin the Chiefs, will make the headmen system unworkable, and will drive thousands of people out of the district.”

Even before I left Rangamati alarmist questions asked me in the Chakma Circle showed beyond doubt that opposition to any sort of reform is already being organised. ↵

APPENDIX C.

COMPULSORY LABOUR.

In areas where it is employed one of the first duties a District Official is to watch and regulate compulsory labour. The nature of this labour is often misrepresented. It is a form of taxation, and has nothing whatever to do with anything in the nature of slavery. Payment in labour is no more an anachronism than payment of dues in money. The prompt and punctual giving of labour should therefore be as strictly enforced as the payment of taxes, and failure should be duly punished. Where this is done labour is readily and cheerfully given, and punishment, in my experience, is very, very rarely necessary. While the provision of labour for those entitled to use it should be strictly insisted on, the obtaining of coolies under compulsion by unauthorised persons should be heavily punished. Such people as oil prospectors are, I have found, apt to attempt bribe headmen to compel coolies to work for them, and missionaries who want transport are not infrequently offenders. Secondly, a standard

weight for one coolie's load and for two coolies carrying with a pole, should be fixed and strictly adhered to. A coolie should understand that he is bound to carry up to that weight, but no load exceeding it should under any circumstances be permitted. This has not yet been done here, though the loads carried and are usually ridiculously light.

Thirdly, a standard daily wage should be fixed, with special rates for distances of, say, over 12 miles or for particularly difficult marches. Six annas is the usual rate here, but I have noticed a certain vagueness, and one wonders if wandering process-servers et hoc genus always pay as much.

Fourthly, requisitions on headmen for coolies should be on a printed form with counterfoils, books of such forms being issued only to authorised persons of whom a list should be kept. This enables an inspecting officer to see who is using labour (2) and for what purpose.

Fifthly, coolies when called for any day but not employed should be paid half the standard wage. Anything like calling for 15 coolies when only 10 are required is to be deprecated. It indicates that the person calling for them anticipates that the full quota is unlikely to turn up, and if this anticipation be known it will assuredly be fulfilled.

Sixthly, coolies who are prevented from getting back to their homes for the night should be paid an additional half-day's wage.

Seventhly, the evasion and attempted evasion of labour by the physically fit which goes on is bad; not only does it make touring tedious, but it means that the old and poor often carry the loads of Government officials instead of the young and well-to-do. Bolting into the jungle at the sight of anyone coming for coolies is far from unknown here. This should be visited with punishment of the village as a whole, and for this and other offences involving whole communities, the Deputy Commissioner, Chittagong Hill Tracts might well be vested with powers of punishment similar to those held by the Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills.

Eighthly, certain classes of persons, including the old and infirm, but not including the lusty relations of headmen, should be definitely exempted by written order. It is ridiculous that a headman, as one did during my visit, should attempt to fine a blind old man for sending his son instead of coming himself when called upon for coolie work. One would have liked to have inspected some of the people on the village who were not called upon that day.

Under Rule 42 (9) Chiefs and headmen are permitted to employ compulsory labour on payment; this is as it should be. The claim of the Chiefs to unpaid forced labour has been rightly disallowed; indeed I am doubtful whether the rights (3) of begar which were commuted into money payment to headmen should ever have been recognised by Government [Stevens 1925 (a), in: Selections 1925:507 ff.]. Had the Chiefs ever had the right which they claimed to an indefinite amount of free labour, there would have been no object in the creation of the Rajparia clan by a former Chakma Chief. This clan was artificially made up of persons taken from all clans with the object of forming not only a frontier guard but a labour force. It was not really unpaid for its duties, payment taking the form of remission of taxation. Had the whole Chakma tribe been available as a labour force there would have been no object in creating a special one. Moreover, entirely unpaid labour is not in accordance with the primitive basis of Chieftainship. In primitive communities reciprocity is the basis of the social system, and a Chief is expected to give food in return for the labour he received. If reduction of taxation is ever considered, this tax of Re. 1 each jhuming family on account of commuted begar which the headmen now pocket might be abolished.

Compulsory labour is very light indeed in this district and I doubt if the average man renders one day's service in a year to a Government official; indeed I have even heard people grumble at having to give this small amount. But if the practice were abolished, the administration could literally come to a standstill; no official, in a country where no roads for wheeled traffic exist, could move his baggage across country on tour, and the Armed Police, if they were ever called out, would find themselves immobilised through lack of transport.

To discuss this subject may seem outside the scope of my enquiry. My excuse is that it is a matter of great importance to the administration of the district, an administration with which it is hoped the Chiefs (4) will be more closely connected in future. Further, it is a burden, as is all taxation, though an exceedingly light one, and the more rigorous the strictness with which it is regulated and the more inevitable the punishment of evasion, the more evenly and fairly will it be distributed.

[←](#)

APPENDIX D.

THE COLLECTION OF THE JHUM TAX.

As I understand that the collection of jhum tax by Government direct from headman is a new idea in this Province, I venture to add this note, in the hope that it will make it clear that the method is easy, expeditious, cheap and just. I can best begin by describing the duties I have myself carried out for some years in the Naga Hills.

There is nothing in the nature of a jhum tax settlement for so many years. The Deputy Commissioner in Sadr Subdivision, and the Subdivisional Officer Mokokchung arrange their tours so as to visit each part of their jurisdiction in turn. On reaching a village it is counted and assessed, unless this was done a very short time before. That is to say, villages which one often has to pass through are not assessed every visit, but remote villages are. Every effort is made to leave no village unassessed for more than three years, and a list of villages kept in office, with the date of the last reassessment opposite each show how duties are being carried out. Another point stressed is that the Deputy Commissioner and Subdivisional Officer are expected to reassess many villages as possible themselves, only deputing the duty to someone else when it proves physically impossible for one of them to get round his Subdivision in 3 years. This personal counting of houses, and the reassessment, ensures that the officer visits every corner of his Subdivision, and is accessible to every inhabitant of it; and, after all, one might just as well take the opportunity of counting a village when one visits it as not.

The assessment is by houses, double tax being paid only in the rare cases where two families inhabit one house. In reassessing the village, therefore, all the houses are first counted. The persons who have had (2) remission of revenue in the past are looked at, to see if they are still alive, and if for any reason, such as remarriage by a widow, they ought no longer get remission. Then fresh applicants for remission are heard, their houses being personally examined if there is any doubt about a plea of destitution. Remissions are deducted from the total, and the headman is told from many houses he has to collect the tax; he is required to bring in the whole tax, receiving his commission for it in office. The assessment is recorded in a register, and stands till the next assessment, which may be

in two years' time, or maybe in three, alterations between assessments being made from time to time on reports by the headmen, who are bound to notify any change in the number of houses in their villages. Assessment in this way can be carried out very quickly, and is absolutely accurate. Everyone who ought to get remission gets it after personal inspection by the officer and personal enquiry, and no one who ought to pay gets off. It is certainly most popular, and equally certainly effective. As far as I can remember there was not a single rupee of arrears all the time I was at Mokokchung, and if there were any at Kohima, on which my memory is not clear, they were insignificant.

I give below an imaginary page with imaginary names from a Naga Hills assessment register. It compares favourably with the tauzi with 46 headings which the Chakma Chief tries to make his headmen fill up. The left hand page of the register is as follows:- (3) [↩](#)

Village --- Bhaimho

Total houses	Remission	Revenue	Remarks
67	9	58	recounted 11./7./21 J.M.
plus	9	plus	
<u>2</u>		<u>2</u>	
69		60	reported by headman on 2-12-21.
-	<u>1</u>		
68	8	60	ditto on 4-5-21.
-	<u>2</u>		
60	6	60	ditto on 22-10-22
-	<u>2</u>	<u>-2</u>	
64	6	58	ditto on 2-1-23
64	+ <u>1</u>	57	granted remission
	7		8-12-23. J.M.

The right hand page contains details of remissions and would be as follows:-

Hotoi	ex-headman
Gwochaha	headman
Lhuzekhu	Government interpreter
Lushali	old woman
Zukheshe	old man
Natali	widow (for 4 years from 8-12-23 or till remarriage)
Luvishé	Labour corps

This system has always worked perfectly smoothly in the Naga hills, and I cannot see why it should not work in the Hill Tracts, assuming, of course, that no Deputy Commissioner or Subdivisional Officer is ever appointed to the district who is not physically able and mentally keen to visit every part of his jurisdiction. What relics there are left, too, of the old evil custom of absentee headmen would have to be swept away; such men would not be able to report increases or decreases in the number of households in their mauzas. Since the villages here are far smaller and more scattered than they are in the Naga Hills it might be necessary to lay down 5 years instead of 3 as the maximum period for which a village

should be left unvisited. Mauza headmen would have to be made personally responsible for reporting changes in all (4) the villages of the mauzas. At present they do very little work in proportion to the emoluments they receive, and I do not think it would hurt them to move about in their own mauzas a little more even if they had to tuck up their long dhotis and discard the wonderful shoes with which they deck their extremities.

The method of assessment of jhum tax will also require further consideration. Probably the best method will be found to be to assess every house except those which can be proved to contain no person liable to assessment. This will make assessment easy and rapid, and will not entail enquiries as to whether two families in the same house are separate or not. It will also prevent persons who ought to pay the tax from evading it by living with some one who is exempt. If it be found that this method leads to evasion of tax by jhumiyas living in joint houses it can be altered and each couple can be taxed.

The present system is vague and unsatisfactory. The orders of Government are contained in their letter No. 10435 of the 15th December 1924. Mr. Hopkyns was later asked by the Chakma Chief direct for further interpretation of these orders. This he gave in his d.o. No. 24 of 31st January 1925. This letter however does not clear matters. By custom among the Maghs, for instance, a young man lives in his father-in-law's house for the first three years of his marriage and works off his marriage price. By custom he has always been exempt from jhum tax for this period. But now, I understand, young married men often go on living with their fathers-in-law after the three years is up in order to evade taxation. They may not jhum a separate patch but by their help they double the size of the household jhum, which comes to the same thing. Even if Government do not accept my proposal to relieve the Chiefs of the duty (5) of collecting the jhum tax I consider that this question should be considered at leisure and in consultation with the Chiefs before the end of the present settlement.

7.4. History of the family of the Bohmong

This is to follow the fortune and misfortune of one of the grandchildren of the great Emperor Barab Naung, and son of the dethroned, (and afterwards put to death) Nanda Bareng, or Nga Suddaraja, of Pegu.

Tabun Shwe, the king of Tangu, of the Burmese royal family, conquered Pegu, the country of the great Talaing race with its capital Hansavali, took the title of King of the Kings, "Baran" having subordinate to him the kings of Ava, Prome, Tangu and Matarban. After him two usurpers of the Talaing race, supposed to be the descendants of the Talaing royal family, after murdering the Tabun Shwethi, reigned for 3 months and one year; their names were Thamindawt and Thamihlan.

Bareng Naung, the scion of the royal family, and the general of the Tebun Shewti, reconquered the city after defeating the Thaminhlan in a fierce battle. He assumed the title of Barun or Emperor, and reigned full 30 years, being succeeded by his eldest son Nanda Bareng.

In 1596 the tributary king of Tangu leagued with the king of Arakan, Mein Rajagree, who possessed hundreds of warships, and brought a large force. Pegu was overrun by the combined armies and the capital Hansawadi taken; this great city with its beautiful palace was surrendered, and the supreme king, the son of the emperor Bereng Naung, was sent in bondage to Tangu. The king of Tangu returned home, after garrisoning the conquered country; the king of Arakan got the lion's share of the booty, with a white elephant, and the king's daughter Shunthwee and her brother Mong Soa Pyn, a young boy, and 33000 subjects of the Talaing.

Meng Rajagree of Arakan soon returned to his kingdom in 1599 and married Shunthwee, giving her the title of "Chomangree" (great woman conqueror) though she was generally known as Baguphroo (white princess of Pegu) among the Arakanese. Her young brother remained as prince in the palace near his sister; through intrigues of the Arakanese queens Shunthwee soon fell out of favour; the Arakanese also grievously oppressed the Talaing people and many returned to their old homes over the Yomataung range. Mein Rajagree died in 1612, succeeded by his gallant son Mein Khamaung. Finding that so many of his people had fled from the east to their old homes, under the advice of his minister and of

Shunthwee he ordered the Talaing to come to his capital and settle in the west, those in the west being ordered to move to the east.

About three quarters of the people obeyed, but the rest fled to Pegu, it is said by reason of oppression and disease. The rest remained true to (2) their original prince and princess and were subdivided into 12 septs or clans:---

Regresa, Wenesa, Marosa, Kyakpyasa, Sabaksa, Lankadusa, Palangsa, Chinraisa, Marisa, Kolaksa, Farunsa, Kokkadinga, these being taken from the names of rivers and places where they newly settled in the west in the Koladan valley.

In 1620 King Mein Khamaung made preparations to conquer and punish the Falong (Portuguese) chief Gonzalo and the Bengali raja Kula mein in the middle and the western land, with an army of 100,000 men with 150 ships manned by 10000 men; the right wing was in the command of Meng Soa Pyn, (who had married a cousin of Khamaung). The Portuguese were routed, their ships and people captured, and half their forces destroyed, and their chief Gonzalo killed. The Bengali raja lost his dominions one by one, up to the middle land, that is to say from Dacca in the north, Murshidabad in the west, down to the sea in the south. Mengsoa Pyn showed great gallantry and prowess and was appointed governor-general of Boh-maug of the middle land, comprising the Muya or Naaf river in the south, the Feni in the north, the Meghna or blue river in the west, and he and his own Talaing and some Arakanese settled in the country peaceably for several years.

In 1630 Meng soa Pyn was succeeded by his son Meng Raiphroo (nicknamed the white pearl of Palaiphroo) and his reign was marked by many fights with the Bengali raja; the troops of the Moghul emperor compelled the western governor to retire and he and his men were scattered and took refuge in the seaside jungle. All this time Arakan itself was rent by civil war. His son Hariphroo succeeded him

In 1665 as Bohmong, and in his time his strongholds were overpowered and his people driven back with great brutality to the hills by the Moghul army, many returning to Arakan leaving their wealth behind them. Hariphroo fought the Moghul in the hills when opportunity arose, without any assistance from the king of Arakan, though he twice applied to him for aid; Arakan was in great disorder and from there no assistance could be obtained; so Hariphroo died in

great distress about 1687, being succeeded by his nephew Haringao s/o his brother Aungwaphroo, the ablest of the next generation. In his time one adventurer Chanda Wijaya set himself up in Arakan, gathered his forces of 200,000 men with the idea of regaining the lost territory from the Moghul. Haringao received him with great pomp, and they managed to drive away the Moghuls from the large part of the wrested territory, with captures of slaves, elephants, cannon etc. (3) King Chanda Wijaya conferred the title of Bohmongree on Haringao, and returned to Arakan by the upper Sangu and the Kunsaraktaung pass. Wijaya was killed by his son-in-law Chanda Thuriya raja. The Moghuls again invaded the middle land with great losses to our men, and we retired again southwards of the fastnesses of the hills. Haringao applied to the king of Arakan for assistance, but could obtain none and died there leaving a grandson Kong Hla Phroo, son of his dead son Sado Phroo. The new king of Arakan, Raifawso or Chanda Suriya, the drunkard son of Thriya, became so oppressive that Kong Hla Phroo moved again to the middle land, or Chittagong, with his people, and being welcomed by such of his old people as had remained there during his absence of 20 years, took possession of territory upto the Karnafuli or Kansa khyong, and in 1798 settled finally at Bohmong roa. Nine years later Kong Hla Phroo went to Calcutta to see the Company raja, returning after 14 months, dying in 1811 leaving six sons, the eldest Sathanphroo succeeding him.

In 1814 a gang of freebooters from Arakan under the leadership of one Khyambrai revolted against Burmese rule, but were driven out and took shelter in the Bohmong's territory, and established a stronghold in the upper Sangu from which place they raided the Bohmong's people; he was ultimately attacked by Sathanphroo and his force and killed. In 1823 Sathanphroo supplied 500 men to make a road for the East India Company into Arakan, i.e. the Thaludaung of old Arakan trunk road.

In 1822 the Bohmong settled at Bandarban, in 1824 a Bunjogi chief Rangchoolung came with a force to punish his runaway subjects in the Bohmong's territories, but Sathanphroo ordered his general or chakai, Ahchoshun Hindukhai with his men to capture this chief, which was done, the chief being utterly defeated. Sathanphroo died in 1840, and before he could be cremated his coffin was washed away by heavy floods, but miraculously stranded on the western bank. All his brothers except Htoon Hla Phroo predeceased him, and he was very old and

infirm, and gave up his claims to the Bohmongree to his newpew Kamalanga. In his time the deputies of the Ramu and Matamuri mahal refused to pay him tribute, and the Commissioner brought about a settlement in 1847. In 1864 one Angyaphroo defied the Bohmong and established a stronghold at the Bisara range, but Kamalanga sent out his cousin Mongkhai against him and he was subdued, and the rebel was handed over to the British raj. In 1866 Kamalanga abdicated through old age in favour of his brother Momfroo. ↩

[7.5.] Lists of Relationship Terms/Word List

List of Relationship Terms.

Manikchandra Tippera of Ramgarh of Thungbai Huda [24.11.1926]

Mro in pencil

	[Tripura]	[Mro]
1. Paternal grandfather	bochu	opu
2. " grandmother	bochoyi	api
3. Maternal grandfather	bochu	opu
4. " grandmother	chochoi	api
5. Father	bopa	apa
6. Mother	boma	awa
7. Father's elder brother	bini ayung	poma
8. " younger brother	bini althoi	pahiyo
9. " brother's son	bini thabu	nama + name
10. " " daughter	bahanzuk	towama
11. " elder sister	ayinzuk	relung
12. " younger sister	anoi	nko
13. " sister's son	thaku	apu
14. " sister's daughter	bahanzuk	chu
15. " brother's wife	if elder: bayinyak	noko
	if younger:	
16. " sister's husband	bayung	tarang
17. Mother's elder brother	ayung	apu + name
18. " younger brother	malung	apu + name
19. " brother's son	thaku	nayu
20. " brother's daughter	kokoi	noko
21. " elder sister	aynizuk	atai + name
22. " younger sister	nonoi	uram
23. " sister's son	dada (if older than speaker) or kokoi (if younger than speaker)	raiwa + name (if older), uran (if younger than speaker)
24. " sister's daughter		
24A. " sister's husband	ayu	pehi
24B. " brother's wife	nonoi	api
25. Son	bosa	cha

26.	Daughter	bisazuk	chema
27.	Elder brother (M.S.)	da	chepata
28.	Elder brother (D.S.)	da	rak
29.	younger brother (M.S.)	bopayung	naoma + name
30.	Younger brother (D.S.)	bopayung	ra
31.	Elder brother's wife (M.S.)	basoi	atai
32.	Elder brother's wife (W.S.)	basoi	atai
33.	Younger brother's wife (M.S.)	baishoraok (cannot speak)	incha + name
34.	Younger brother's wife (W.S.)	koyi	yaocha
35.	Brother's son	bopayung bosa	chepa
36.	Brother's daughter	bopayung bosazuk	chema + name
37.	Elder sister (M.S.)	boboi	towata
38.	Elder sister (W.S.)	boboi	taima + name
39.	Younger sister (M.S.)	bahanzok	towama + name
40.	Younger sister (W.S.)	bahanzok	naoma + name
41.	Elder sister's husband (M.S.)	bokumoi	incha
42.	Elder sister's husband (W.S.)	bokumoi	name
43.	Younger sister's husband (MS)	bopayung	nai + name
44.	Younger sister's husband (W.S.)	bopayung	naoma + name
45.	Sister's son	bosa	nakcha
	" daughter	chu
46.	Husband	bosai	huwa
47.	Wife	bihi	meshi
48.	Husband's father	bokera	yaocha
49.	" mother	bokera	noko
50.	" elder brother	da	taima (naoma reply)
51.	" younger brother	bopayung	naoma
52.	" elder sister	boboi	yaocha
53.	" younger sister	bahanzuk	towana
54.	" brother's wife	basoi	naoma
55.	" sister's husband	kokoi	nai
56.	Wife's father	kera	apu
57.	" mother	kerazuk	api
58.	" elder brother	da	nai
59.	" younger brother	kokoi	naoma
60.	" elder sister	boboi	atai
61.	" younger sister	kokoi	naoma

62.	“ brother’s wife	basoi (if elder) boboi (if younger)	naisarma
63.	Husband’s brother’s son	bosa	chepa + name
64.	“ “ daughter	bosazuk	chema + name
65.	“ sister’s son	bosa	makcha
66.	“ sister’s daughter	bosazuk	chu
67.	Wife’s brother’s son	bosa	nai
68.	“ “ daughter	bosazuk	chu
69.	Wife’s sister’s son	bosa	chepa
70.	“ “ daughter	bosazuk	chema
71.	Son’s son	bosho	[on]ly name
72.	Son’s daughter	“	“
73.	Daughter’s son	“	“
74.	“ daughter	“	“
	Son’s wife		yaocha
	daughter’s husband		makcha
	can marry anyone two generations separate		

24/11/26

List of Relationship Terms.

Kangcha-areng Magh of Ramghar

[25.11.1926]

1. Paternal grandfather	apu
2. " grandmother	abong
3. Maternal grandfather	apu
4. " grandmother	abong
5. Father	aba
6. Mother	ado
7. Father's elder brother	phagni
8. " younger brother	abye
9. " brother's son	akhogni (if older than speaker), + hyingale (if younger)
10. " " daughter
11. " elder sister	arigri
12. " younger sister	arishi
13. " sister's son	yiopa
14. " sister's daughter	toma
15. " brother's wife	ayngri + ayushi (...W age)
16. " sister's husband	mamung
17. Mother's elder brother	kho (W.S), yiopa (M.S)
18. " younger brother	hamung
19. " brother's son	name (no word)
20. " brother's daughter	" "
21. " elder sister	ayngri
22. " younger sister	aynyeshi
23. " sister's son	akho (elder), + nische (younger) (reciprocal)
24. " sister's daughter younger "	ami (if older than speaker), name if nam hä (illegible)
24A. " sister's husband	pugri
24B. " brother's wife	ari (name forbidden)
25. Son	sa (descriptive – name used in address.
26. Daughter	sami " " " " "
27. Elder brother (M.S.)	akhogri
28. Elder brother (W.S.)	amaong
29. younger brother (M.S.)	nynigshe

30. Younger brother (W.S.)	moang (descriptive), name used in address.
31. Elder brother's wife (M.S.)	menegri
32. Elder brother's wife (W.S.)	romagri
33. Younger brother's wife (M.S.)	mereshi
34. Younger brother's wife (W.S.)	romashi
35. Brother's son	as son
36. Brother's daughter	as daughter
37. Elder sister (M.S.)	ameghri (older), ameshi (illegible) (name not used)
38. Elder sister (W.S.)
39. Younger sister (M.S.)	namha (descriptive). Name used in address.
40. Younger sister (W.S.)	nima
41. Elder sister's husband (M.S.)	yropagri
42. Elder sister's husband (W.S.)	khogri
43. Younger sister's husband (MS)	yropashe
44. Younger sister's husband (W.S.)	khoshi
45. Sister's son	sa (descr.), + sami for daughter
46. Husband	laong (descriptive), hoi(in address), or if father, father of so + so.
47. Wife	muja (descr.), hamoma (in address) or if mother, mother of so + so
48. Husband's father	mamung
49. " mother	ari
50. " elder brother	kogri
51. " younger brother	maishi
52. " elder sister	romagri
53. " younger sister	romashi
54. " brother's wife	ami (elder brother's wife), name for younger's wife
55. " sister's husband	among
56. Wife's father	segong
57. " mother	segongma
58. " elder brother	yropagri
59. " younger brother	yropashi
60. " elder sister	meragri
61. " younger sister	krima (descriptive), name used

62.	“ brother’s wife	ami (elder brother’s), name for younger
63.	Husband’s brother’s son	sa (descriptive)
64.	“ “ daughter	sami ()
65.	“ sister’s son	name used
66.	“ sister’s daughter	name used
67.	Wife’s brother’s son	tu (descriptive) name used in address
68.	“ “ daughter	tuma (descriptive) name used in address
69.	Wife’s sister’s son	sa (descriptive)
70.	“ “ daughter	samit ()
71.	Son’s son	merin (descr.), name used
72.	Son’s daughter	merin (descr.), name used
73.	Daughter’s son	merin
74.	“ daughter	merin
75.	Son’s wife	kroma
76.	Daughter’s husband	soma

Word list Mro - Khyeng

[10.12.1926]

	Mro	Khyeng
„chaul“	mi	chong (low note)
“what“	hom	bu
one	lok	ngāt
two	pre	nhi
three	sam	tūm
four	tūli	ehi
five	tanga	hngan
six	terok	chok
seven	krenit	se
eight	ruga	set
nine	toku	ko
ten	homot	ha
eleven	halailo	paili yak
twelve	halaipre	paili whi
thirteen	halaisam	paili tum
fourteen	halaitūli	paili ehi
fifteen	halaitanga	paili hngau
sixteen	halaiterok	paili chok
seventeen	halaihrenit	pailiset
eighteen	halairiyat	pailisat
nineteen	halaitoku	pailiho
twenty	prupoimi	pailikul
twentyone		kulghūlnghat
thirty	chungkam	tumghit
forty	likam	lhighit
fifty	ngakam	hnganghet
sixty	terokkam	chokghit ei: wue omoi
seventy	hremikkam	seghit ei not: so nedoi moitiya
eighty	riyakam	setghit I gave ke klepek
ninety	akam	khra ak I did not give ke pekгна
one hundred	akam	khra ak
good	yung	apwoi
bad	yungdoi	poya
red	arhihma	eshen
white	akhoma	obok
black	eynigma	ohōm

dao	serai	chim
spear	rhe	she
cloth	wan	aowa
head	lu	luki
leg	klung	okho
[unreadable]	bong	okhut
cut	tuwen	khoso
hit	teyit	kholok
unreadable	patkai	altäm
fall	ip	okin
die	khloagkai	edhui
eat	chahom	khe-e
drink	angkom	kho-ok
„madhu“		chimle
meat	chakgua	osho
fish		ngan
Stone	howa	lung
Earth	bon	dek
Water	tui	tui
Fire	mai	me
sky	mokwong	hon
sun	chhat	khoni
moon	lama	khro
star	khere	ase
jungle	khaorong	tho
tree	serig	ting
“jhum”	uwa	lo
house	kim	in
village	kowa	nam
man	kechawua	potto
woman	mishuwua	mhü-to
father	apa	po
mother	aowon	ma
son	anchaowe	chä
daughter	anchama	mhü-to-chä
cow	chuja	shiyal
dog	kuyi	uyi
fowl	wa	a
pig	pa	wok
rice	(dhan) cha	chong (high note)

Khyeng List of Relationship Terms.

Taken from Pilifru of Kukiyachhari 19/12/26.

1. Paternal grandfather	tha
2. " grandmother	chi
3. Maternal grandfather	pushel
4. " grandmother	pui
5. Father	po
6. Mother	ma
7. Father's elder brother	po-lin
8. " younger brother	po-lek
9. " brother's son	tā
10. " " daughter	chi
11. " elder sister	chang
12. " younger sister	chang-lek
13. " sister's son	bai
14. " sister's daughter	nhe
15. " brother's wife	nulen
16. " sister's husband	mokchanglen
17. Mother's elder brother	pulen
18. " younger brother	pu
19. " brother's son	nhe
20. " brother's daughter	nhe
21. " elder sister	ngolen
22. " younger sister	ngolek
23. " sister's son	tā
24. " sister's daughter	chi
24A. " sister's husband	poslen, po-lek
24B. " brother's wife	pui
25. Son	chā
26. Daughter	chunhu
27. Elder brother (M.S.)	talen
28. Elder brother (D.S.)	ta
29. younger brother (M.S.)	ngo
30. Younger brother (D.S.)	be
31. Elder brother's wife (M.S.)	nōk
32. Elder brother's wife (D.S.)	nōk
33. Younger brother's wife (M.S.)	nyo piya
34. Younger brother's wife (W.S.)	be piya
35. Brother's son	chan, nyo chan, be chan

36. Brother's daughter	kuta etc chunhu
37. Elder sister (M.S.)	chilen
38. Elder sister (W.S.)	chilen
39. Younger sister (M.S.)	chilencho
40. Younger sister (W.S.)	chilek
41. Elder sister's husband (M.S.)	mhōk
42. Elder sister's husband (W.S.)	che
43. Younger sister's husband (MS)	nhōk
44. Younger sister's husband (W.S.)	ngan pota
45. Sister's son	tu
" daughter	tu
46. Husband	pota
47. Wife	piya
48. Husband's father	chechang
49. " mother	chichang
50. " elder brother	che
51. " younger brother	chupu
52. " elder sister	rong ma
53. " younger sister	rong ma
54. " brother's wife	ngan
55. " sister's husband	lā or be
56. Wife's father	pushel
57. " mother	puyi
58. " elder brother	yokpa (answer mtok)
59. " younger brother	yokpa (answer mhok)
60. " elder sister	khongok
61. " younger sister	krema
62. " brother's wife	bhe
63. Husband's brother's son	che chan, chupu chan
64. " " daughter	chechumhu, chupucho
65. " sister's son	rongmaphau
66. " sister's daughter	rongma cho chuhhu
67. Wife's brother's son	yokpa cho an (answer mokchang)
68. " " daughter	yokpa chan hu (answer mokchang)
69. Wife's sister's son	kongok cho
70. " " daughter	kongok chongno
71. Son's son	chan tu
72. Son's daughter	chan tu
73. Daughter's son	chun hu tu
74. " daughter	chu nhu tu

8. The Photographic Collection. The Album

The collection consists of 101 negatives (duplicates not counted). They are kept in one Album and in several envelopes in the “Manuscripts and Rare Books Division” of the “Archives of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS).

The photographs are listed following the order in J.P. Mills’ Album of negatives in the Archive of the SOAS, London, the captions are his. In some cases I have added captions marked by “GH” which were made by Geraldine Hobson.

This order does not correspond to the chronology of his trip in the CHT.

The Chronological Order below contains links to every picture. Below each picture there is a back button and a foreward button. The back button leads the reader back to the Chronological Order. The forward button contains a link to the discussion of the photographs.

8.1 Chronological Order

Number	Title	Place	Date
[1]	Mro house	Yimpu	12.12.1926?
[2]	Mro house	Yimpu	12.12.1926?
[3]	Mro woman combing hair	Yimpu	12.12.1926?
[4]	Mro headman	Yimpu	12.12.1926?
[5]	Two Mro youths	Chekyong	11.12.1926
[6]	Woman + girl, Mro	Khaitung	13.12.1926
[7]	Woman, girl + man	Khaitung	13.12.1926
[8]	Girl pounding, Mro	Khaitung	13.12.1926
[9]	Girl pounding, Mro	Khaitung	13.12.1926
[10]	Girl winnowing, Mro	Khaitung	13.12.1926
[11]	Three children, Mro	Khaitung	13.12.1926
[12]	Place of sacrifice [Mro]	[Khaitung]	13.12.1926
[13]	House, Mro	Khaitung	13.12.1926
[14]	House, Mro	Khaitung	13.12.1926
[15]	Headman + wife, Mro	Bali	12.12.1926
[16]	Mro coolie (front)	Bali	12.12.1926
[17]	Mro coolie (back)	[Bali]	12.12.1926
[18]	Burning place, Mro	Rekyong	[14.12.1926]
[19]	Burning place, Mro	Rekyong	[14.12.1926]
[20]	Burning place, Mro	Rekyong	[14.12.1926]
[21]	View from Camp Bali, [Mru]	Bali	12.12.1926

[22]	Three Mro men	Bandarban	09.12.1926
[23]	Lushai woman	Trupu/Yimpung	[14.12.1926]
[24]	Two men [Pangkhua]	Basanta Pankhu Kuki	30.12.1926
[25]	Woman + girl [Pangkhua]	Basanta Pankhu Kuki	30.12.1926
[26]	Youth, woman + children [Pangkhua]	Basanta Pankhu Kuki	30.12.1926
[27]	Boy, girl + baby [Pangkhua]	Basanta Pankhu Kuki	30.12.1926
[28]	Man + two women [Pangkhua]	Basanta Pankhu Kuki	30.12.1926
[29]	Two boys [Pangkhua]	Basanta Pankhu Kuki	30.12.1926
[30]	A boy [Pangkhua]	Basanta Pankhu Kuki	30.12.1926
[31]	Woman + girl [Pangkhua]	Basanta Pankhu Kuki	30.12.1926
[32]	Two boys [Pangkhua]	Basanta Pankhu Kuki	30.12.1926
[33]	Mithan posts [Pangkhua]	Basanta Pankhu Kuki	30.12.1926
[34]	House [Pangkhua]	Basanta Pankhu Kuki	30.12.1926
[35]	View of village [Pangkhua]	Basanta Pankhu Kuki	30.12.1926
[36]	Bunjogi Kukis [Bawm]	Chingkyong	[09.12.1926]
[37]	Bunjogi Kukis [Bawm]	Chingkyong	[09.12.1926]
[38]	Bunjogi Kukis [Bawm]	Chingkyong	[09.12.1926]
[39]	One Bonjogi Kuki [Bawm]	Bandarban	[09.12.1926]
[40]	Three Bonjogi Kuki [Bawm]	Bandarban	[18.12.1926]
[41]	Girl + two men, Khyeng	Arachhari	19.12.1926
[42]	Girl + man, Khyeng	Kukiyachari	19.12.1926
[43]	House, Khyeng	Arachhari	19.12.1926
[44]	Headman + family, Tippera	Nharamukh	19.12.1926
[45]	Headman + family, Tippera	Nharamukh	19.12.1926
[46]	House, Tippera	Nharamukh	19.12.1926
[47]	House, Tippera	Nharamukh	19.12.1926
[48]	Tippera boys on Sangu	[Sangu river]	09.12.1926?
[49]	Tippera boys on Sangu	[Sangu river]	09.12.1926?
[50]	Tippera man + two Women	Naokha/Naskher(?)	09.12.1926?
[51]	Tippera youth	Bandarban	09.12.1926
[52]	2 women + 3 children, Tippera	Nunchari	21.11.1926
[53]	Man + family, Tippera	Nunchari	21.11.1926
[54]	Girl + two boys, Tippera	Nunchari	21.11.1926
[55]	S. Magh [Marma]	Chekyong	11.12.1926
[56]	Temple, S. Magh [Marma]	Chekyong	11.12.1926
[57]	Bohmong's family [Marma]	[Bandarban]	08.12.1926
[58]	Bohmong's family [Marma]	[Bandarban]	08.12.1926

[59]	Bohmong's son + wife [Marma]	[Bandarban]	08.12.1926
[60]	Bohmong's son + his wife [Marma]	[Bandarban]	08.12.1926
[61]	Bohmong's son [Marma]	[Bandarban]	08.12.1926
[62]	Hdman of Pulikha + family, S. Magh [Marma]	[Pulikha]	15.12.1926
[63]	Hdman of Pulikha + family, S. Magh [Marma]	[Pulikha]	15.12.1926
[64]	Procession	Bandarban	10.12.1926
[65]	Procession	Bandarban	10.12.1926
[66]	The Bohmong [Marma]	[Bandarban]	08.12.1926
[67]	The Bohmong [Marma]	[Bandarban]	08.12.1926
[68]	The Bohmong [Marma]	[Bandarban]	08.12.1926
[69]	House N. Magh [Marma]	Maischari	21.11.1926
[70]	Hurricane house N. Magh [Marma]	Maischari	21.11.1926
[71]	Daughter of Mong Raja + servant [Marma]	Singinala	20.11.1926
[72]	Old woman (N. Magh) [Marma]	Singhinala	20.11.1926
[73]	View of Rangamati	[Rangamati]	22.12.1926
[74]	View of Rangamati	[Rangamati]	22.12.1926
[75]	View of Rangamati	[Rangamati]	22.12.1926
[76]	View of Rangamati	[Rangamanti]	22.12.1926
[77]	Polt Lakhyichhari	?	22./29.12.1926
[78]	Man + family, Chakma	Bamer Toyichakma	29.11.1926
[79]	Worship place, Chakma	Bamer Toyichakma	29.11.1926
[80]	Groups, Chakma	Bamer Toyichakma	29.11.1926
[81]	Groups, Chakma	Bamer Toyichakma	29.11.1926
[82]	Houses, Chakma	Lakhyichhari	22./29.12.1926
[83]	Mother + child [Chakma]	Undrimahachari	30.12.1926
[84]	Girl + child [Chakma]	Undrimahachari	30.12.1926
[85]	Two girls [Chakma]	Undrimahachari	30.12.1926
[86]	Two girls [Chakma]	Undrimahachari	30.12.1926
[87]	Man, wife + child [Chakma]	[Undrimahachari]	30.12.1926
[88]	Woman, child + 2 girls [Chakma]	Undrimahachari	30.12.1926
[89]	Woman, child + 2 girls [Chakma]	Undrimahachari	30.12.1926
[90]	Chakma burning place	[to Rangamati]	20.12.1926
[91]	Girl + woman, Chakma	Mahalchari	20.11.1926
[92]	Girl + woman, Chakma	Mahalchari	20.11.1926
[93]	Majirakhine Lake		22.11.1926
[94]	[2 shields, 1 "crocodile harp"]	Bandarban	09.12.1926

[95]	[House with verandah]	?	?
[96]	[3 men]	?	?
[97]	[Houses]	?	?
[98]	[House with veranda]	?	?
[99]	[2 women, 1 smoking pipe]	?	?
[100]	[4 women, 3 spinning cotton]	?	?
[101]	[Man]	?	?

[...] my addition

? Photo, place and date not identified

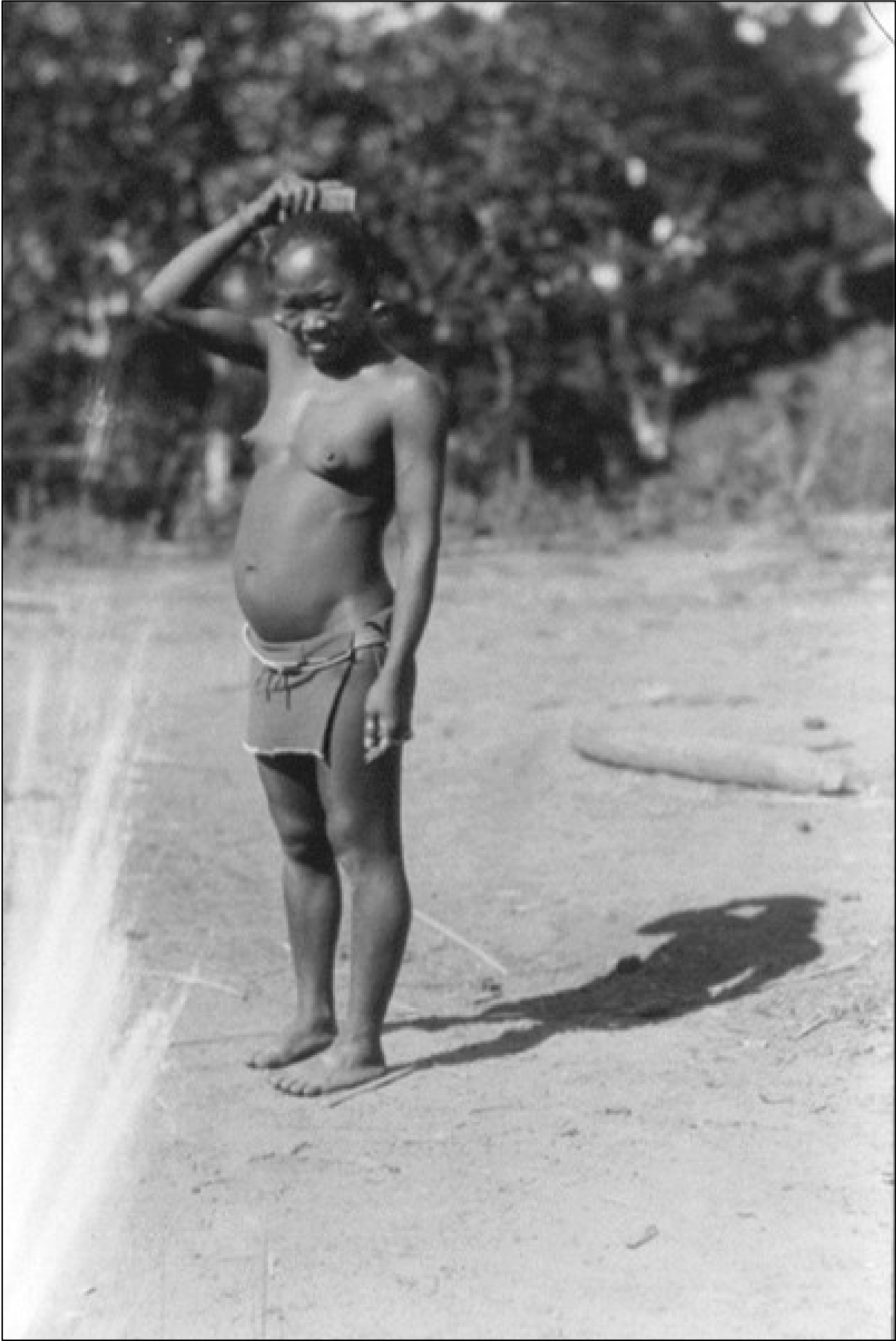
[1] Mro house, Yimpu



[2] Mro house at Yimpu



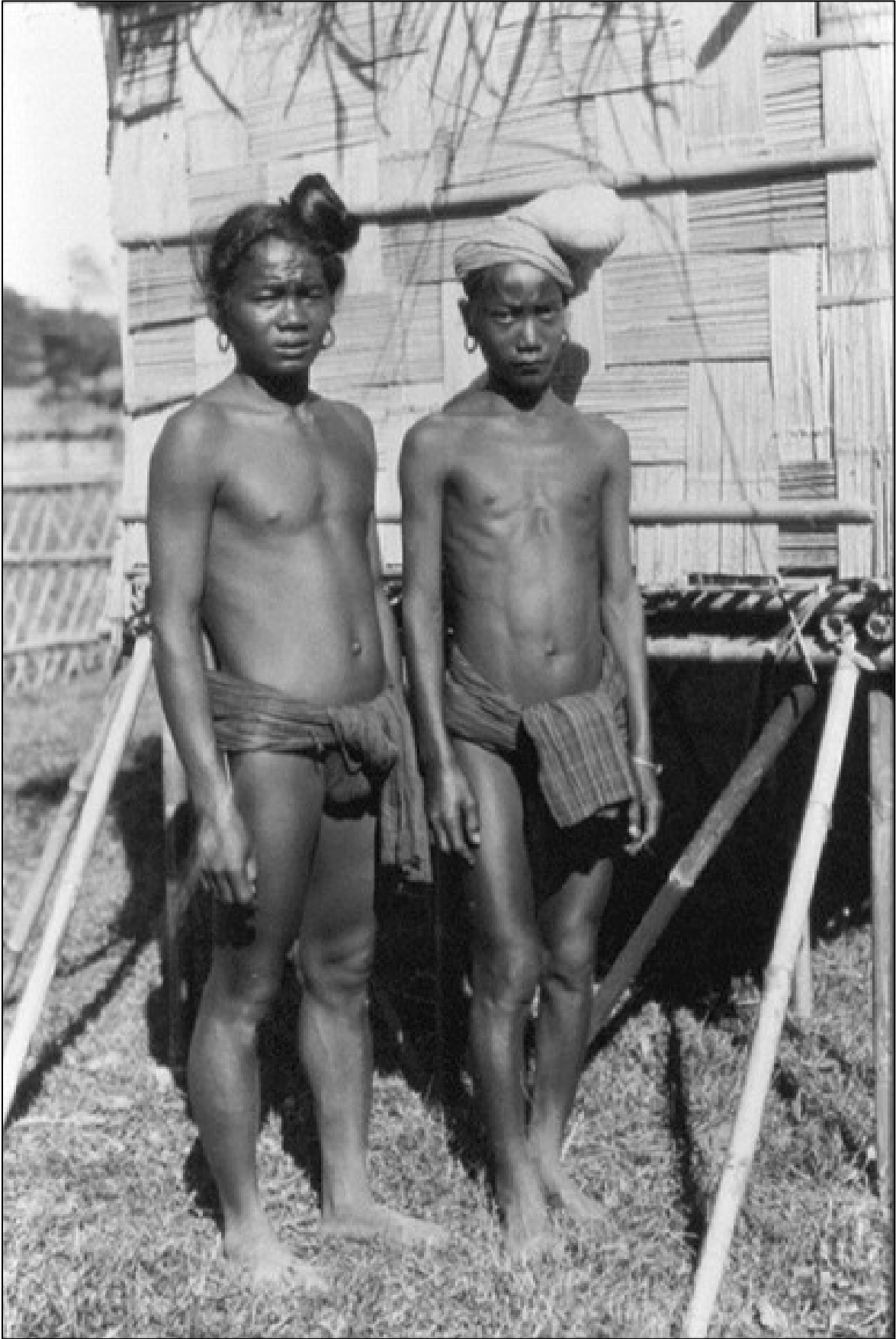
[3] Mro woman combing hair, Yimpu



[4] Mro headman, Yimpu



[5] Two Mro youths at Chekyong



↔ ↔

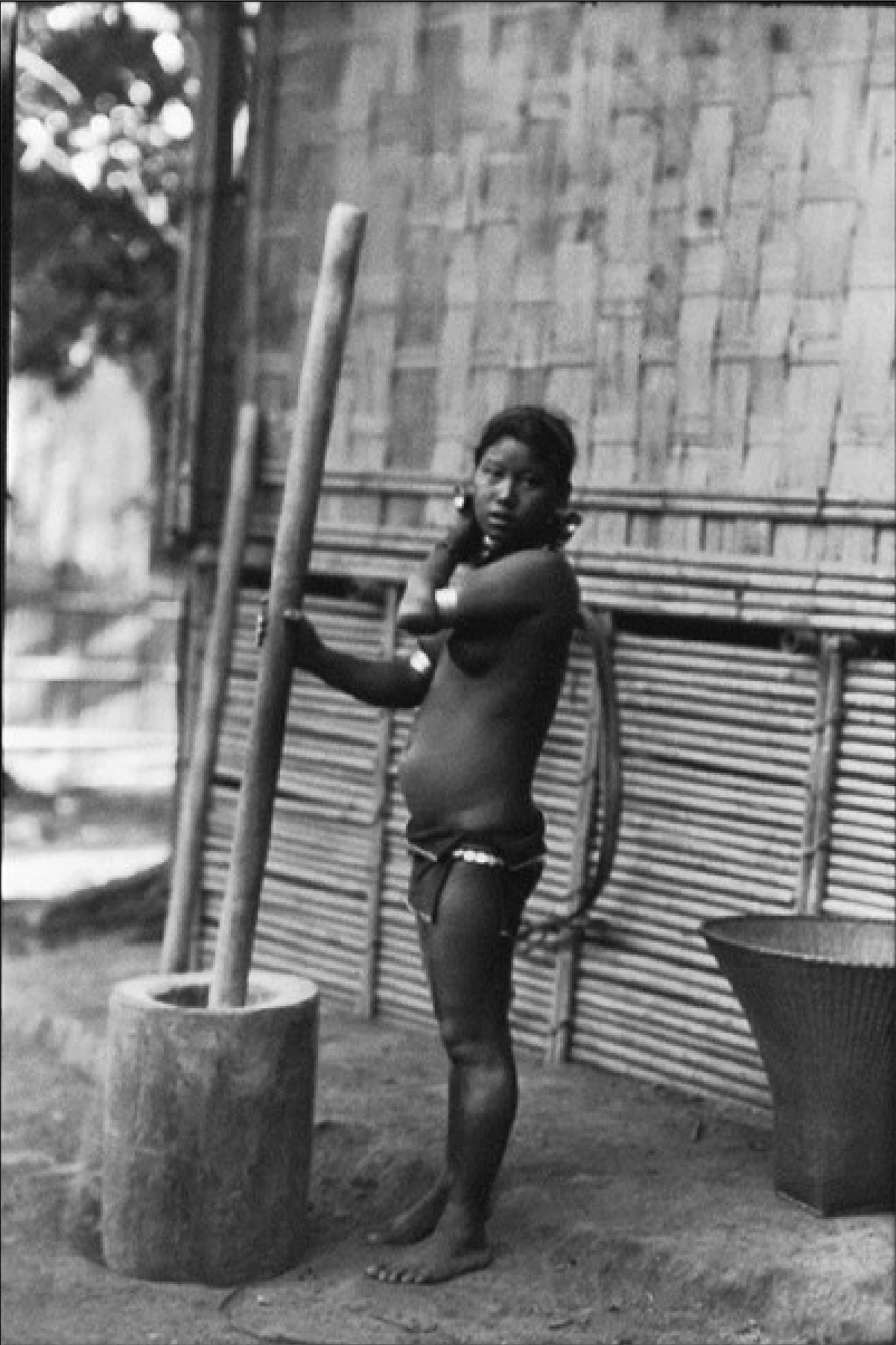
[6] Woman & girl (Mro) Khaitung



[7] Woman, girl & man in Khaitung



[8] Girl pounding, Khaitung (Mro)



[9] Girl pounding, Khaitung (Mro)



[10] Girl winnowing, Khaitung (Mro)



[11] Three children, Khaitung (Mro)



GH: Three children, the boys dressed in loincloths with their long hair worn loose and the girl with her hair in a bun and wearing a narrow skirt. Her trumpet-shaped ear ornaments are of silver ⇐ ⇒

[12] Place of sacrifice, Khaitung



[13] House, Khaitung (Mro)



[14] House, Khaitung (Mro)



[15] Headman & wife, Bali (Mro)



[16] Mro coolie (front) Bali



[17] Mro coolie (back)



[18] Burning place (Mro) Rekyong



[19] Burning place (Mro) Rekyong



[20] Burning place (Mro) Rekyong



[21] View from Camp Bali [Mru]



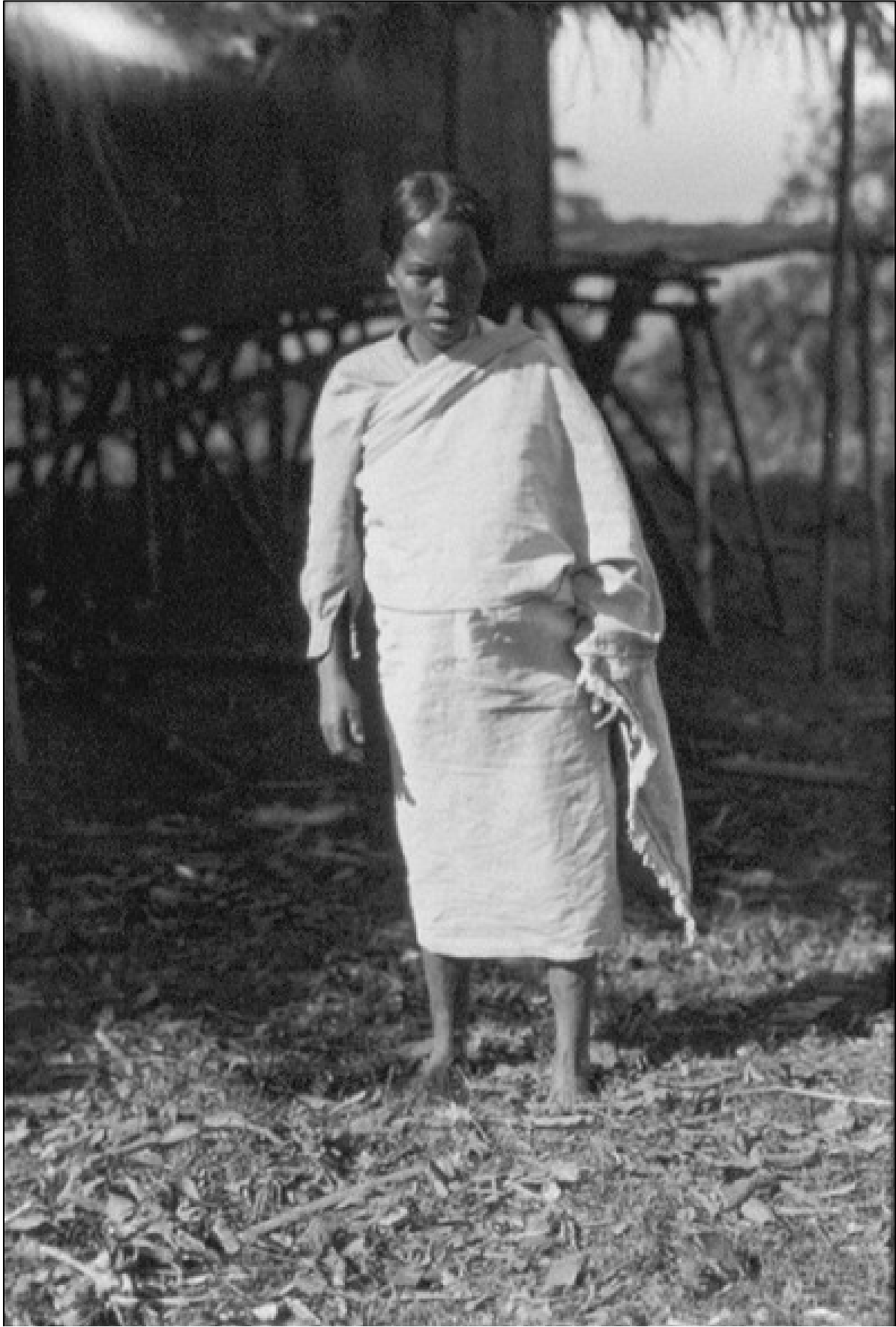
[22] Three Mro men, Bandarban



GH: Three men, wearing white loincloths and a narrow strip of cloth wound round the head. The hair is dressed in a bun on the left side of the head with a bone pin through the hair knot.

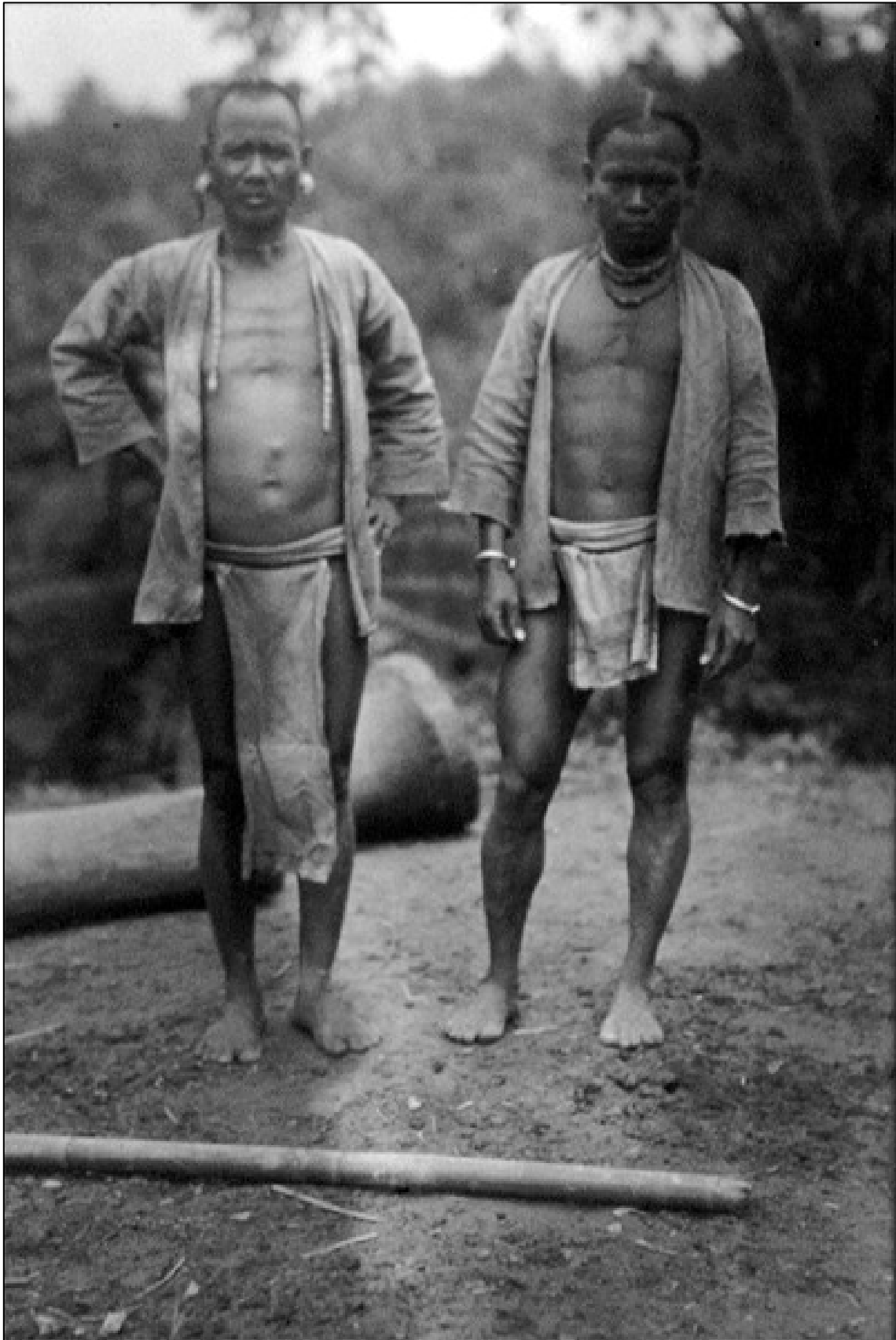


[23] Lushai woman at Yimpung



GH: Lushai Christian girl, Yimpu

[24] Two men, Basanta Pankhu Kuki



GH: Basanta. Two Pankho Kuki men, wearing loincloths and loose coats.



[25] Woman + girl, Basanta Pankhu Kuki



GH: Two Pankho Kuki women and a young child, the woman on the right wearing beads and rings of brass wire round her waist. They are standing outside their house, the walls of which are made of broad interwoven slats of bamboo. Also in the picture are a finely woven cane basket, a large metal pot and various gourds and other containers. ⇐ ⇒

[26] Youth woman + children, Basanta Pankhu Kuki



[27] Boy, girl + baby, Basanta Pankhu Kuki



[28] Man + two women, Basanta Pankhu Kuki

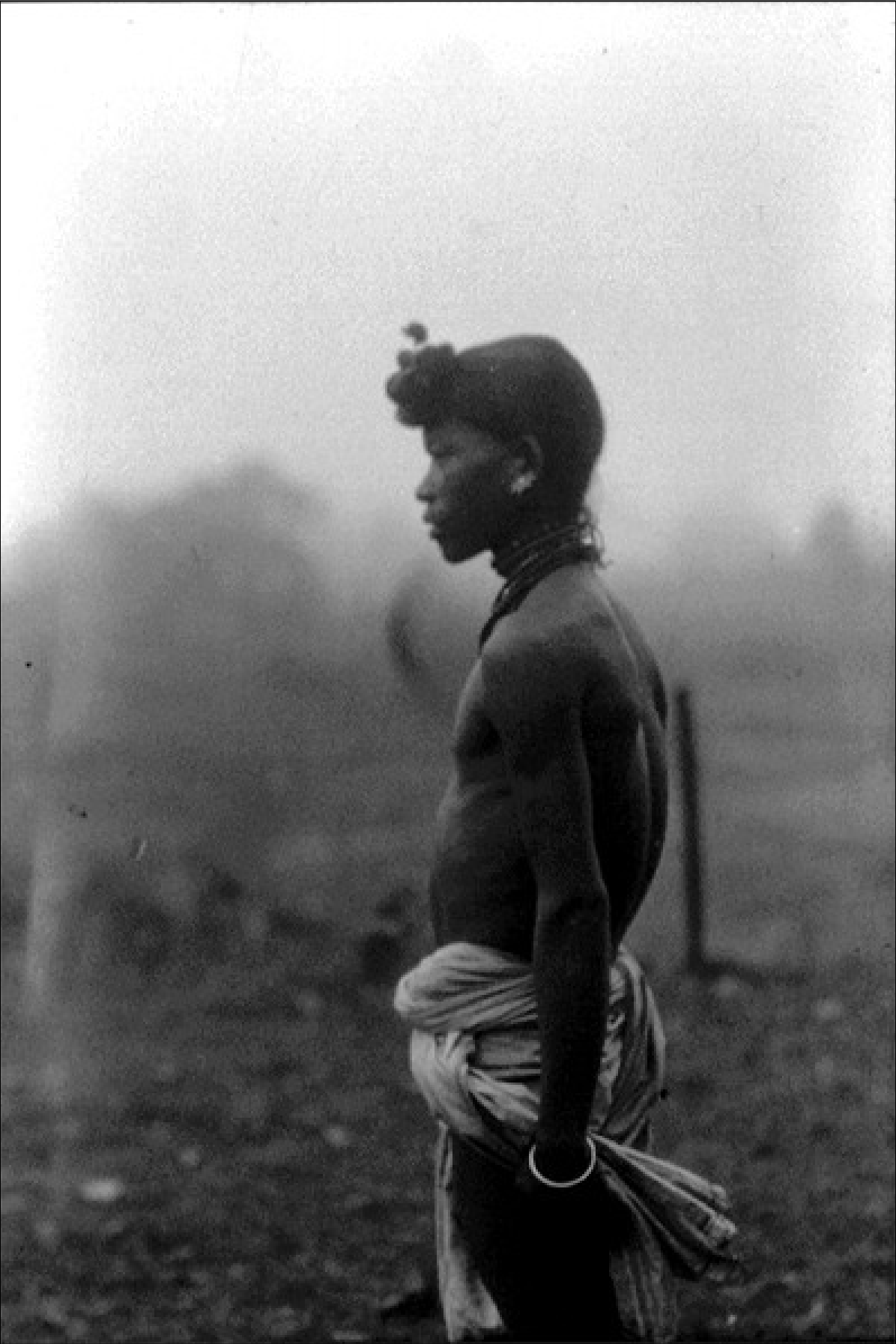


[29] Two boys, Basanta Pankhu Kuki



GH: 1926, Basanta. A Pankho Kuki man and boy, the latter with his hair drawn into a bun above his forehead with a steel pin pushed through the hair knot. ⇐ ⇒

[30] A boy, Basanta Pankhu Kuki



[31] Woman + girl, Basanta Pankhu Kuki



GH:1926, Basanta, Pankho Kuki. A woman and child, the woman wearing a white skirt with narrow red lines, many necklaces, and plugs of bone or bamboo in her earlobes. Behind her is a loom of the Indonesian type. ⇐ ⇒

[32] Two boys, Basanta Pankhu Kuki



GH: 1926. Basanta. A Pankho Kuki man and boy, the latter with his hair drawn into a bun above his forehead with a steel pin pushed through the Hair knot. ⇐ ⇒

[33] Mithan post, Basanta Pankhu Kuki



GH: 1926. Basanta Kuki. A forked post set up outside the house of a man who has done the mithan sacrifice. A stylised mithan head is carved below the fork. ⇐ ⇒

[34] House, Bansanta Pankhu Kuki



GH: 1926. A Pankho Kuki village, also containing a few Bunjogi houses, in the north of the district. The houses are built on stilts, with a porch in front and a sitting-out platform at the back, similar to a typical Naga house. Like those of the Nagas, the Kuki villages are invariably sited on ridges. ⇐ ⇨

[35] View of village Basanta Pankhu Kuki



GH: 1926. A Pankho Kuki village, also containing a few Bunjogi houses, in the north of the district. The houses are built on stilts, with a porch in front and a sitting-out platform at the back, similar to a typical Naga house. Like those of the Nagas, the Kuki villages are invariably sited on ridges.

↔ ↔

[36] Bunjogi Kukis, Chingkyong



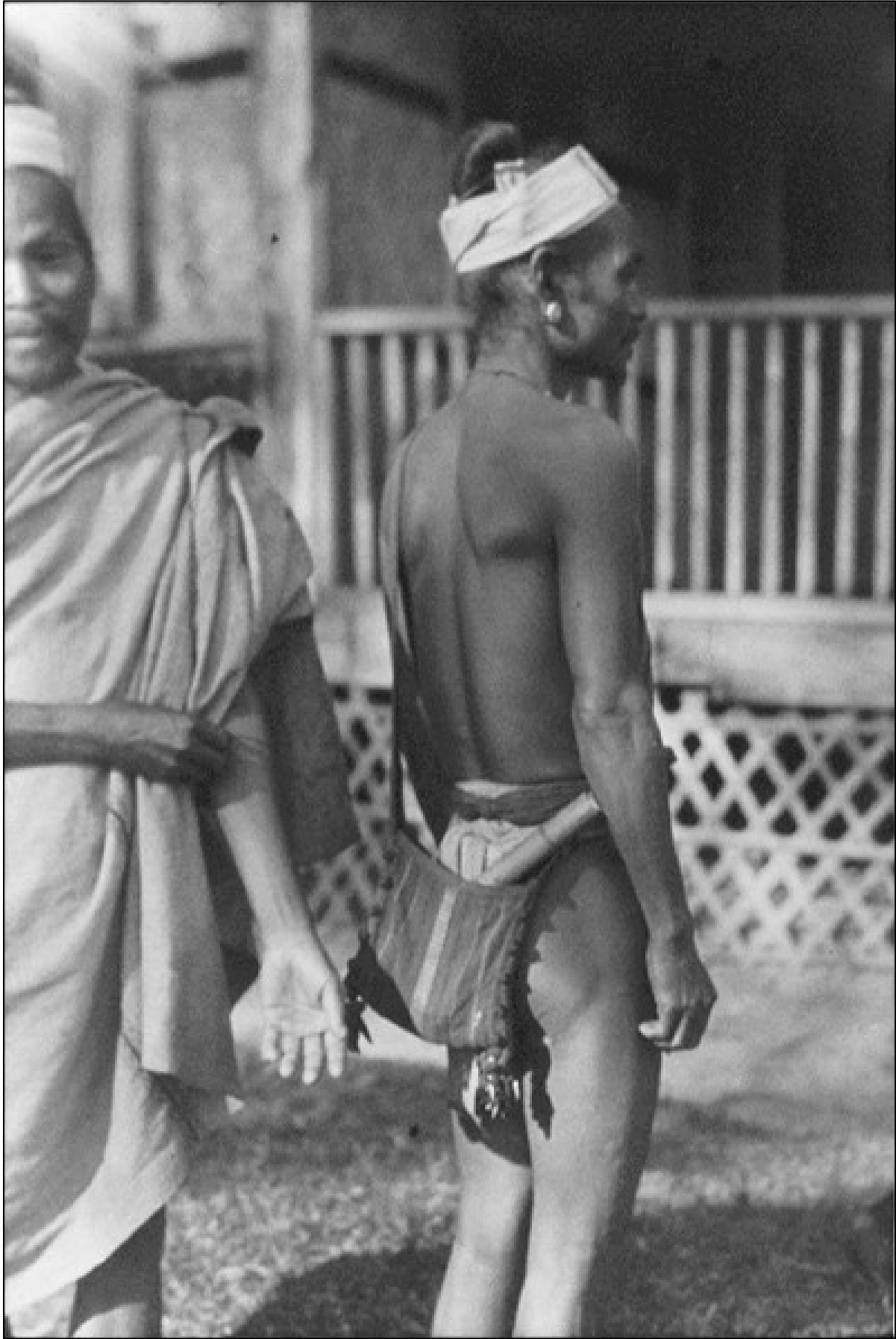
⇐ ⇒

[37] Bunjogi Kukis, Chingkyong



⇐ ⇒

[38] One Bonjogi Kuki, Bandarban



[39] Three Bonjogi Kuki, Bandarban



[40] Three Bonjogi Kuki, Bandarban



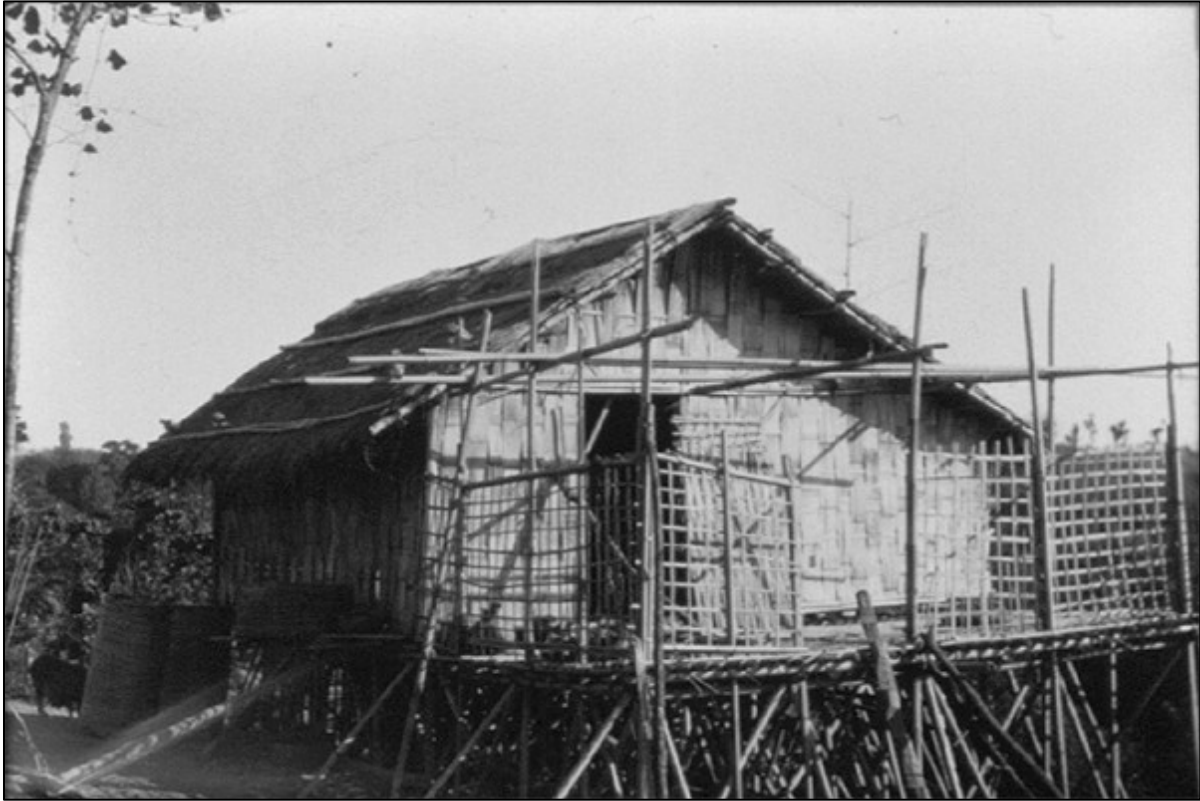
[41] Girl + two men (Khyeng), Arachhari



[42] Girl + man (Khyeng), Kukiyaehari



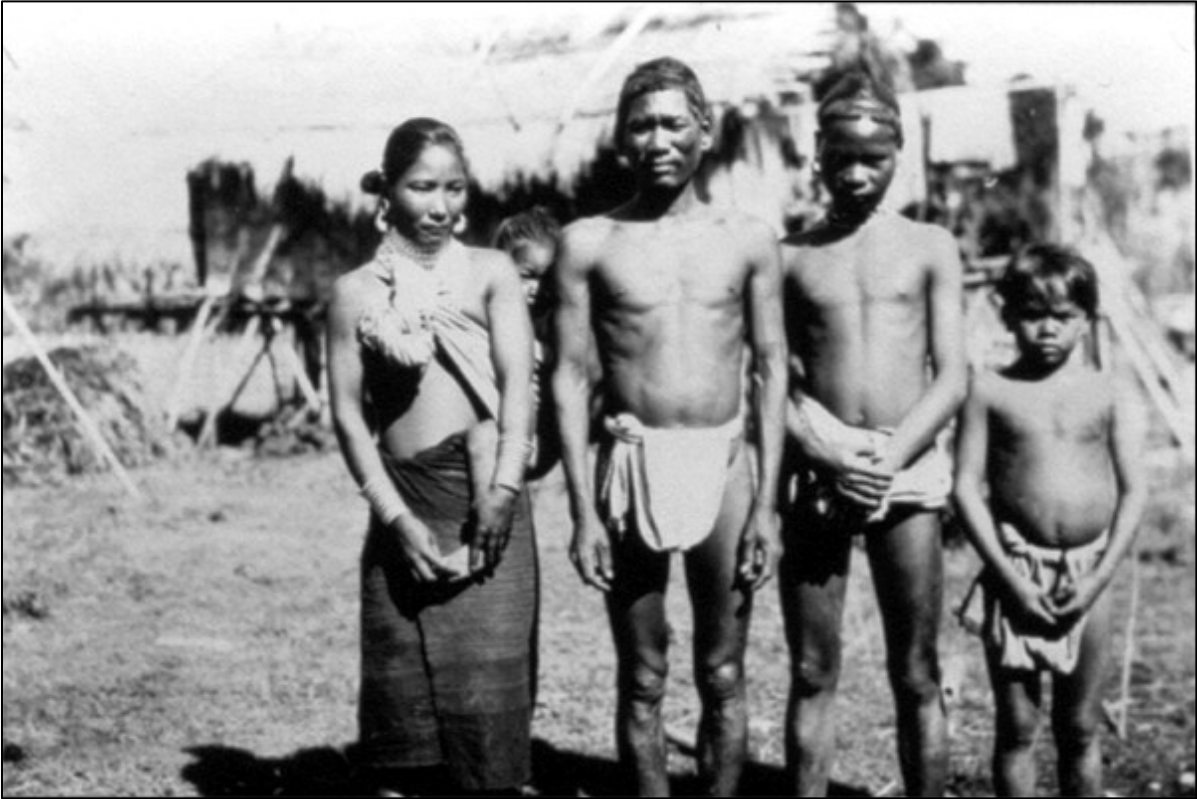
[43] House (Khyeng), Arachhari



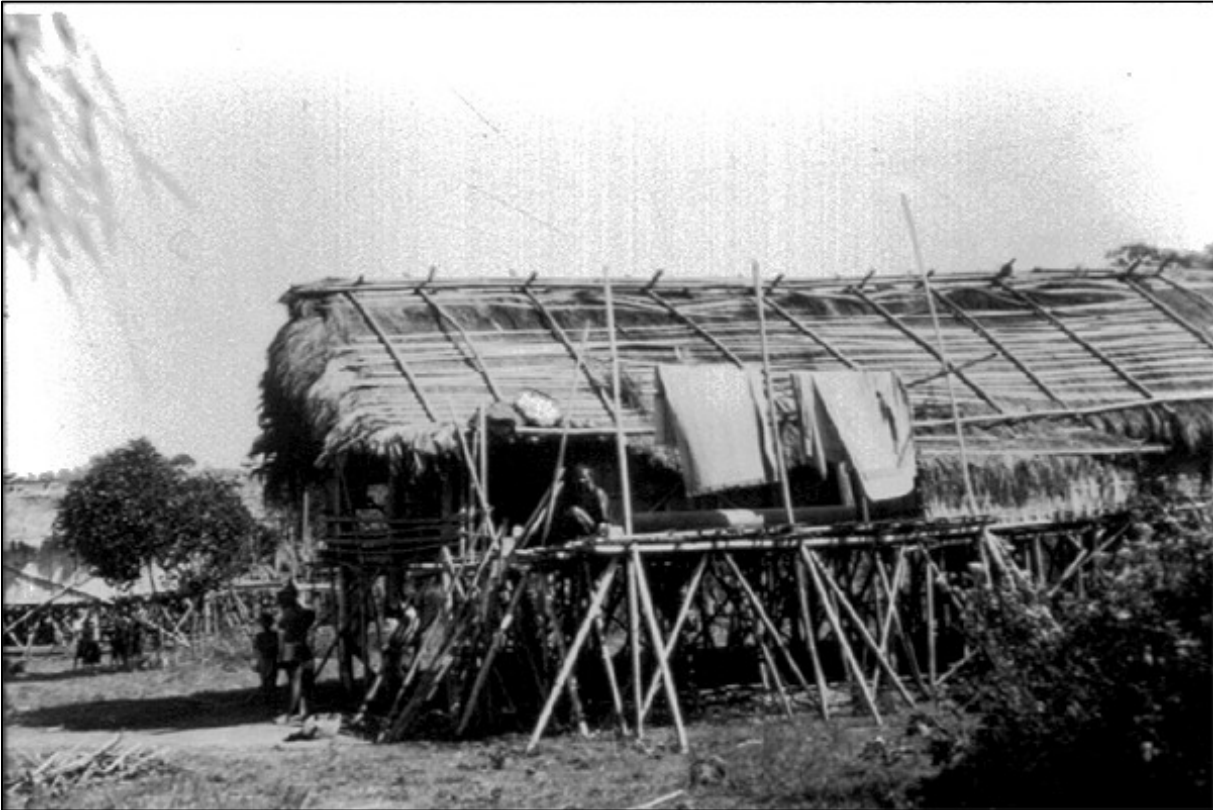
[44] Headman + family (Tippera), Nharamukh



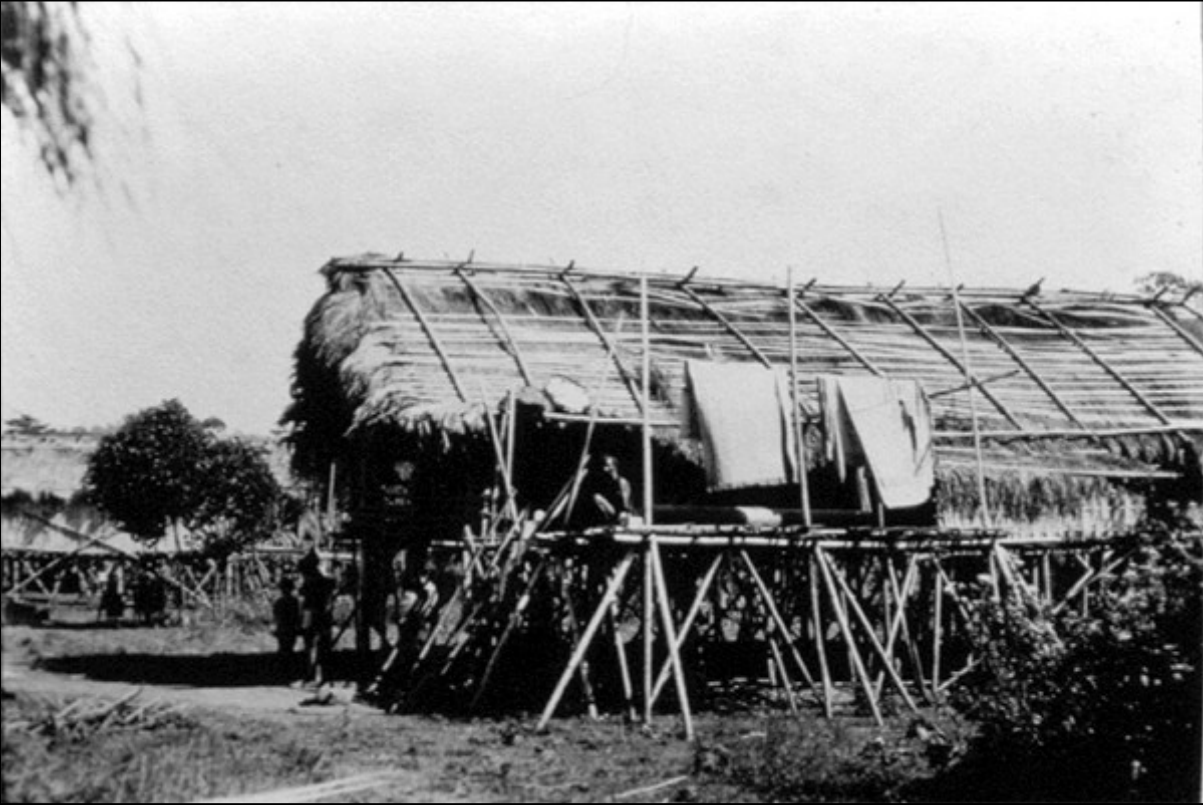
[45] Headman + family (Tippera), Nharamukh



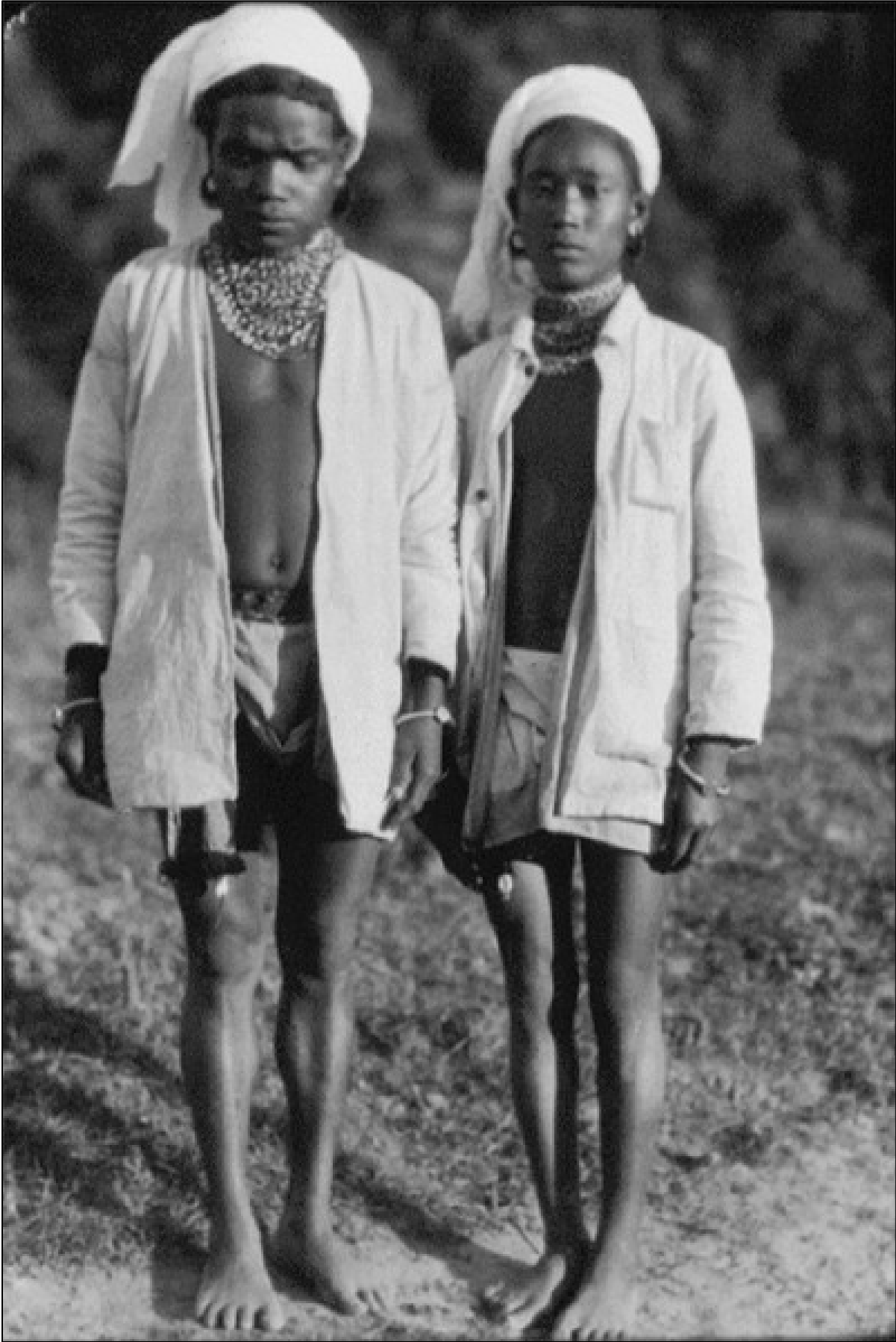
[46] House (Tippera), Nharamukh



[47] House (Tippera), Nharamukh



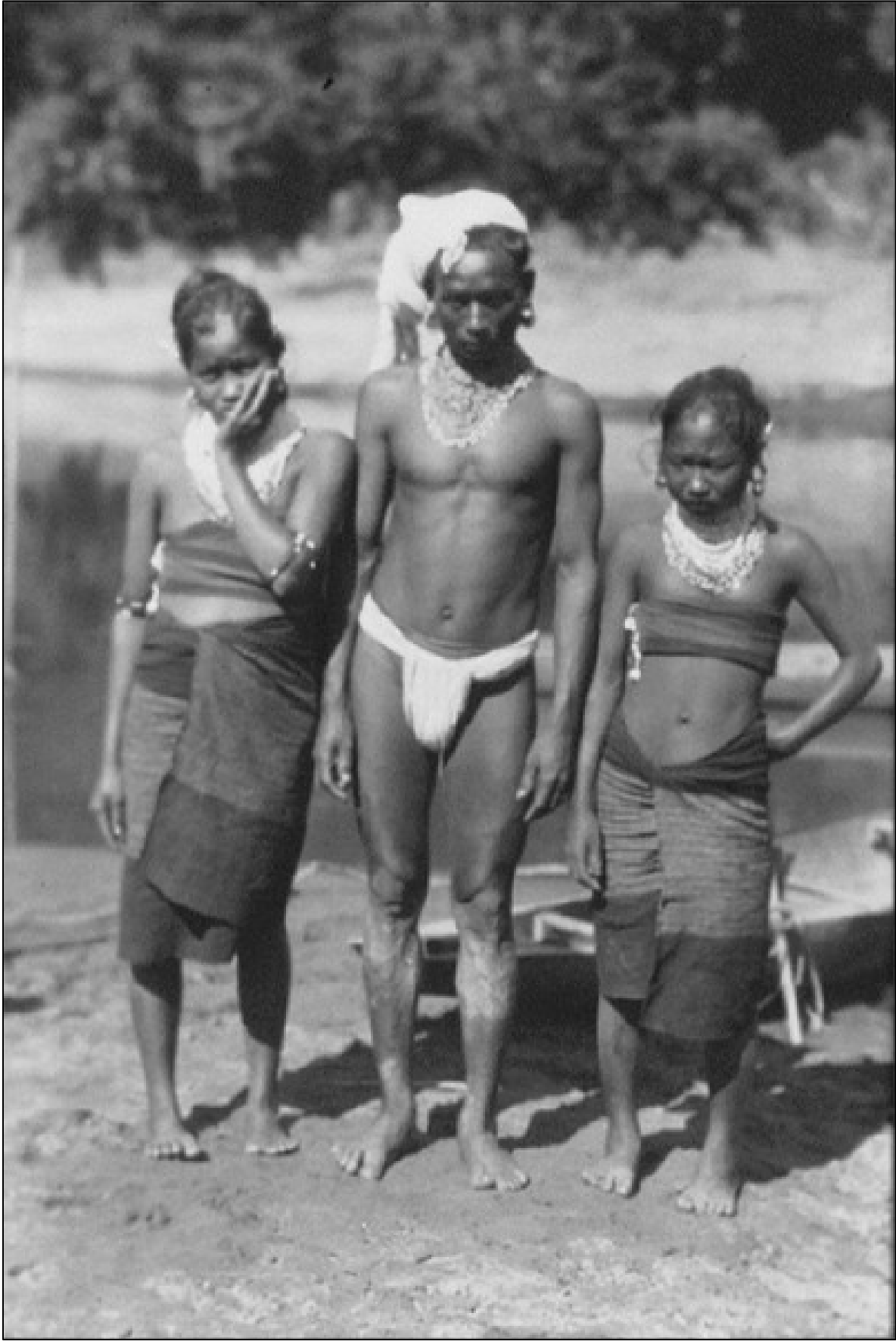
[48] Tippera boys on Sangu



[49] Tippera boys on Sangu



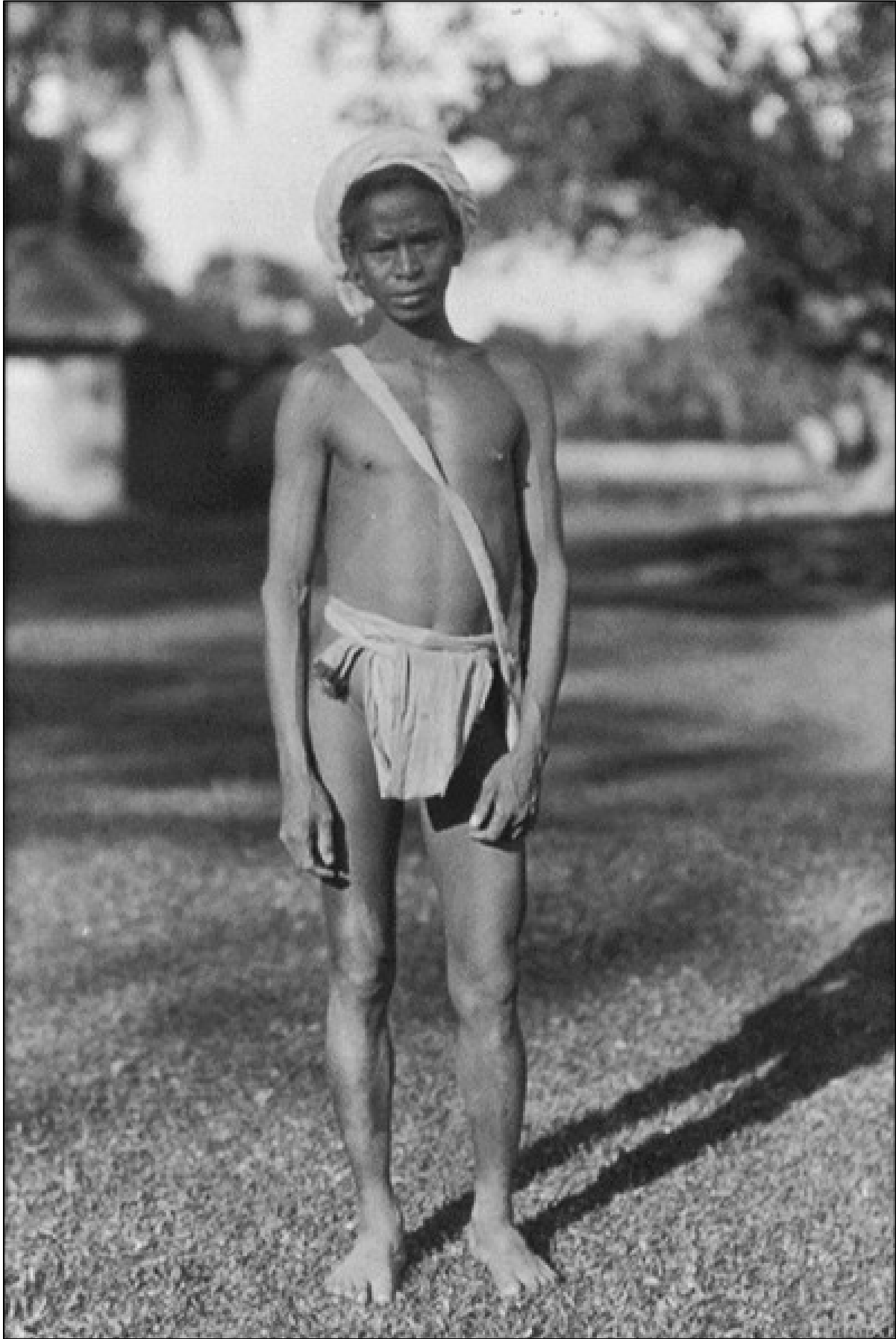
[50] Tippera man + two women Kaokhen



[or Haokha or Naokha (?) Naskher (GH)]



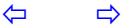
[51] Tippera youth, Bandarban



[52] 2 women + 3 children, Nunchari (Tippera)



[53] Man + family, Nunchari



[54] Girl + two boys, Nunchari, Tippera



[55] Chekyong village, S. Magh

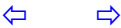


⇐ ⇨

[56] Temple Chekyong, S. Magh



[57] Bohmong's family



[58] Bohmong's family



[59] Bohmong's son + his wife



[60] Bohmong's son + his wife



[61] Bohmong's son



[62] Hdman of Pulikha + family, S. Magh



[63] Hdman of Pulikha + family, S. Magh



[64] Procession, Bandarban



[65] Procession, Bandarban



[66] The Bohmong



[67] The Bohmong



[68] The Bohmong



[69] House Maischari, N. Magh



[70] Hurricane house Maischari N. Magh



[71] Daughter of Mong Raja + servant Singinala



[72] Old woman Singhinala (N. Magh)



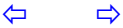
[73] View of Rangamati



[74] View of Rangamati



[75] View of Rangamati



[76] View of Rangamati



[77] Polt Lakhyichhari



[78] Man + family (Chakma), Bamer Toyichakma



[79] Worship place Chakma, Bamer Toyichakma



[80] Groups Chakma, Bamer Toyichakma



[81] Groups Chakma, Bamer Toyichakma



[82] Houses (Chakma), Lakhyichhari



[83] Mother + child, Undrimahachari



[84] Girl + child, Undrimahachari



[85] Two girls, Undrimahachari



[86] Two girls, Undrimahachari



[87] Man, wife + child



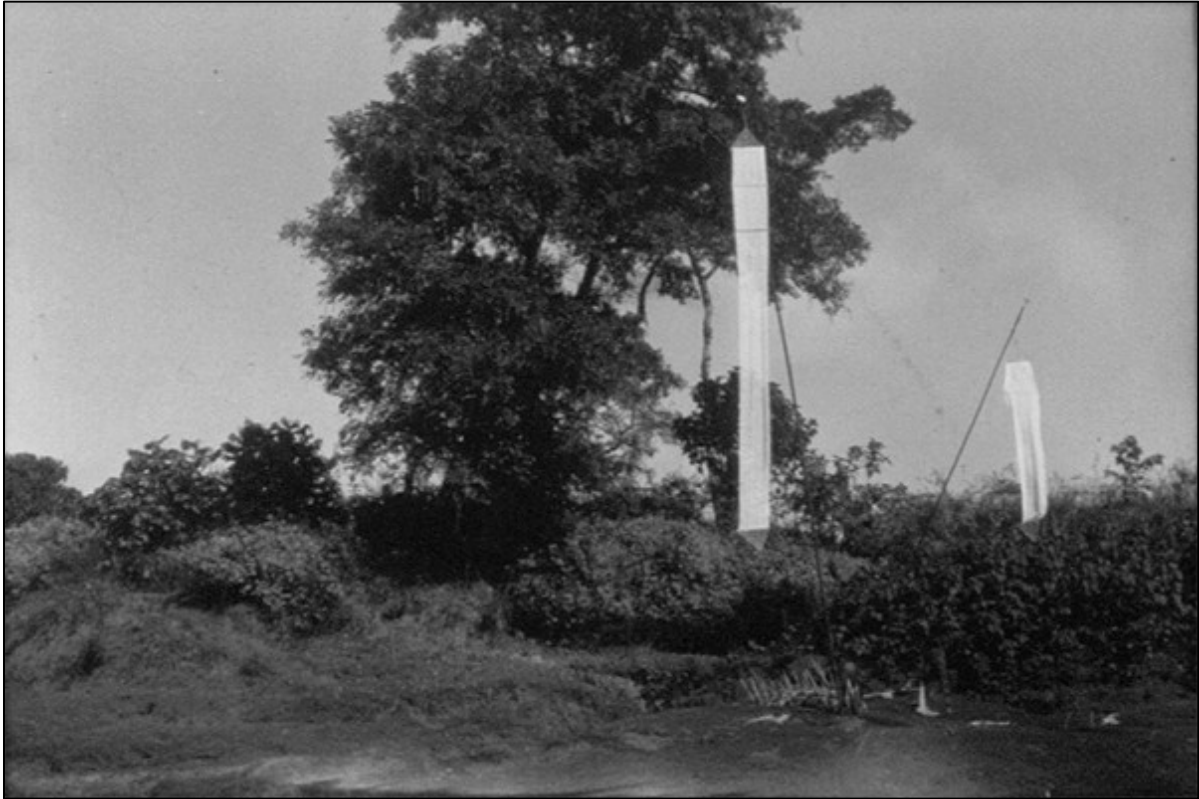
[88] Woman, child + 2 girls, Undrimahachari



[89] Woman, child + 2 girls, Undrimahachari



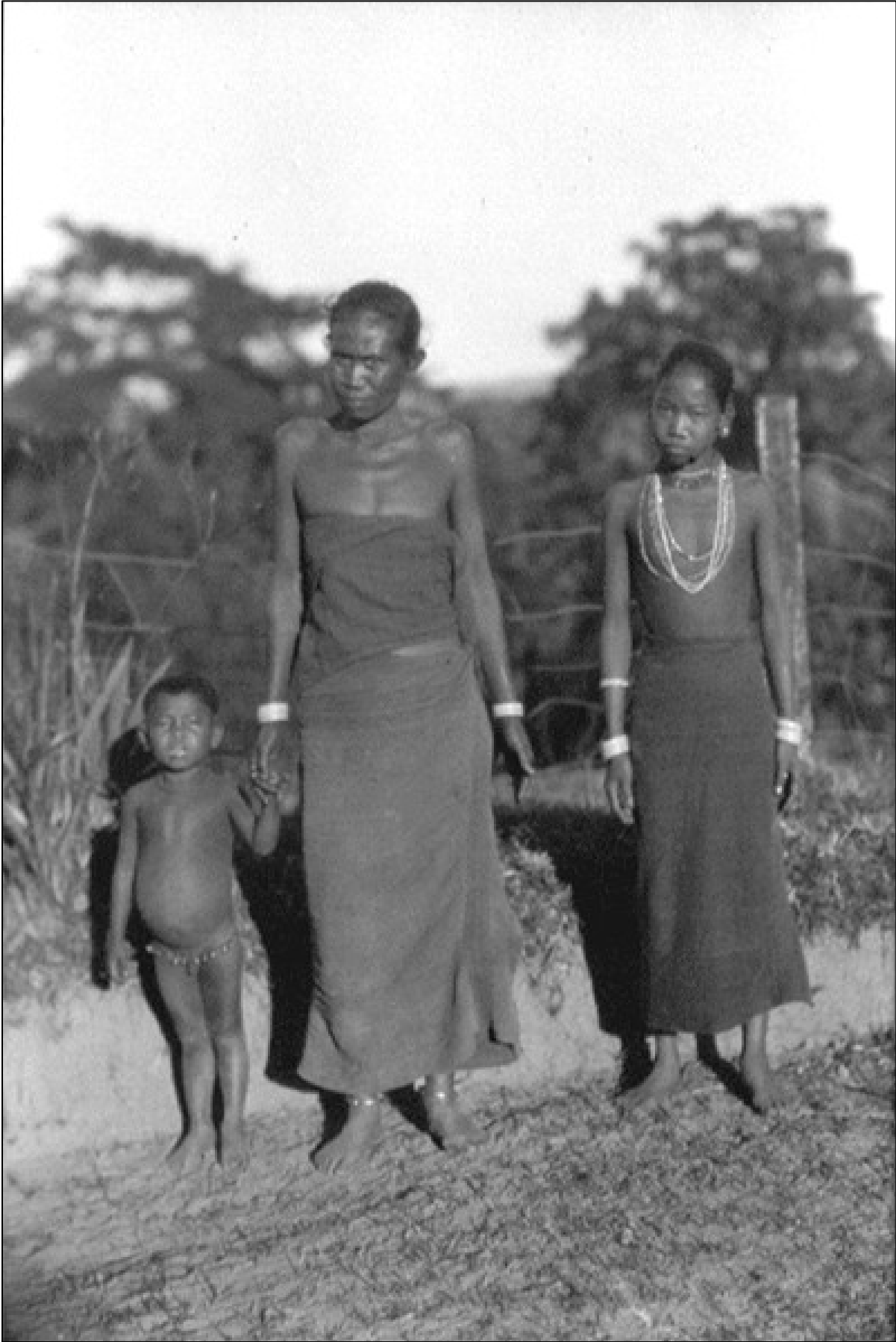
[90] Chakma burning place



[91] Girl + woman, Mahalchari (Chakma)



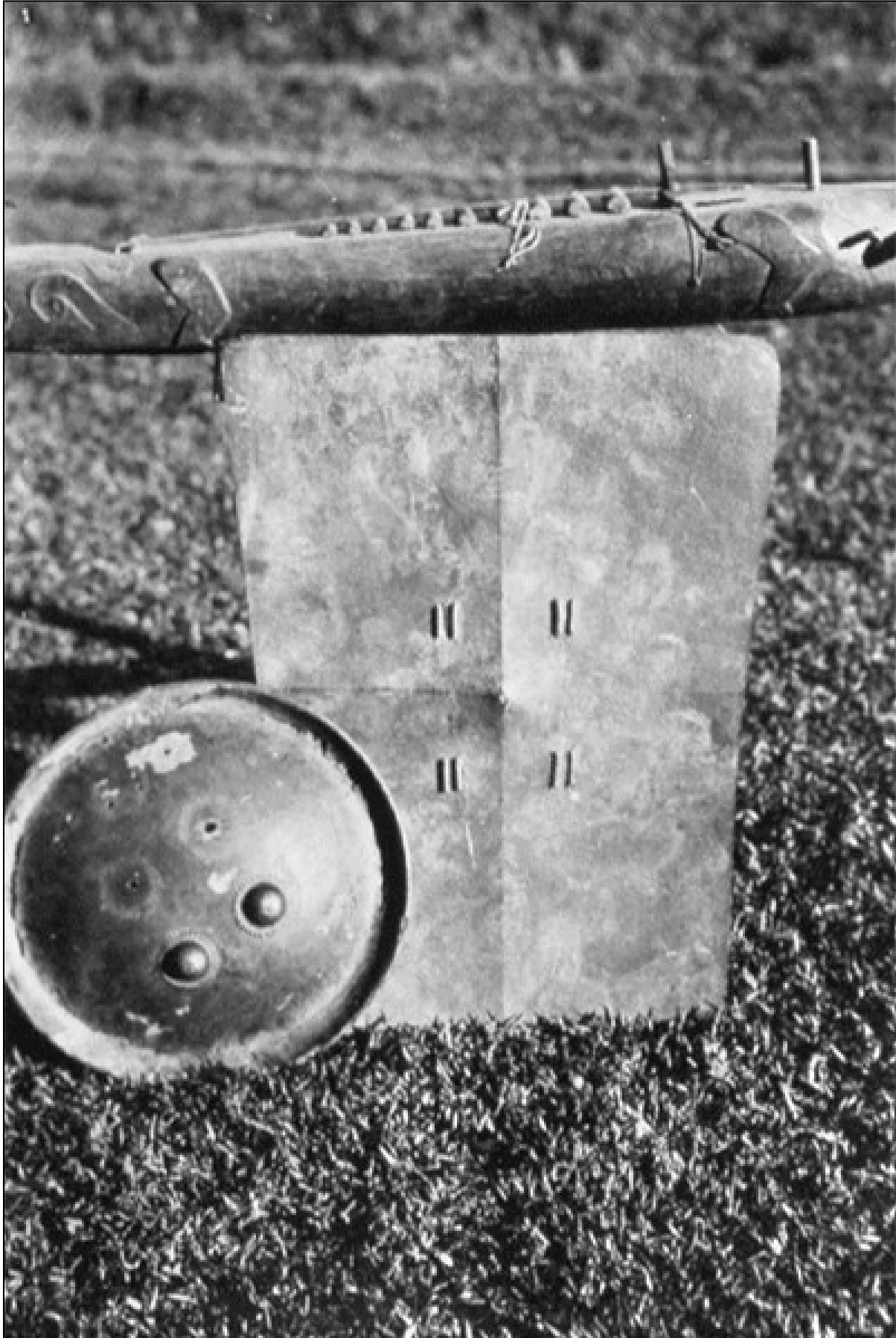
[92] Girl + woman, Mahalchari (Chakma)



[93] Majirakhine Lake



[94] [crocodile harp, shields]



[95] no caption



⇐ ⇨

[96] no caption



[97] no caption



[98] no caption



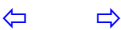
[99] no caption



[100] no caption [women, spinning cotton]



[101] no caption



8.2. Description and Interpretation of the Photographic Collection

In order to realise the significance of this collection it is important to understand its relation to other collections.

In fact, few photographic collections on the Chittagong Hill Tracts do exist. The first series of photos date back to the time of T.H. Lewin. He made some 20 photographs in the Hill Tracts in the 1860/70es and published a selection in the first edition of his “A Fly on the Wheel” [1882]; later editions do not contain these photographs any more. His aim was to display the indigenous individual in his and her own right and dignity [cf. van Schendel, Mey & Dewan 2000: frontispiece, pl.10, 11,12, 13, 14, 19].

Emil Riebeck, a German ethnographer and collector, travelled in the southern Lushai Hills and the Chittagong Hill Tracts in 1882. His photographs were destroyed due to inadequate handling. His lithographs, however, show his focus on ethnographic objects. They do not mirror the ethnographic situation in the hills. One aspect, however, relates Riebeck’s photographs and lithographs to a method which was widely in use on his days, e.g. that of categorising human variations [Riebeck 1885]. Such collections have “left us with large collections of images which show nude or semi-nude bodies, *en face* or *en profil*, lined up in the interest of advancing anthropological theory” [Van Schendel, Mey & Dewan 2000:14].

The search for objectivity saw other topics at the turn of the century. “Nature” and “natives” ceased to be the topics; “real life” came into the focus. “An unposed snapshot showing the labourer behind the plough or with a spade, the basket maker among his baskets, the weaver at the loom, is more worth than twenty waterfalls” [Neuhaus 1894,18, quoted in: Van Schendel, Mey & Dewan 2000:16].

S.R.H. Hutchinson published a small number of photographs to illustrate his account of the Hill Tracts of 1906]. They mirror his somewhat dry “administrative” description to the hill people; his photographs are illustrations of a history book.

J.P. Mills made his photos November and December 1926. In 1927, Julius Konietzko and his wife visited the Hill Tracts. He was a collector; the ethnographic objects he collected on his trip in the hills were remitted to the ethnographic museums in Hamburg and Leipzig. The couple travelled from Chittagong by boat to Rangamati and spent there

most the time. Apart from the ethnographic objects they made some 50 photos in the area, a few of which I have published earlier [cf. Mey 1991].

The photographic collections of these two, of the collector and the administrator, mark, for different reasons though, another view on “The Other”. Julius Konietzko needed to show the objects “in use” because he wanted to sell them to museums.

Mills approach to “culture” was influenced by both diffusions and functional theory. His aim was to show variations of objects in time and space

This will be discussed in a greater context. First of all I want to discuss the photographic collection. Mills did not comment on the photographs. When possible I have added entries from the Tour Diary or from the “Notes on a tour in the Chittagong Hill Tracts”.

Photo [no 1](#) shows Mro houses in Yimpu village. They are built on stilts with large verandas stretching out. In the foreground is a protecting enclosure for small fruit trees, half way down a seed plot, fenced in. The light coloured patches in the hillside are swidden fields.

Photo [no 2](#) shows another two houses at Yimpu village.

“The houses “are large and well built. The roofs are slightly log-backed. They are on piles and the only approach is up a notched log” [Mills 1931:520]

Photo [no 3](#) shows a Mru woman in the traditional short skirt, which is kept open over the left thigh [Holtheuer 1967:40 f.]. She is shown combing her hair. She wears hourglass shaped earplugs [Holtheuer 1967:54; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f.,12].

Metal ornaments are generally the workmanship of Bengali smiths and are sold widely in the Hill Tracts. Their use marks Bengali influence.

Photo [no 4](#) shows a man in a loincloth and a fillet. The bun on top of the head is not covered. He wears one bracelet [usually silver plated brass; Holtheuer 1967:62; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f., 6] on his left arm and silver disks in the ears [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 33; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f.,1].

Photo [no 5](#) shows two young Mru men. They wear loincloths, the left one a bun over the left forehead [Van Schendel, Mey & Dewan 2000, pl.389:280], the man on the right side has he bun wrapped in a head dress; on his left arm he wears a bracelet similar to the man on photo 4

[Holtheuer 1967:62; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f., 6]. Both wear silver disks in the ears [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 33; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f.,1].

“The dresses of men are thus characterised: “Their costume of of the lightest. The men wear a narrow white of red cloth, which is wound round the waist, pulled between the legs from the front and tucked in at the back. In addition a home-spun coat is sometimes worn. The hair is done in a bun on the left side of the head and through the bun a bone pin ois stuck. A *puggaree* is sometimes worn” (Mills 1931:520).

Photo [no 6](#) shows two Mru girls in traditional dress [small skirts, Holtheuer 1967:40 f.] held by belts, both wear necklaces, hourglass shaped earplugs [Holtheuer 1967:54; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f., 12], adorned with flowers and [possibly beaded] jewellery around the neck and the head. Both wear upper arm bangles [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 28, 34; Holtheuer 1967:63 f.] On the arms they wear bracelets like the man on photo [4](#) and [5](#).

Photo [no 7](#) shows the same Mru girls with the same ornaments on, the Mru man on the left side is shown wearing a head dress like the man on photo [no 5](#), a shirt with long sleeves, a long skirt also held by a belt and black leather shoes.

Photo [no 8](#) shows a Mru woman pounding paddy. This photo illustrates well that the skirt is left open on the left thigh. She wears a bracelet [see photo [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#)], ornaments on the upper arm [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 28, 34; Holtheuer 1967:63 f.] and hourglass shaped earplugs [Holtheuer 1967:54, Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f., 12]. She wears a belt [cf. also Brauns/Löffler 1990:95 f.].

Photo [no 9](#) shows the same woman in the same dress.

Photo [no 10](#) shows another woman in the same dress winnowing rice. The woman who is pounding paddy is on the left.

The woman on photo [no 8](#), [9](#), and [10](#) wears one [?] armlet [see photo [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#)] a pair of upper-arm bangles [see photo [6](#), [7](#)], hourglass shaped earplugs and ornaments in the hair.

The dresses of women are thus characterised:

“Women wear small skirt, blue, worn double + open down left thigh. Also low belt of beads, + silver chain” [Tour Diary, 12.12.1926; cf. also Mills 1931:520].

Photograph [no 11](#) shows two Mru boys with a loincloths, the hairs kept open, the girl wears a short skirt, the hair kept tightly back and turned into a bun. She wears hourglass shaped earplugs [Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f.,12].

Photo [no 12](#) shows the place in Khaitung, where sacrificial posts for a cattle fiest are erected.

On photo [no 13](#), these sacrificial posts are in the in the foreground of the photo. Close to the right of the large house a large decorated bamboo mast is put up.

“A man who has given the full series of feast of merit may builds an extra lagre house and may set up by the side of it four or five long bamboos [...]. A plain upright post in the middle of the village marks the place of sacrifice [...]. In one village I passed through the sacrificial post was very high, and was surrounded at a distance of some feet by a circle of lower posts nothced at the top” [Mills 1931:520].

“For each sacrificed head of cattle, a large bamboo mast, which towers high above the roof, is put up beside the staircase of the fiest-giver’s house” [Brauns/Löffler 1990:230].

When Mills was in Bali, he wrote about the sacrificial posts he saw there:

“Posts for cattle sacrifice, but no forked posts here. When a man has done it he sets up against his house” [Tour Diary, 12.12.1926].

Photo [no 14](#) shows more Mru houses at Khaitung village.

Photo [no 15](#) displays a Mru man in a loincloth, a white jacket and a fillet around the bun over the forehead. The woman wears a short skirt [Holtheuer 1967:40 f.], a bracelet [Holtheuer 1967:62; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f., 6] and a chain around the neck.

Photo [no 16](#) displays a Mro man with a loincloth, he wears a bracelet [cf. photo [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#)], silver disks in the ears [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig.33; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f.,1], and chains around the neck.

Photo [no 17](#) shows how the dao, the bush knife is kept.

The bun on the left side of the head is kept together by a pin, most probably either a bone pin or a porcupine quill [cf. Brauns/Löffler 1990:140].

“Bali a Mro village. Men with cloth round waist [...]. Red + white [...]. Some boys wear belts of beads. Hair done in bun at side. Puggaree often worn. Large round earring” [Tour Diary, 12.12.1926].

Photo [no 18](#) shows a small house with a slanting roof erected at the place where dead persons are cremated.

“Saw Mru golgotta. Dead houses, + lean-to’s all facing East. Over ashes under lean-to is put a piece of cloth, which is pegged down, + on this are laid dao, hoe, + other implements, with another piece of cloth over them. Food + drink are put beside them. [16] Some calcined bones are also put in dead house, + baskets, food etc, is put there too” [Tour Diary, 14.12.1926].

In 1931, Mills wrote: “Every village has its burning place near a stream and usually close to pipal tree. The nody is burned and the calcined bones are removed and placed in a little house on piles a few yards further back from the stream. To the side of the house are fastened bamboos festooned with tassels of bamboo shavings, and n the house are put with the bones food, drink, pots, and bits of rag for clothes. All vessels, whether of pottery or brass , are broken” [Mills 1931:521].

The photographs in Brauns/Löffler [1990:199] may better illustrate these somewhat underexposed photos. Löffler writes: “A dead body is normally cremated and the remains of its bones are wrapped in a cloth. Along with a fan and food [in a bamboo tube] for the journey of the deceased, the cloth is placed under a slanting roof” [Brauns/Löffler 1990:199].

To photo [no 19](#) and [20](#) the following quotation applies:

“Meanwhile a little house with two rooms is prepared; its walls being woven in the same special decorative patterns as those used for the coffin [...]. The baskets and pots used in the funeral are left on top, or in front, of the house” [Brauns/Löffler 1990:199]

Photo [no 21](#) shows the view from Camp Bali in the Mru hills in the southern Hill Tracts

Photo [no 22](#) displays three Mru men with loincloths. All three have a bun on the head/over the forehead. Two persons [left and middle] wear silver disks in the ears [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 33; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f.,1]. The man on the left carries a dao in the loincloth.

Photo [no 23](#) shows a Lushai woman of Yimpung/Trupu village. The entry in the Tour Diary says: “~~A Lushai teacher in village~~”. [14.12.1926] This Lushai “teacher” must have been a missionary. They were active in the Mru hills since the 1920es. The woman wears a blouse with long sleeves, a long skirt and a large cloth over the upper body. This dress is not the traditional Lushai/Mizo] dress any more [cf. Riebeck 1885, table 2, fig. 5 ,7, 8] but the modern one of the christianised Lushai [Mizo], meant to cover the whole body. She does not wear any ornaments.

Photo [no 24](#) shows two Pangkhua men with loincloths and long-sleeved jackets. The two men wear ear ornaments, necklaces and bracelets [Holtheuer 1967:62; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f., 6].

Photo [no 25](#) shows a woman and a girl wearing half long skirts, held by a belt. The woman on the right carries a child in a cloth on her left side. Both females wear ear ornaments, the right one silver plugs [Holtheuer 1967:54; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f.,12], bracelets, and ornaments around the neck.

Photo [no 26](#) shows five Pangkhua, the woman with a child is also shown on photo [24](#). The woman on the left wears ear ornaments [see photo no [25](#)], chains around the neck; other ornaments are not to be seen. The girl in a half long skirt carries a small child on her hip. She wears chains around her neck. The man is clad the same way as the man on the right side of photo [24](#), probably he is the same one. He wears chains around the neck and [at least] one bracelet.

Photo [no 27](#) shows two persons, the woman *en face*, she is the same on as on photo [26](#). She wears a half long skirt and a large scarf over the breast, ear ornaments and bracelets. She carries a small child in a sling. The child wears bracelets. The man is displayed *en profil*. He wears a long jacket with long sleeves; the loincloth is not to be seen. The *en profile*-position shows the position of the bun [held together by a pin] over the forehead very clearly.

“Some men do their hair in a bun at the back, while others – usually young men – pile it up over the forehead into a sort of horn” (Mills 1931:519).

Photo [no 28](#) shows a Pangkhua man and two women, the girl on the left side wears a half-long skirt with a series of belts, at least on chain of coins [Holtheuer 1967:57] and more necklaces around the neck and bracelets. The man in the middle wears a loincloth and a jacket, the woman on the right side wear the half long skirt, too, held by a belt. She carries a baby (cf. also Mills 1931:519).

Photo [no 29](#) shows two Pangkhua men; one with the hairs combed back [he is the same one as on photo [24](#) and [26](#)], the other one has a bun over the forehead [similar to the one on photo [27](#)], held by a pin, most probably a porcupine quill. Here two different kinds of hair dress are shown. Both wear bracelets [cf. photo no [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#), [24](#); Holtheuer 1967:62; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f., 6].

Photo [no 30](#) shows a Pangkhua man *en profil* with the bun over the forehead, this time with a different loincloth and without jacket/shirt. He wears chains around the neck and a bracelet [cf. photo no [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#), [24](#); Holtheuer 1967:62; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f., 6].

Photo [no 31](#) shows a Pangkhua woman with ornaments around the neck and the arm, clad in a half-long skirt. She wears earplugs. The girl wears necklaces. Another child in the background is almost hidden by the woman. In the foreground paddy is spread out for drying.

In the background, fixed to the frame of the veranda, cotton yarn is rolled up between two hanging bamboos.

Photo [no 32](#) displays two Pangkhua men, clad in loincloths and jackets. The left man has the hairs combed back while the boy on the right side wears a bun over the forehead, and bracelets. They are the same as depicted on photo [29](#).

“I was able to visit Basanta, a Pankho village [...], near Subalong in the Northern portion of the district. The men wear a small apron and a white coat ornamented with a little embroidery round the bottom at the back” [Mills 1931:519].

Photo [no 33](#) shows a mithan post. Persons who gave a cattle fies of merit were entitled to erect such a post. A mithan [*bos frontalis*] head is carved in the angle of the fork [cf. Van Schendel, Mey & Dewan 2000:pl.188:156].

“A man who has sacrificed *mithan* (*gayal*) sets up in front of his house a large forked post with a *mithan* head carved on it” [Mills 1931:529].

Photo [no 34](#) shows a newly erected house of the Pangkhua at Basanta Kuki village.

Photo [no 35](#) gives a view of Basanta Panghku Kuki village.

“The houses are on piles and are big and well built. There is one main room, with an open porch in front and a sitting-put platform at the back” [Mills 1931:520].

Photo [no 36](#) [also: [37](#), [38](#)] shows three Bawm men, all with a bun over the forehead and headbands, all three with loincloths, two of them with a shirt/jacket. All three carry haversacks. They wear chains around the neck, ear ornaments and two of them bracelets. Photo no [37](#) shows that all of them wear bracelets. The man on the left respectively on the right [[37](#), [39](#)] carries a gun.

Under the date of December 18, 1926 Mills wrote in his Tour Diary:

“Saw some Banjugi Kukis + took their photos. Hair done in high bun of top of head. Metal pins. Small waist cloth. Home spun coat. Embroidered headband + jhola. Small cornelian beads. Some men wear large red beads or yellow beads of what seems to be amber”; cf. also Mills 1931:519].

[The caption of the photos says that they were made at Chingkyong. This village is not mentioned in the Tour Diary, but the description might apply to them.]

Photo [no 39](#) shows two Bawm men, one with a loincloth and a haversack with the traditional design, decorated with covers of the wings of a beetle. He wears no shirt. The man on the left wears what could be the large Bawm blanket men wear in the cold weather. Both men wear headbands and have the bun on top of the head. The man on the right wears earplugs.

Photo [no 40](#) shows the same men as on photo [39](#), wearing the same clothes. The man on the left and the one on the right wear both a haversack and one bracelet each [Holtheuer 1967:62, Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f., 6].

The man on the left wears a loincloth and a long shirt with long sleeves on. All three wear headbands. In this photo three different combinations of Bawm dresses are shown.

Photo [no 41](#) shows two Khyeng men and one woman. The woman wears a long skirt, a breast cloth and a fillet. She wears silver spirals as bracelets [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 36], and ornaments [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 28; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f., 8] on the upper arms [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 28, 34; Holtheuer 1967:63 f.; cf. Van Schendel, Mey & Dewan 2000, pl.321:235]. Apart from this she wears a long chain of coins [Holtheuer 1967:57], a number of other chains around the neck, ear ornaments and a fillet. The men wear loincloths and fillets. The man in the middle wears bracelets.

Photo [no 42](#) shows a young Khyeng woman and a man. The woman is clad in a long skirt, a breast cloth, and a decorated fillet. She wears silver-spiral on the arms [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 36; Van Schendel, Mey & Dewan 2000, pl.338:249], a broad silver necklace which is locked with a long chain [see also [83](#), [87](#), [88](#), [89](#)] and ear disks of silver [cf. Holtheuer 1967:54]. She wears two anklets on the feet.

The man wears a loincloth and a bun on the left side of his head. Both wear a finger ring.

In the Tour Diary, Mills wrote:

“Many men now wear Magh or Bengali costume, but real dress is string round waist, + white cloth with red embroidered end, worn as lungtha. Hair is done in knot on left, like Mros with bone pins. Though many men now follow Bengali or Magh custom. Women wear skirt + breast cloth of narrow red + white stripes + large white cloth with red embroidered end as puggaree” [19.12.1926; cf. also Mills 1931:519].

Photo [no 43](#) shows a Khyeng house at Arachhari.

“The houses are on piles, and each consists of one large room with a kitchen at the back” [Mills 1931:519].

Photo [no 44](#) shows four Tripura from Nhara Mukh. The woman on the left wears a long skirt, two silver spirals on the arms [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 36] and ear ornaments [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 33; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f., 1], a set of chains around the neck. She carries a small child in a sling.

The three male persons of different ages wear loincloths.

“Men dress as described above. Woman usually go naked to waist after marriage” [Tour Diary, 19.12.1926].

Photo [no 45](#) shows the same persons in slightly different positions with the same dresses. The youth [second from right] is shown *en profil*, he displays his way of dressing the hair, and wears earplugs and necklaces, the child an anklet.

“A more primitive and interesting section [...] is scattered anout the Bandarban circle in the South of the district [...]. The men wear white waist clothes of which the black embroidered ends are left hanging down at the side. The corners are decorated with cowries. Above they wear white home-spun jackets [...]. In the lobes of the ears are cylinders of bamboo” [Mills 1931:519].

Photo [no 46](#) shows a Tippera house at Nharamukh.

Photo [no 47](#) shows a Tippera house at Nharamukh. The veranda is situated in the foreground.

Photo [no 48](#) shows two Tripura men, clad in loincloths, jackets with long sleeves and fillets. They wear chains of beads around the neck, silver disks as ear ornaments [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig 33; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f,1] and each of them two armlets [Holtheuer 1967:62; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f, 6]. The man on the left wears a belt.

Photo [49](#) shows the same persons without jacket.

Photo [no 50](#) compares two women wearing the traditional dress and a man in a loincloth. All three wear necklaces and ear ornaments. The

woman on the left wears bangles below the elbows. The man wears a fillet.

Photo [no 51](#) shows a Tripura man wearing a loincloth, a fillet and a haversack.

There is one remark, which refers to the dress of the Tripura men: on December 14, 1926, Mills wrote in his Tour Diary:

“Puggarees, with homespun coats, waistcloths [homespun] with black embroidered ends + cowries at corners. Dao carried in this. Hair cut like Naga. Cylinders in lobes of ears, + half-moon ornaments through them” [Rour Diary 14.12.1926; cf. also Mills 1931:519].

Photo [no 52](#) shows two Tripura women with three children. The women wear long skirts, breast cloths and ear ornaments [cf. also Mills 1931:519].

Photo [no 53](#) compares a Tripura man from the northern hills wearing a Bengali dress with the traditional dress of the Tripura men as displayed by photos [48](#), [49](#), [51](#). This may support Mills statement that the Bengali influences in the northern hills is more prominent than in the southern hills. The young girl on the photo does not wear a breast cloth as compared to the two women on photo [52](#).

The two females wear hourglass shaped earplugs [Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f, 12] the elderly woman wears silver spiral armlets [Riebeck 1895, table 7, fig. 36]. The boy wears a loincloth.

While in Nunchari, on November 21, 1926, Mills wrote:

“Slept at Nunchari, a Tippera village. Men all in dhotis [...] “Women wear Chakma skirt, after puberty a cloth round breasts. Large silver ornaments in ears, + spiked silver ornaments, with chains through top of ear” [Tour Diary 21.11.1926].

Photo [no 54](#) shows different dresses of boys [Bengali dhoti, loincloth] and a young girl in a long skirt. She wears hourglass shaped earplugs [Holtheuer 1967:54; Brauns/Löffler 1990:138 f., 12] and the hair in a knot on the back of the head.

Photo [no 55](#) shows a row of Marma houses at Chekyong village [southern Hill Tracts]

Photo [no 56](#) shows a Marma temple at Chekyong [southern Hill Tracts; cf. Mey 1991, in: Berg et al. 1991:437, Abb. 6]

Photo [no 57](#) shows the Bohmong's family in front of a hall. All wear Burmese dresses, long skirts made of silk, blouses with long sleeves, the women scarves, chains of coins [Holtheuer 1967:57], necklaces and bracelets, the men jackets [barrister], some women carry umbrellas.

Photo [no 58](#) shows the Bohmong's family in front of the palace in Bandarban. They wear Burmese dresses, long skirts made of silk, blouses with long sleeves, scarves, chains of coins [Holtheuer 1967:57], necklaces, and bracelets, and some women carry umbrellas. On the right [with an umbrella] stands the woman and the child shown on photo [59](#).

Photo [no 59](#) shows the Bohmong's son, his wife and a child in Burmese dresses, long skirts made of silk, blouses with long sleeves, the woman wears a scarf, a chain of coins [Holtheuer 1967:57], necklaces and bracelets, a bun on the head, decorated with an ornament, the men a light coloured jacket [barrister].

Photo [no 60](#) shows the same sujet.

Photo [no 61](#) shows another son of the Bohmong in Burmese dress, a long skirt of silk, a blouse with long sleeves, a dark jacket a scarf and black leather shoes. The girl wears a long skirt, a light coloured long sleeved blouse and chains. She wears a bun on the head.

Photo [62](#) displays the headman of the Marma village Pulikha and his family. The man smokes a cigar, he wears a light coloured jacket with a dark skirt, and the women on photo [62](#) wear long skirts and breast clothes and fillets. The woman on the right side wears bangles. The boy shows how a pellet bow is held and where the pellet is placed for shooting.

“Women often wear string above breast in which breast cloth tucked” [Tour Diary, 15.12.1926].

Photo [no 63](#) shows the same man, now he wears a dark jacket and a light coloured skirt, the young man, clad in a light coloured skirt holds a pipe, the woman wears a long skirt and a blouse, a fillet, bracelets and ear ornaments.

Photo [no 64](#) shows a procession of Buddhist priests walking on white cloths and under a white canopy at the occasion of the yearly fiest of the collection of the jhum tax. At this occasion the mauza headman hand over the jhum tax to the Bohmong Chief. The priests join the event.

Photo [no 65](#) shows the same procession of Buddhist priests

“Took photos of Bohmong. Procession priests Punya” [Tour Diary, 10.12.1926].

Photo [no 66](#) displays the Bohmong wearing a dark long skirt, a light coloured shirt, and a shoulder scarf. In the right hand he carries a walking stick. He wears dark leather shoes.

The young man besides him is clad in a dark jacket and a chequered long skirt; he wears a fillet and carries an umbrella.

Photo [no 67](#) shows the same sujet.

“Bohmong came to see us in evening, wearing Magh dress, with fillet round head, + umbrella” [Tour Diary, 8.12.1926].

Photo [no 68](#) shows how a person clad in a long skirt, a dark jacket and a light coloured fillet prostrates before the Bohmong.

Photo [no 69](#) shows a house on stilts with a veranda of the northern Marma at Maischari [cf. Mills 1931:5115].

Photo [70](#) displays a “hurricane house” of the northern Marma at Maischari.

“Curious custom is that of building little low houses close to main house, to which inhabitants retire in case of hurricane” [Tour Diary, 21.11.1926; cf. also Mills 1931:515 f.].

The man wears a [Bengali] dhoti [Mills 1931:516], a long jacket/coat and a fillet.

Photo [71](#) shows the daughter of the Mong Raja [left], she is clad in a long skirt and wears a light coloured blouse. She wears a bangle and a

long chain. The woman on the right wears a long skirt, a light vest, a chain, ear ornaments, bangles on both arms and two anklets.

“From Mahalchari went to Singinala + visited Neuma, daughter of Mong Chief, + daughter in law of Bohmong, a widow. Wore a red Burmese skirt, + English blouse + ornaments. Her servant girl wore vest + Burmese skirt + had hair done in bun” [Tour Diary, 20.11.1926].

Photo [no 72](#) shows a woman with a long skirt and a breast cloth. She wears bangles and three long silver chains attached to two triangular holdings, which are connected by a single chain [see also photo [85](#), [86](#)].

Photo [no 73](#) shows a view of Rangamati.

Photo [no 74](#) shows a view of Rangamati.

Photo [no 75](#) shows a view of Rangamati.

Photo [no 76](#) shows a view of Rangamati.

Photo [77](#) shows scenery with a small stream in the area of Lakyichhari.

The two females on photo [78](#) display the dresses of Chakma women. The woman on the left wears a skirt and a breast cloth, silver spirals on the wrists and upper arms, an ornament around the neck, ornaments of the nose and the ears. The young girl wears a long skirt, but no breast cloth, and a set of necklaces, ear ornaments and a nose ornament. On the arms she wears bangles [Van Schendel, Mey & Dewan 2000, pl.338:249; pl.387:278].

The man wears a [Bengali] dhoti, a long shirt and a white blanket covering the upper part of the body.

Photo [79](#) displays an offering platform of the Chakma at Bamer Toyichakma village.

The photo [no 80](#) shows a group of Chakma in dhotis and long shirts.

Photo [no 81](#) shows a Chakma house. Besides the baskets, a triangular fish trap lies on the veranda [Mey 1991, in: Berg et al. 1991:437, 5]

Photo [82](#) gives a view on Chakma houses at Lakhyichhari.

The woman on photo [83](#) displays a mother breastfeeding her child. She wears a Chakma skirt and a silver spiral [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig, 36] and bracelets. Around the neck she wears a broad silver ornament [cf. photo [42](#), [87](#), [88](#), [89](#)] on the feet she wears anklets.

Photo [84](#) shows a girl wearing a Chakma skirt, bangles and upper an arm ornament [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 28, 34; Holtheur 1967, 63 f.], a chain of coins [Holtheuer 1967:57], another set of chains and ear

ornaments. On the feet she wears anklets. She carries a small child on her hip. The child wears a small jacket.

Photo [85](#) shows two Chakma girls in long skirts and breast cloths. The girl on the left wears silver spirals on the arms, a chain of coins [Holtheuer 1967:57], a necklace and a nose ornament. The girl on the right wears a silver ornament on the arms [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 35], a silver ornament on the upper arm [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 28, 38; Holtheuer 1967:63 f.], a chain of coins [Holtheuer 1967:57], a broad necklace, a four-stringed silver chain fastened to two triangular holdings which are connected by a single chain. She also wears a nose ornament and ear ornaments [cf. Van Schendel, Mey & Dewan 2000:pl.101:92, pl.338:249],].

Photo [86](#) shows the same sujet.

Photo [87](#) displays a woman wearing a long skirt and a breast cloth. She wears a silver spiral [Riebeck 1885, table 7, fig. 36], a broad silver necklace [see also [42](#), [83](#), [88](#), [89](#)], ear and nose ornaments. The child she is carrying wears a loincloth and bangles, too. The man wears a [Bengali] dhoti.

Photos [no 88](#) displays the same woman and child. The woman is clad in the same dress and wears the same ornaments. The girl in the middle wears a necklace, a chain of coins [Holtheuer 1967:57], and two sets of bangles. She has taken her breast cloth off, a part of which she is still holding in her hand,

“with a little persuasion [she] let me photograph her without her breast cloth” [Tour Diary, 30.12.1926].

The girl on the right side does not wear a breast cloth. She wears bangles, a broad necklace, and chain of coins [Holtheuer 1967:57] and ear ornaments.

Photo [no 89](#) shows the same sujet.

Photo [90](#) shows a place of cremation of the Chakma.

“Chakma put up three long streamers of white cloth hung fr. Bamboos at place on bank where they have burnt dead” [Tour Diary, 20.12.1926].

Photo [91](#) displays a Chakma woman with a long skirt and a breast cloth. She wears bangles and a nose ornament. The small child wears a

chain of ornaments around the hip. The girl to the left is clad in a long skirt, she has ornaments in the nose and the ears, around the neck and bangles on the arms [in the background most probably Mills' bicycle].

Photo [92](#) shows the same persons. The woman in the middle wears anklets, which are not to be seen on the previous photo.

“To Mahalchari 28 miles by bicycle. At Mahalchari photographed a Chakma woman + girl of about 11 + child” [Tour Diary, 20.11.19226].

Photo [93](#) shows a view on the Majirakina lake in the northern Hill Tracts.

“to Guimara village, on Guimara stream. On range saw lake [Majirakine], apparently formed by land slip” [Tour Diary, 22.11.1926].

Photo [no 94](#) shows two shields and a musical instrument.

“Chanthwainfru came again in evening. I got a crocodile harp [...] from him [...]. Took photos of [...] square leather shield of Bohmong, + round shield (prob. Mogul)” [Tour Diary, 9.12.1926; cf. also Mills 1931:516 f.].

Riebeck portrays an almost identical shield [1885, plate 10, fig. 4] but says it is of Shendu/Mara origin.

Photo [95](#) shows a house with a veranda. The village is not identified.

Photo [96](#) shows three men, possibly Marma with different kinds of skirts, jackets and fillets, the man on the right wears a light coloured shirt apart from the jacket.

The villages of the houses on photo [no 97](#) is not identified

The village of the house on photo [98](#) is not identified.

Photo [99](#) shows two women. They wear half long skirts, breast cloths and dark fillets. Both wear silver belts [Holtheuer 1967:59, cf. Brauns/Löffler 1990: 138 f., 9] and bangles on each arm. The woman on the right is holding a pipe.

Photo [100](#) displays four women, three of them spinning cotton yarn [Mills 1931:516]. They wear half long skirts and blouses; the two women on the left wear bangles. They wear fillets and ear ornaments.

I cannot identify what the man shown on photo [101](#) is doing, Mills texts gives no indication.

The sujets

Houses and ritual structures are another sujet of the photographs. The photos No. [1](#), [2](#), [13](#), [14](#), [34](#), [35](#), [43](#) show houses, generally on stilts of people living on the hill ranges [Mru, Pangkhua], while photos no [46](#), [47](#), [55](#), [69](#), [80](#), [81](#), [82](#) show houses of valley-living people [Chakma, Marma, Tripura].

“Both Magh and Chakma homes built on piles, with setting out machans”
[Tour Diary, 20.11.1926].

Thus the contrasts between ridge-top living and valley-living people are marked.

Scenic views are few. The documentation of Nature is not in the focus of Mills' view.

Apart from the short captions and except the few remarks in the Tour Dairy Mills did not give any descriptions or explanations as to the content of the photos or why he had chosen the particular sujets.

Yet the choice of the sujets offers explanations. A closer look at the photographs reveals that there are almost no snapshots among them. Few photos show Nature [[21](#), [73](#), [74](#), [75](#), [76](#), [77](#), [93](#)]; this topic was not in the focus of the documentation.

More photographs show houses and sights of villages.

Mills documented the houses of two different settlement types. The houses on stilts of the ridge-top living people [Mru: [1](#), [2](#), [13](#), [14](#), Pangkhua: [34](#), [35](#), Khyeng [43](#)] and the houses of the valley-living people [Tripura: [46](#), [47](#), Marma: [55](#), [56](#), [69](#), [70](#), Chakma: [80](#), [81](#) (?), [82](#)].

3 photos of houses are unidentified [[95](#), [97](#), [98](#)].

Some photographs display local authorities, e.g. village headmen [Mro: [15](#), Marma: [62](#), [63](#)] and the Bohmong and his family [[57](#), [58](#), [59](#), [60](#), [61](#), [66](#), [67](#), [68](#)].

By far the most photographs display persons, either individuals or families or groups of persons: Mru: [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [11](#), [15](#), [16](#), [17](#), [22](#), Lushai [Mizo] [23](#), Pangkhua [24](#), [25](#), [27](#), [29](#), [30](#), [31](#), [32](#)], Bawm: [36](#), [37](#), [38](#), [39](#), [40](#), and Khyeng: [41](#), [42](#), representing the ridge-top living people and Tippera [[44](#), [45](#), [48](#), [49](#), [50](#), [51](#), [52](#), [53](#), [54](#), Marma: [57](#), [58](#), [59](#), [60](#), [61](#), [62](#), [63](#), [64](#), [65](#), [66](#), [67](#), [68](#), [70](#), [71](#), [72](#), and Chakma: [78](#), [80](#), [82](#), representing the valley-living people.

In some cases these broad distinctions can be differentiated further:

The photos [3](#), [6](#), [7](#), and on photo [8](#), [9](#), and [10](#) show how the skirts of Mru women are worn.

The loincloths dresses of Mru men are compared on photos [4](#) and [5](#), [16](#), [17](#), and [22](#) with the dhoti [[7](#), held by a belt]. The man on photo [15](#) wears a short jacket

Photos [4](#), [5](#), [7](#) display the different ways the bun is kept among the Mru [especially photo [5](#), also on photo [15](#), [16](#) and [17](#), and [22](#)].

Photos [25](#), [26](#), [27](#), [28](#), [31](#) display Pangkhua women in their different skirts and breast cloths and ornaments.

Different loincloth of the Pangkua are shown on photo [24](#) and [30](#), men with jacket are shown on photos [24](#), [26](#), [27](#), [28](#), [29](#), [32](#) as opposed to the person on photo [30](#).

Photos [24](#) [[26](#)] and [28](#) [[29](#)] and [32](#) contrast men with the hair combed back with persons who have a bun [[27](#), [29](#), [30](#)], especially photo [32](#).

Bawm men in different dresses [loincloths and jackets] are compared on photo [36](#) [[37](#), [38](#)], they wear headbands and opposed to the Pangkhua men. Photo [39](#) and [40](#) contrast men wearing with a loincloth only, a man with a loincloth and a jacket and another person who wears a large blanket covering the whole body. In a way this photograph is a condensed version of [36](#), [37](#), [38](#), and [39](#).

Photos [41](#) and [42](#) compare Khyeng men in different loincloths, and women in long skirts, breast cloths, ornaments and fillets.

The series of photos from no [44](#) – [46](#) and no [48](#) - [50](#) compares the dresses and ornaments of Tripura of the southern Hill Tracts with those of the northern Hill Tracts as displayed on numbers [52](#) – [54](#), [70](#). While the men in the southern Hill Tracts wear loincloths, the Tripura man from Nunchari wears a Bengali dress and the children on photo no [54](#) display the difference between boys' and girls' dresses.

The photos [44](#) and [45](#) display also the different way hairs are worn as opposed to the men wearing a fillet on photo [48](#), [49](#), [50](#), and [51](#).

The rich dresses displayed on photos [57](#) - [61](#) and [66](#) – [68](#) compare with the moderate dresses of photo no [62](#) and [63](#), which also display a variety of men's and women's dresses.

The photos no [71](#) and [72](#) compare female dresses and ornaments.

Photos [78](#), [83](#), and [84](#) – [88](#) and [91](#) –[92](#) display women's dresses [long skirts, breast cloth and without breast cloth and ornaments], the photo 78

and 80 compare the Bengali dress of the Chakma with the simpler and traditional Chakma men's dress on no. [87](#).

Few photos document everyday work: On photo no [8](#) and [9](#) a Mru woman is shown pounding paddy, on photo no [10](#) another Mru woman is shown winnowing and on photo [100](#) 3 women are shown spinning cotton yarn.

Few photos document religious places: no [12](#) and [13](#) the places where the cattle was sacrificed by the Mru, no [33](#) a forked post of the Pangkhua, set up after a similar cattle fist.

Photos [18](#) – [20](#) show a place where the Mru burn the dead; photo 90 shows a place near a river where the Chakma burn the dead. No 56 shows a Buddhist temple, and [64](#) and [65](#) a procession of Buddhist priests.

Photo [94](#) shows two shields and one musical instrument, it documents aspects of material culture, but it does not "tell a story" like the others do.

The photographs of this collection compare the houses, dresses and ornaments of people living in different habitat [ridge-tops and valleys], and the same topics within the different people in terms of tradition and change.

This "philosophy" behind the photographs also explains another aspect of this collection. There are almost no snapshots in this collection, possibly photos no [8](#), [9](#), and [10](#) are some. Most of the photographs displaying persons are arranged. The camera focuses on them and isolates them to mark distinctive [cultural] features, both in the context of tradition and of change. Persons are grouped together so as to allow for the most conspicuous and evident comparison.

"Comparison" and "series" are the topics of these photographs. They serve another theme, which permeates the collection of photographs and texts.

In his texts Mills identified what could be called the "authentic" aspect of "tribal society" in terms of history and social institutions as opposed to the results of colonial intervention and consecutive cultural change.

The photographic collection supports this pattern, e.g. the representation of "tribal culture" and less marked, "cultural change".

It is here where both parts of the corpus merge in terms of theory. The discussion of the photographic collection leads thus directly into the

discussion of the theory which lies behind the texts. I prefer to discuss both elements of the corpus in a final chapter.

9. The Ethnographic Collection

During his trip in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Mills collected 89 ethnographic objects for the Pitt Rivers Museum. Some of the purchases are mentioned in the tour Diary, not all of them turn up in the list of purchases.

Here I have listed these purchases giving an object description, the name of the ethnic group and the name of the village where the objects were collected and finally the date of purchase as verified from the online catalogue and/or the entry in the Tour Diary. These entries do not correspond always with the data in the online catalogue. My corrections are put in [...].

Number	Object	Ethnic Group	Place of Collection	Date of Collection
1.	Body cloth	Tripura	Nunchhari	21.11.1926
2.	Traverse flute, bamboo	N. Marma	Maischari	21.12.1926
3.	Breast cloth	N. Marma	Maischari	26.11.1926 [21.11]
4.	Breast cloth	N. Marma	Maischari	26.11.1926 [21.11]
5.	Fire making accessory	N. Marma	Maischari	21.11.1926
6.	Cotton cleaning bow	Tripura	Jadurai	22.11.1926
7.	Head cloth	N. Marma	Dewanpara, Guimara Mauza	22.11.1926
8.	Weaving shuttle	S. Marma	Dewan Para Guimara Mauza	22.11.1926
9.	Bamboo flute	S. Marma	Krao	8.12.1926
10.	Hair pin	S. Marma	Krao	8.12.1926
11.	Single free reed pipe	S. Marma	Krao	8.12.1926
12.	Small wooden stick (for cotton)	S. Marma	Krao	8.12.1926
13.	3-stringed zither/crocodile	S. Marma	Bandarban	26.12.1926 [9.12.]
14.	Carved shuttle	S. Marma	Bandarban	9.12.1926
15.	Netting needle	S. Marma	Bandarban	9.12. 1926
16.	Tobacco pipe	S. Marma	Bandarban	9.12.1926
17.	Bamboo blowgun	S. Marma	Bandarban	10.12.1926
18.	Blowpipe dart	S. Marma	Bandarban	10.12.1926
19.	Dao	S. Marma	Bandarban	10.12.1926
20.	Fire making accessory	Mro	Lairo	10.12.1926
21.	Cotton cleaning bow	S.Marma	Chekyong	11.12.1926
22.	Carrying band	S. Marma	Chekyong	12.12.1926 [11.12.]
23.	Cotton winding instrument	S.Marma	Chekyong	12.12.1926 [11.12.]
24.	Body cloth	Mro	Bali, S. Hangar Mauza	12.12.1926
25.	Skirt	Mro	Bali	12.12.1926
26.	Bone hair pin	Mro	Bali	12.12.1926
27.	Bone hair pin	Mro	Bali	12.12.1926
28.	Tobacco pipe	Mro	Bali	12.12.1926
29.	Small wooden stick	Mro	Bali	12.12.1926
30.	Spindle	Mro	Bali	12.12.1926
31.	Cotton cleaning bow	Mro	Bali	12.12.1926
32.	Mouth organ	Mro	Bali	12.12.1926

33.	Mouth organ	Mro	Bali	12.12.1926
34.	Small iron bladed hoe	Mro	Bali	12.12.1926
35.	Zither, bamboo	Mro	Bali	14.12.1926 [12.12.]
36.	Wooden hair comb	Mro	Bali	18.12.1926 [12.12.]
37.	Bird snare	Mro	Bali	30.12.1926 [12.12.]
38.	Zither, bamboo	Mro	Impu	12.12.1926
39.	Liquor measuring device	Mro	Khaitung	13.12.1926
40.	Men, neck ornament	Mro	Miza	13.12.1926
41.	Bow + Fiddle, coconut shell + brass wire strings	Mro	Impu	14.12.1926
42.	Bamboo pellet bow	S.Marma	Pulikha	15.12.1926
43.	Pellet to pellet bow	S. Marma	Pulikha	15.12.1926
44.	Tabacco pipe	S. Marma	Aongajao	16.12.1926
45.	Body cloth	Bawm (Bunjogi Kuki)	Palankhyong	16.12.1926
46.	Flageolet	S. Marma	Bandarban	17.12.1926
47.	Flageolet	S. Marma	Bandarban	17.12.1926
48.	Flageolet	S. Marma	Bandarban	17.12.1926
49.	Flageolet	S. Marma	Bandarban	17.12.1926
50.	Diaphragm flute	S. Marma	Bandarban	17.12.1926
51.	Conical fish trap	S. Marma	Bandarban	17.12.1926
52.	Bamboo spikes	S. Marma	Bandarban	17.12.1926
53.	Bamboo spikes	S. Marma	Bandarban	17.12.1926
54.	Bamboo spikes	S. Marma	Bandarban	17.12.1926
55.	Bamboo spikes	S. Marma	Bandarban	17.12.1926
56.	Dao shaped knife	S. Marma	Bandarban	17.12.1926
57.	Jew's harp	S. Marma	Bandarban	12.1.1927 [17.12.]
58.	Jew's harp	S. Marma	Bandarban	12.1.1927 [17.12.]
59.	Jew's harp	S. Marma	Bandarban	12.1.1927 [17.12.]
60.	Body cloth	Bawm	Palankhyong	18.12.1926
61.	Fire making accessory	Bawm	Ohetia village	18.12.1926
62.	Head band, patterned	Bawm	Palangkhyong	18.12.1926
63.	Fire making device	S. Marma	Naraha	18.12.1926
64.	Flageolet	Khyeng	Arachhari, Dhanuchhara Mauza	19.12.1926
65.	Bamboo cylinder shuttle	Tripura	Nhara Mukh	19.12.1926
66.	Bamboo blowgun	Tripura	Nhara Mukh	19.12.1926
67.	Blowpipe dart	Tripura	Nhara Mukh	19.12.1926
68.	Woman's comb	Tripura	Nhara Mukh	19.12.1926
69.	Small bamboo bow	Khyeng	Kukiyachara	19.12.1926
70.	Blowpipe	Khyeng	Kukiyachhari	19.12.1926
71.	Blunt stunning arrow	Khyeng	Kukiyachhari	15.12.1926 [19.12.]
72.	Liquor siphon	Mro	Impu	19.12.1926
73.	Child's puzzle	Chakma	Rangamati	13.12.1926 [20.12.]
74.	Spinning toy	Chakma	Bhusanchhari	27.12.1926 [28.12.]
75.	Fire making accessory	Pangkhu	Sharulchhari	28.12.1926
76.	Notched flute	Pangkhu	Basanta Kuki, near Subalong	30.12.1926
77.	Top + spinning gear	Pangkhu	Basanta Kuki near Subalong	30.12.1926
78.	Notched flute	Pangkhu	Basanta Kuki,	30.12.1926

			near Subalong	
79.	Bamboo blow gun	Pangkhoa	Basanta Kuki, near Subalong	30.12.1926
80.	Blow pipe dart	Pangkhoa	Basanta Kuki, near Subalong	30.12.1926
81.	Pop gun	Pangkhoa	Basanta Kuki, near Subalong	30.12.1926
82.	Bird snare	Pangkhoa	Basanta Kuki, near Subalong	30.12.1926
83.	Bird snare	Pangkhoa	Basanta Kuki, near Subalong	30.12.1926
84.	Cotton cleaning bow (ginner)	Pangkhoa	Basanta Kuki, near Subalong	30.12.1926
85.	Long rod spool	Pangkhoa	Basanta Kuki, near Subalong	30.12.1926
86.	Liquor siphon	Pangkhoa	Basanta Kuki, near Subalong	30.12.1926
87.	Bamboo cylinder shuttle	Tripura	Undrimachhari, near Subalong	30.12.1926
88.	Breast cloth	Chakma	Undrimachhari, near Subalong	30.12.1926
89.	Skirt	Chakma	Rangamati	12.1.1927

The data are given in the online catalogue. In some cases I have added dates like [28.11.]. In these cases the online-catalogue data are wrong. I have added the correct data taken from the Tour Diary.

The distribution of the purchased objects is shown in the following table:

Tripura (north)	3
Tripura (south)	4
Marma (north)	5
Marma (south)	33
Mru	20
Khyeng	4
Bawm	4
Pangkhoa	12
Chakma	3

By far the most purchases (77 out of 89) were made in the southern Hill Tracts among the jhumia population.

3 Metal objects (19, 34, 56) and the metal strings of the zither (41) are Bengali made, the rest is of indigenous production.

10. A Discussion

10.1. J.P. Mills and the Chittagong Hill Tracts

After the publication of Ascoli's Report of 1918, texts on the situation in the CHT were few and largely confined to narrow administrative correspondence and settlement questions [Government of Bengal 1927; Selections 1929; Basu 1931; Mills 1931; Ghosh 1933; Three Chiefs, n.d.].

In those years it was only Mills' papers which supplied material on the socio-economic and political conditions in the Hill Tracts of the late 1920s, on the growing agricultural crisis its population was facing in some parts of the country, calling for immediate action, and on the bad state of administration.

Mills' texts mark a new aspect in the ethnographic description of the CHT. He was the first who applied anthropological methods of inquiry and interpretation. It is the merit of his inquiry to have shed light on the construction of power and to have paved the way to a clearer perception of the unfolding of political power in the CHT.

His analysis of the history and status of the chiefs resulted, in fact, in an analysis of the development of aspects of the political systems of the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. He transcended the narrow frame the administration had set, e.g. to "advise the Bengal Government how the Chiefs in the Chittagong Hill Tracts may best be utilised in the administration" [OM I: 2] and made space for a wider perception of political processes in hill peoples' cultures.

His photographic collection is the first one to document aspects of the cultures of the people of the CHT, and his ethnographic collection is the only one in Great Britain to document material culture of this part of the Empire.

There is yet another achievement, a very abstract one though, which emerges in the texts. When I found this manuscript in 1971 it was locked away in the strong room of the SOAS. Where Lucien Bernot had the texts from he does not indicate. But he was sure that the Report (the recommendations he did not know) had not met with the favour of Mills' superiors, moreover, he writes that the Report was practically suppressed [Bernot 1967:41]. Evidently, J.P. Mills had fathomed out the limits the Administration could grant. His concern for the protection of

the hill people was too evident and it seems as if he had exceeded these limits, no matter if he was right or wrong.

This situation points at the dialectics of colonial administration: Good administrators were needed, but they could only be effective if they comprehended the systems of the people they were to rule. So far, so good. But sometimes the views and visions of the Others, of their “wild worlds” were too dangerously alluring, tempting, seducing and eventually more promising than the gains of a *pukka sahib*’s life in the cantonment or residential quarters.

The danger of administrators in the “wilderness” changing sides was an ever recurrent threat to any colonial administration. This kind of reasoning may seem strange in this context. But it is Mills’ remarks which invite us to follow up this track. I will return to this issue later.

10.2. Discourses behind the Text

The texts on the CHT are not “finalised”. Originally, they were written as communications to the government, not as anthropological or ethnographic texts. Yet, given this limitation, they display arguments which invite a discussion. Describing the failures and incompetence of the British administration in the CHT both from the position of an administrator and anthropologist, he constructed new perspectives.

The whole corpus is multifaceted.

The texts can be read as reports and recommendations for the administration. Then they tell the story of incompetent administration and the incompatibilities of colonial and “tribal” governance.

They can be read as historical texts. Then they are a study of “origins” and of “diffusion”.

They can be read as an anthropological text. Then they tell the story of the “production” of political power.

They can be read as a theoretical text, then they give insight into the construction of anthropological *topoi*.

These texts also mark the crossing of two respectively three different theoretical discourses: One is the approach of the historical and the diffusionist tradition of anthropology as it was taught by A.C. Haddon and more prominently by W.H.R. Rivers in Cambridge. Contemporaneous British anthropology was then largely concerned with

questions of origin and/or of diffusion of cultural elements, some aspects of these approaches surface in the Reports, e.g. in the discussion of the origin of the Chakma and the “Indonesian layer” and in the search for The Authentic.

The other discourse is marked by the rise of functionalism. Mills had read “Crime and Custom in Savage Society” after his return from the field trip. Much of his argument with regard to the relationship between the chiefs and his followers rested on the notion of “reciprocity” so central to Malinowski’s argument.

10.3. Constructions: Origins, Diffusion and Function

J.P. Mills had worked both as administrator and anthropologist in the Naga Hills since 1916 when he was posted as Subdivisional Officer to Mokochung (cf. Hobson 1998, 12:62). Ethnographic description of the Naga cultures had achieved a high standard in those years [Hutton 1920; 1921 a; 1922; Mills 1922; 1926]. With regard to the situation in the CHT, however, he faced quite a different situation. Information on this part of the Empire was vague.

The standard of knowledge was imprecise and contradictory in anthropological terms. He knew about T.H. Lewin’s writings [cf. his letter to Balfour of May 12th, 1926] but other references may not have been accessible to him prior to the beginning of his field trip to the CHT. Yet, while on tour he seems to have had opportunities to consult some of the colonial sources [Tour Diary, 27.12.1926]. At that time colonial correspondence was basically directed at the acquisition of knowledge for policy making. There were the annual Administration Reports, the Census Reports, the Ricketts Report of 1847, Lewin’s texts of 1867;1869; 1870; and 1912, Hutchinson’s monographs of 1906 [1909]; the Correspondence of 1871, Hunter’s and Mackenzie’s books [1876;1884], and the Selections of 1853 and of 1887, to name only the most important publications.

From the Reports I and II it becomes clear that at least shortly after his mission he was able to consult this literature and correspondence on the CHT. He noticed that both the colonial jargon and an imprecise knowledge of the “tribal” situation did not allow for a clear understanding of the situation. He stated that the people of the hills were

ruled by administrators who had projected their Victorian concepts of civilisation and development on the cultures of the hill peoples. These projections, he maintained correctly, did not mirror life in the Hill Tracts.

Yet, the same principle of critique, the identification of “the text behind the text” has to be applied to his descriptions, interpretations, the photographs and the museum collection.

These three aspects of the corpus (the texts, the photographic collection and the ethnographic collection) do not have much in common at first sight. A closer look, however, reveals a common approach which permeates the whole corpus like a hidden text.

J. P. Mills attempted to shed light on the somewhat obscure state of knowledge on the CHT by applying the anthropological method of inquiry, description and interpretation. He meant to differentiate into ethnographic reality, e.g. the reliable and correct description of basic aspects of the cultures of the people of the CHT and the colonial projection of both concepts and projects. At the same time there are a few suppositions which are worth mentioning. They may help to understand better his line of reasoning.

Origin, Diffusion and Function - These three terms stand for concepts which permeated much of British anthropological discourses during the latter decades of the 19th and the early decades of the 20th century.

There were the influences of Lewis Henry Morgan and his shaping of evolutionism, implying questions of “origin”. There were the influences of Fritz Gräbner’s concept of the “Kulturkreise” [1905] which, supported by the achievements of archaeology in Egypt [cf. Perry 1923] led to the discussion of the question of diffusion of cultures and eventually to the reception of diffusionism in Great Britain.

These large narratives were at some point confronted with a new look at anthropological work, especially field-work and interpretation of data, e.g. the subtle rise of functionalism.

Origins

The origin of the Chakma and their social organisation was one topic of his inquiry. Some Chakma, he writes, claim “that they are the descendants of Kshatriyas from Champanagar” [OM I, 23], but he dismissed this as myth and maintained “that they are of mixed origin. The basis of the tribe is Magh [...]. There is possibly a slight admixture of

Tippera blood [...] but the main foreign strain, and that a very strong one indeed, comes from the Mogul army of the Governor of Lower Bengal and from Bengali subjects of the Mogul with whom they were in close contact while occupying the country round Cox's Bazaar during the latter half of the seventeenth century." [OM I:23 f; cf. also: Tour Diary, 25/11/26).

The Mong Chief gave an explanation which seemed to support this position. He stated that they called the Chakma "Saok" in Magh, meaning "of mixed blood". "Ma" is a feminine termination" [Tour Diary, 26/11/26]. In the Report I he translated "Saok" also as "of mixed blood" or "of impure worship" [OM I:24]. It does not become clear what "impure worship" means in this context, also, why the Chakma should apply a feminine termination of "offensive character" to designate themselves and their "mixed origin".

The Mogul origin seems to be further supported by "Muhammedan ornaments which the women still wear in their ears" [M I:24]. At one time, he wrote, "Muhammedan names were all the rage, as the list of Chiefs testifies and apparently many of the tribe at one time embraced Islam" [OM I:24;28].

The fact that the chiefs had Muslim names shows that they used them, but this does not say anything about the names of "ordinary" Chakma. None of the dewans' names he mentioned are of Muslim origin. Apart from this the bearing of Muslim names can be explained differently (see below).

The fact that the Chakma women wore "Muhammedan ornaments" can be explained by the fact that the Chakma did not know to work silver at that time. Even today they buy Bengali-made silverware.

This preoccupation with the Moghul-Marma issue leaves another link out of consideration, e.g. the relationship of the Doignak with the Chakma [Lewin 1869:64 ff.].

The political aspect of the Chakma society is another topic of his inquiry.

The Chakma population, being "in the main of Indonesian (Maghi) stock, [...] retained the indigenous system of clans (*gozas*) each under a tribal chief (Dewan). They collected the tribute but paid it to a middleman, who was never a tribal Chief, and at first was not even a

Chakma. It is these middlemen who are now called “Chiefs” by Chakma historians [OM I:26].

In short: The chiefs were from the very beginning tax farmers, they had adopted Muslim names (“Khan”) and had “almost certainly” embraced Islam. The kinship groups of the Chakma were each represented by a tribal chief, a Dewan.

These tax farmers collected what Mills called a “tribute”. Yet, there is other information: In 1713 the Mogul administration measured the land in the Chittagong district, divided it into “jagir” and rented it to peasants who henceforth enjoyed the status of jagirdars [O’Malley 1908:136, 53]. The hills east of Chittagong were not influenced by these measures [Bernot 1967:105]. In 1713, the Chakma Chief “*Rajah* Zallal Khan obtained permission from Furrukshah and Muhammadshah to allow the Beparrees of the low lands to trade with the Joomeahs on payment of a tribute of cotton” [History/Settlements 1866; Hutchinson 1909:24]. The “cotton tribute” is here described as part of a trade agreement [Lewin 1869:22 f.] and has no link to the land revenue system established in the plains at this time, and it is not a tribute.

The term “Khan” remains to be discussed. This is not a name *sui generis*. While originally it was a title equivalent to “Lord” or “Prince”, “used among the Mongol and Turk nomad hordes (...) in India it has become a common affix to, or in fact part of, the name of Hindustanis of every rank” [Yule, Hobson-Jobson. Digital Dictionaries of South Asia, p. 479].

Those collectors of the trade tax had to place themselves into a relationship with the Mogul rulers. This was done by the use of the term “Khan” which they had adopted or which was given to them to define a status which was vaguely superior to those persons in the hills the “chiefs/middlemen” had to deal with.

About the meaning of the term “dewan” some confusion exists in the manuscripts.

Mills wrote at one point that the Chakma had retained “the indigenous system of clans (gozas) each under a tribal chief (Dewan)” [OM I:26]. Here, a clan chief is equated with a tribal chief who is called “dewan” whereas earlier he had said that “there are no tribal Chiefs in this district [...] but there are clan Chiefs, representing the founders of clans [OM I:6].

This may be misleading but it may become clear in the context which Mills had identified. He had criticised that the “terms “tribal Chiefs” and “tribal jurisdiction ”which were constantly used in the colonial correspondence “are [...] misnomers, and have possibly proved seriously misleading at times. They have given rise among officials without personal experience of this area to the belief that the inhabitants are divided into homogeneous tribes, ruled by three Chiefs” [OM I:5 f.].

Yet, another misunderstanding has to be discussed. Mills called the representatives of the Chakma kinship groups “Dewan”. But a “dewan” is “un fonctionnaire chargé du Trésor public dans un district ou un Etat” [Bernot 1967:101, fn 1; cf. also Yule/Burnell (eds.) 1966:309]. The term “dewan” identifies the role of an “agent”, most probably the representatives of the Chakma kinship groups in the system of tax collection in a pre-colonial and colonial context, but it does not identify their role as “goza chiefs”.

One aim of the texts was to identify the origin of the Chakma and the institutions of the hill people as well as influences and changes brought about from outside, and the different cultural layers which accounted for the particular cultures in the CHT. This search for the origin coexisted with the question of the diffusion of cultural traits.

Diffusion

Mills argued that in the course of time and contacts multiple influences had shaped the cultures and political structures of the peoples of the CHT. He had shown how what he called an “Indonesian” “tribal” basis had been superseded by a “non-tribal” Bengali/Buddhist superstructure: “The whole material culture of the tribes of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, under a superficial layer of Bengali and Buddhist culture, is purely and typically Indonesian. They have the typical Indonesian tension-loom, the typical fire-thong, the typical fish-trap lined with cane-thorns, houses, type of hearths, traps, method of cultivation, and so on” [OM I:3; cf. also: pp. 4 ff., 11, with explicit reference to Borneo: pp.18, 22].

In the Tour Diary he referred to the social organisation: “Expected Indonesian type of chieftainship, + found it with Bohmong. Term “tribal chief” begs question” [Diary, 20/12/26].

This “Indonesian type of chieftainship” is marked by characteristic features: “The subject must respect and obey his Chief, must call him “father,” must give him an offering of first fruits from the produce of his fields, and a leg of all game he obtains from the jungle, must help him with labour when required, and with gifts when the Chief is celebrating some big ceremony” [OM I:5]. “One does not ask a man who his Chief is, but whom he calls “father”. A man may owe allegiance to a Chief for various reasons, through being born in the Chief’s clan, through being protected in war, through receiving assistance in times of scarcity, and so on. As the term “father” implies, the relationship is reciprocal” [OM I:4]. Accordingly, the chief has duties towards his “sons”: “the Chief must protect his son, must see that he has land to cultivate in security, must help him through times of scarcity, and must feed him when he works for him” [OM I:5].

Bernot does not confirm such relationship for the Marma and also in his discussion of the “traditional gifts” of the Marma to the roaja (rwā:cā) or to the chief [1967:110 ff.] he does not consider them to be part of such relationship.

My Marma informant was very clear about addressing the Bohmong Chief: He said that “only children call their father “Father” (...). Usually the Bohmong is addressed as “Asanggree”, meaning “Your Highness” by countrymen [Akhyai Mong, personal communication, August 20th, 2005].

The recurring reference to Indonesia including Borneo and the Phillipines remains to be explained. Hutton had employed Ratzel’s division of “Indonesian races” to place the cultures of Eastern India into a wider cultural frame (Hutton 1921, xxii, cf. also Hutton 1922 b:xxvi ff, in: Mills 1922; cf. Ratzel1896). Mills followed this diffusionist heritage and employed the same clasification.

How do the two correspond with theoretical notions, or, to put the question in another way: What is the hidden text behind both collections, different though they may be?

Both collections answer both theoretical approaches, the search for the origin and the authentic and the question of diffusion of cultural elements, e.g., objects and concepts.

I will deal with each collection in turn.

The photographic collection documents basically “traditional culture” and its variations. The photographs display houses, dresses and ornaments of people living in different habitats (ridge-tops and valleys), and they compare the same topics within the different people in terms of tradition and (rarely) change in terms of a geographical comparison.

There are almost no snapshots in this collection, possibly photos no 8, 9, and 10 are some. This may be due to the fact that rapid exposures were technically impossible at that time. However, almost all of the photographs displaying persons are arranged. The camera focusses on them, and isolates them to mark distinctive (cultural) features. Persons are grouped together so as to allow for the most conspicuous and evident comparison.

“Comparison of variations in space”, in other words, “series” are one principle underlying the order of the photographs. This serves another theme which runs through and texts and also the collection of photographs. In his texts Mills identified what could be called the “authentic” aspect of “tribal society” in terms of history and social institutions as opposed to the results of colonial intervention and consecutive cultural change.

The photographic collection supports this representation of “authentic tribal culture” whereas the documentation of external influences on the cultures of the CHT peoples has receded.

The “text behind the ethnographic collection” reads differently. Questions of origin and (unilinear) development of objects and institutions occupied much space in anthropological discourse during the later decades of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th century. It was A.R Lane Fox Pitt-Rivers who studied techniques to understand the evolution of artifacts. This principle he applied first to the study of weapons (Primitive Warfare 1868-70), later to boats and navigation. He displayed his findings in the exhibitions in the Pitt Rivers Museum at Oxford. Henry Balfour was director there when he met Mills and whatever ethnographic objects were collected by him and Hutton in Nagaland followed its “collection design”. So did the objects he collected in the CHT.

According to the then prevalent notion of collection, ethnographic museums had to collect objects which would mirror authentic and essential aspects of the particular culture in question so as to allow the

identification of larger and overarching and interconnected cultural realms, or, to put it in the language of the concept: "Kulturkreise".

In another context Mills wrote: "I got a lot of stuff for Balfour. I know exactly what he wants, just simple things that cost nothing but which fit into series'" (Hobson 1995:8). This remark gives another clue.

The ethnographic collection contains objects of everyday use. It documents the "home made", "original" objects, only the few metal objects are of Bengali workmanship. He could show to which large degree the material culture of the hill people was self-sufficient at this time and how little it was influenced by Bengali imports.

The notion of the "authentic" which is a thematical aspect of the texts and photographic collection surfaces in the ethnographical collection.

Given the evolutionist background of the Pitt Rivers Museum and its director, the ethnographic objects Mills collected for him in the CHT may have been suited to be neatly arranged in typological series in a much larger context. Outside of this context they document the outreach of what Mills had called "Indonesian culture" in its original shape.

Function

The cultures of the people of the CHT were, like many others, threatened by colonial interests [OM II:34 f.] and also by internal mismangement. Mills was to advise the government how the three chiefs in the Chittagong Hill Tracts could best be integrated into the administration, their and the peoples' interests considered.

Mills' proposals were radical. He defined the function of the chiefs in the administration. He wanted to place them on a different footing, they should be relieved of tasks which were not part of their "tribal" duties as chiefs, in short, they should work "as Chiefs" [OM I:2 f.], fulfilling duties he had defined and which were in accordance with their cultures and the needs of the colonial administration. In other words, they should become "tribal" functionaries, "harnessed" to fulfil their tasks.

His proposals involved both "an entire change in the nature of the tasks they are asked to perform" [OM I:2] and a change in the policy of the colonial administration.

10.4. Consequences

The description of the constitutive aspects of the cultures of the people of the CHT and the interpretation of the potential of their institutions was followed by another question, linking anthropology and administration: How could these cultures be preserved in such a way that they could develop their proper capacities in the perspective of progress and in the fold of British administration? One could ask this question less idealistically. There was widespread political unrest in India, especially in Bengal. This had to be contained and neutralised. Unruly hill people would be another factor of instability in domestic policy.

Mills saw “tribal cultures” in the CHT on the verge of being destabilised by external forces and by internal contradictions. To highlight this fear he linked his critique of the public school system in the Hill Tracts with experiences from Africa and Sarawak.

“This Bengali culture, so strongly fostered by the Chief and by the Rangamati High School with its purely Bengali staff and curriculum, is thoroughly bad for the tribe, not because it is Bengali, but because it is alien and unsuitable. A generation of idle students is growing up, eager for clerical posts which do not exist, and probably unfitted for the hard life of the Hill Tracts” [OM I, 36 f.].

Also African societies were threatened by such contradictory developments. Mills quoted the statement of Captain Rattray of the Colonial Office Report for 1921: “one path leads, I believe, to the unrest and ferment we see on every hand among the peoples whose institutions we have either deliberately broken down or as deliberately allowed to decay. The other path at least leads to some surer hope, because it has landmarks which the genius of the people will recognise, and which will keep them upon the road when in difficulties...Among the younger generation there is a tendency to ridicule the past [...]. I firmly believe that once the Government and Political Officers are seen to take more interest in ancient customs, and are seen to encourage such customs and institutions as are good, the younger generation will themselves follow suit, and come to realise that they should not throw away their priceless heritage” [OM I: 37].

A reply to such a threatening situation for indigenous societies he found in Sarawak:

“Speaking of the almost miraculous progress which has been made without any undue disturbance of indigenous customs Mr. Hose says –

‘but this result has been attained only by a carefully considered policy by which the people and their Chiefs are constantly kept in touch with the administrators by sympathy and consultation. In this way the co-operation of the people has been obtained in the Government of the country, and the leading Chiefs and influential men have thus been harnessed into the work of progress and responsibility’” [OM II:21]

It was this policy which Mills advocated to be followed in the Hill Tracts. The chiefs should be “harnessed” and act as chiefs, the indigenous institutions should be both the basis and frame of such development.

This argument leads directly to Mills’ position in the debate concerning the Government of India Act, 1935.

10.5. The Administration Reform of 1935

When Mills received the call to inquire into the current situation in the CHT he could look back on 10 years experience as administrator and an education as anthropologist in Oxford. [I guess he would have preferred another order: anthropologist and administrator.] His recommendations for reforms in the CHT had some immediate effects and though not specifically mentioned in the colonial correspondence, some of his proposals were put into practice.

His recommendations had, however, another function. From one remark in his text we learn that the colonial administration was devising the framework for a new administration reform of India. In this context, the future of the “backward areas” was under discussion. Apart from the overarching political problems in framing the reform which concerned India at large [Chand 1983, 4,1 ff.] there was a debate on the desirability of prolonging and in some cases extending the status of partial or total exclusion to indigenous people.

In order to support the decision making of the provincial governments charged with the decision for partial or total exclusion of “tribal areas”,

Mills' experience and expertise from among indigenous peoples in Eastern India was needed. He was asked "to suggest the areas in which protection should be given in future, and, what is equally important, to suggest machinery to aid the Governors in fulfilling their special responsibilities towards the great number of aboriginals who will remain outside such areas" [Mills 1935:6].

The detailed discussion of this reform would go beyond the scope of this text. But in a text of 1935 Mills expressed some notions more clearly than he had developed them in the Reports and Recommendations on the CHT.

He identified five regions in India where the future of "tribal areas" was at stake and to which his arguments were applicable.

"(i) Firstly there are the tracts encircling Assam on the North and East and running down the Eastern side of Bengal. These are inhabited by a Mongolian population speaking a variety of non-Indian languages.

(ii) Secondly there is the great Central Indian Plateau [...]. (iii) Thirdly there are the hills South of Madras [...]. (iv) Fourthly there are what might be called the Sub-Himalayan Nepalese areas [...]. (v) Fifthly and lastly there are two special areas in North-West India, namely Spiti and Lahaul" [Mills 1935:7].

In his recommendations he developed two positions:

Assimilation or isolation of these people were not the issue he dealt with. He argued in terms of function. To him, "tribal societies" of India harboured particular qualities like honesty and loyalty which could be made use of in the building of a New India.

"There are hundreds of little city states hidden away in the hills of India which far excel any Western democracy. Without chiefs, under the leaders which character brings to the top, they settle their own disputes, make their own roads and improve and keep in order their own water supply. An offer of Government funds they almost regard as an insult; they have their own hands to work with and if any money is required for things they cannot make they prefer to collect it among themselves" [Mills 1935:5].

He argued that "primitive tribes are depositories of qualities of character, organization and skill which cannot but be of value in the future" [Mills 1935:6].

Yet, the contradictions of development had made it sufficiently clear in the past “that these qualities can only survive if the tribes are given time and space to develop on their own lines” [Mills 1935:6].

Second, he maintained that a denial of this chance of self-realisation to “primitive tribes” “would be to oppose the world-wide demand for self-realisation” [Mills 1935:6].

To endorse this political current “every Province has been given autonomy [...]. The same desire of every community to work out its own salvation has led to communal seats in the legislatures. It would have been inconsistent and unfair to have denied to primitive tribes the chances of working out *their* salvation in their own way. To give them this chance, special protection in certain areas is essential” [Mills 1935:6], especially as the results of such policies in Assam, Bihar and Orissa were encouraging.

While the numerical strength of indigenous people was one criterion for their maintaining the “tribal notions”, Mills employed another one. “This is based on the terms “tribalisation” and “detrivalisation”, borrowed from African sociological literature. The greatest problem in South Africa today is that of the detrivalised Bantu, and that of the detrivalised Depressed Classes in India is hardly less serious. My criterion is that if a body of aboriginals still retains a tribal organization it retains with that organization qualities which make special protective measures desirable; if, on the other hand, a body of aboriginals is detrivalised it generally for all practical purposes forms part of the Depressed Classes and must share their fate, be it good or bad. Where to draw the line between tribalised and detrivalised is a matter which has to be decided on the merits of each case. Naturally the tribal spirit is likely to be strongest where aboriginals are most numerous and least intermixed with others, and for this reason the tribal and numerical criteria nearly always leads to the same results” [Mills 1935:6].

Mills confirmed that he had consulted all available sources in order to substantiate his recommendations and noticed that in most cases his findings corresponded to those of the local governments. Moreover, more “frequently I have had to recommend an extension of the areas which Local Governments would partially exclude” [Mills 1935:7]. “The commoner view, which I share, is that the new Constitution has been framed in the hope that the people of India, not excepting the seventeen

million members of primitive tribes will not be harmed by it, but will be helped to higher things" [Mills 1935:99].

Mills emphasised the honesty and loyalty, the cooperation, modesty and self-sufficiency of the "aboriginals" of India [Mills 1935:5] and concluded: "Here are models which, if advanced India ever copies them, will more than halve the cost of administration. These city-states are units of the ideal size for the management of local affairs [...]. In settling their disputes all tribes which have not lost their culture use their own tribal laws, the laws suited to their environment by centuries of experience. These laws will be needed in the future, for a growing body of opinion holds that the day will come when the complicated procedure of English law will either disappear from India or be modified and simplified beyond recognition" [Mills 1935:5].

"Aboriginals", "tribals", or, as Mills said, the "voiceless peoples of India" were placed for a short while into the political focus and the emerging order of future India was to rest on "tribal" or "aboriginal" concepts.

In the context of the overarching political debate about the future of India between the main opponents to British Rule, e.g. the Hindu and Muslim representatives [cf. Chand 1983,3:222 ff., 4:1 ff] this recourse to "the Primitive" is certainly a daring and surprising way of reasoning. It is worth while having a closer look at it.

The recourse to "The Primitive", the employment of inversions has been an ever recurrent *topos* in the perception of "the Other". Travellers, administrators, artists and philosophers of the 18th and 19th century described other peoples and their cultures often in terms of inversions of their own cultures, employing the "Primitive" as a mirror of critique held out to their own societies, more explicitly, to authoritarian political systems. The type of opposition of such inversions to the European societies differed over time, but always they were European products of, and linked to, European societies in a negative way.

Mills was very critical about the competence of British policy in the CHT [cf. Harvey 1961:39, fn 9; Bernot 1967:41]. He had made it very clear how much he had been impressed by the poise and demeanour of the Naga he had lived with for a long time [OM II:21 f.]. He was, on the other hand, equally critical of the notions of development of British colonialism. "Nothing has given me more anxiety at various times than

the question of granting prospecting licenses for oil and minerals in areas occupied by a primitive people. Arguments about 'developing the resources of the Empire' are all very well, but what really often happens is that land which used to grow food for poor jhumiyas is made to produce dividends for rich shareholders instead, the jhumiya being compelled to overwork more than ever the land which is left to him [OM II:34].

Mills' analyses and interpretations were not discussed because they were locked away. His empirical descriptions, his photographs, give faces to persons and people he had visited and spoken to. His ethnographic collection honours the modesty and refinement of people living in those hilly areas of further India who had, after initial reluctance, impressed him deeply. [Mills, May 13th 1927].

10.6. The resurgence of the "Tribal Genius"

Mills represents the sympathetic administrator who worked for the good of the people and who felt himself close to the people he was to rule. Such a person could not be the standard administrator who was out for an easy career in the colonial service. Rather, a person devoted to his task was needed.

"I need hardly suggest the qualifications which a Special Officer for aboriginals will need to have. One of them, obviously, will be a real liking for and understanding of primitive people. Another will be tact, for in his work he is bound often to find the dividing line between advice and interference a thin one" [Mills 1935:28].

At one point in the text, Mills referred to T.H. Lewin, the first Deputy Commissioner of the Chittagong Hill Tracts: "In the last paragraph of his book "The Chittagong Hill Tracts and the Dwellers Therein" Capt. Lewin exactly describes the type of man which will always be needed for this district" [OM II:50]:

"What is wanted here is not measures but a man. Place over them an officer gifted with the power of rule; not a mere cog in the great wheel of Government, but one tolerant of the failings of his fellow-creatures, and yet prompt to see and recognise in them the touch of Nature that makes the whole world kin; - apt to enter into new trains of thought and to modify and adopt ideas, but cautious in offending national prejudices" [Lewin 1869:118].

Lewin soon felt attracted by the life of “his” people in the hills: They “enjoy a perfect social equality. There is certainly no starvation among them; they occupy the “juste milieu” of neither poverty nor riches” [1869:116], and little later he added:

“My great and distinctive feeling with them has been that they were my fellow-creatures, men and women like myself” [1869:118] and he proposed: “Under guidance like this, let the people by slow degrees civilize themselves. With education open to them, and yet moving under their own laws and customs, they will turn out, not debased and miniature epitomes of Englishmen, but a new and noble type of God’s creatures” [Lewin 1869:118].

Lewin had started his career in India fighting in the Great Mutiny in 1857. But his years in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and later the Lushai Hills had made him thoughtful. His post-romantic turn came and only a dozen years later he proposed, in blatant contradiction to the colonial law of profit: “let us not govern these hills for ourselves, but administer the country for the well-being and happiness of the people dwelling therein. Civilization is the result and not the cause of civilization” [Lewin 1869:118].

Yet, he was realistic: “It is due to Englishmen to say that they do try to do good to the country and the people; but when it is a question of the people’s benefit or an increased or diminished sale of Manchester cottons, piff! paff! the people are nowhere” [Lewin 1869:118].

In the course of his career Lewin had repeatedly over-stepped his limits and the Administration accordingly punished him [Lewin 1912:288]

Mentally Lewin had changed sides. He wrote in 1868 to his mother that he wanted to remain in his beloved hills, that he felt himself very much a Hillman, eating their food, wearing their clothes and sharing their life and values. He expressed his distaste of the English way of life and even dreamt of sweeping down upon the plains of Bengal with his hill men to set up the British standard again.

The writings of both administrators display overlappings in terms of standing and disobedience, both were in what I call a silent conspiracy. Both wanted to rehabilitate the “tribal community” in its own rights to overcome the “colonial subject”.

Both understood perfectly well the dialectics of colonial rule and meant to civilise this regime through the potential of “tribal societies” which were to be given a chance to develop in terms of their own concepts.

At some point Lewin had wanted “to stay back” in his beloved hills, but eventually, under “a chill sense of disappointment [...] and weary and broken” [Lewin 1912:313] he gave up and made his peace with The Administration [Lewin 1912:314]. Mills’ Reports and Recommendations were locked away in the strong room of SOAS.

To perceive here a parallel would be, of course, an exaggeration. Yet, this would conform to what Lewin remarked: “A high Indian official once brusquely but pertinently remarked in my hearing: ‘We don’t want personal influence; we want men who will obey orders’” [Lewin 1912:313]

These documents may, I hope, be of use as sources for both scholars on and in the CHT. Yet, these papers tell another story, e.g. the story of silent refusal to The Administration’s obsession for orders to be obeyed. This would highlight an aspect of J. P. Mills’ work, which does not surface in his ethnographic writings and which would add to a better understanding of the person James Philip Mills, his career as government anthropologist and his ethnographic writings.

There is yet another aspect of this “changing the sides”. One of the dominant debates of the first half of the 20th century revolved around the question of independence and the political future of the two major segments of the Indian population, Hindus and Muslims. The mainstream debate focussed on the question who would eventually run the independent state. This dominating narrative darkened other issues, e.g. those of the future of what was called “depressed classes”, “criminal tribes”, “aboriginals”, “tribals”, in short, minorities. Contrary to the political mainstream, Mills did not argue in the perspective of the Empire’s historiography, he rather focussed on “minor” narratives”, and maintained that value systems of minorities, of “tribal societies”, would eventually be of wider use for what was to become independent India.

11. Glossary

Abwab

“cesses, imposts, and charges, levied by zemindars and public officers”
[Wilson 1855:2]

Amu, Ahoon

Representative of a Tongsonya kinship group [Lewin 1869:67]

Bhadralok

Upper middle class gentleman

Chaprases

Lower subordinate employees

Dhamai

Member of the Bohmong Chiefs’ force [Mey 1980:247]

Dhan

Paddy

Dheba

Low and marshy land, not claimed for cultivation

Etnami kabuliyat

"kabuliyat": "a word of agreement", or the act of "agreeing" in relating one's ownership/possession of a certain piece of land. "Etnami" should be "Eknami", a single person, name: a person gets a lease in his single name and in exchange he has to make agree to pay an annual rent.

Etnami pata

Should be Eknami pata, a document of lease holding in the name of a single person

Genna

Naga-Assamese word for a “ Naga ceremony” [Mills 1922:232, 136 ff.]

Ghat

Shore of bricks or cement at a pond or river

Goza

Kinship group of the Chakma [Hutchinson 1909:26]

Hashila

“cultivated” in contrast to Khilla that means “fallow land”

Havildar

A staff of a lower order in the police force

Hazar

“A Thousand”, should be “nazar”: a “gift” claimed by the chiefs

Jawa

a kind of mark indicating one's own right over any natural resource

Jhola

A side bag which one takes on the shoulder

Karbari

“A person conducting affairs (...) a manager” [Wilson 1855:261; Yule/Burnell 1966:475]

Khay Kharcha

Khay: eating, entertaining with foods, drinks; Kharcha: expenses

Khilla

Uncultivated fallow land

Kisars, Khisha, Kye ca:

“a person who lives on the revenue of a province [Stevenson/Eveleth 1921:217]

Kuchi

a segment of the kinship group

Kumar

Prince

Kyong

Buddhist temple

Lengta

Man's apron

Machan

veranda

Pan

Betel

Pan chayat

Village council

Parganait

Assembly of a number of parganas

Patta

Land holding document, a document of purchase or of a lease

Peon

Lower subordinate staff

Puggaree

A headdress, fillet

Pukka ghat

A landing place made of brick or cement at a pond or river

Rwa:ca:

“agglomeration - manger”, c'est-à-dire “celui qui tire ses ressources de l'agglomeration [Bernot 1967, 1, 84 f.]

Sepoy

A Soldier

Sradh

A ceremony after death as performed by the Hindu

Tauzi , Towzi

A list of the rents

Tila

hillock

Tulwar

A Sword

Yuvaraja

Successor of a Raja

Zimbadar

Custodian, here: a person holding a document (patta) certifying the right to enjoy the land

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13.1. Part I.

Note

This report was written by Mr. J. Mills, I.C.S., Officer on Special Duty. Certain portions of the original report have been omitted.

REPORT ON THE CHIEFS OF THE CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS. PART I.

INTRODUCTORY

1. The voluminous correspondence which exists regarding the Chittagong Hill Tracts is largely concerned with the relations between Government and the three chiefs, the Bohmong, the Chakma Chief, and the Mong Raja living in that area. Those relations have been far from happy. From the chiefs Government has, as everyone who has discussed the question has noted, received sometimes entire lack of co-operation, and sometimes active obstruction, together with a flood of memorials containing extravagant claims and undignified appeals for money in return, for which no useful assistance has either been forthcoming or offered. Government on the other hand has viewed delinquencies with a leniency so great and long suffering that the chiefs have come to expect it as their right. The details of the dealings of Government with them since the district was taken over are to be found in files which are readily available, and I do not wish unduly to lengthen my report by going over all the old ground. Mr. Ascoli summarises the administrative development of the district from 1860 when it was taken over, to 1918 in paragraphs 1 to 8 of his report.

In 1924 the collection of the so called 'abwabs' by the chief received the attention of Government, and in 1925 the collection of plough rents was taken out of their hands. The necessity for this serious step was beyond all doubt and made it clearer than ever that the chiefs were in danger of fast becoming useless. But a non-independent chief is very far from necessarily being a useless person; he can be of the greatest assistance and value if proper use be made of his position and capabilities. I have therefore been instructed "to consider the past history of the chiefs, and their present position, and in the light of my experience of other tribal

chiefs advise the Bengal Government how the chiefs in the Chittagong Hill Tracts may best be utilised in the administration, regard being had both to the interest of the people and the desirability of maintaining the dignity and influence of the chiefs and preventing them from becoming mere figure-heads in receipt of certain emoluments."

It has been considered that " the main difficulty appears to be that a change from the tribal to a territorial system has tended to make the chiefs unnecessary to the administration" but I am to advise "whether having regard to their history and influence they can be given a useful place in it."

2. Such is the problem which I have attempted to solve in this report. Though I respectfully disagree with the opinion expressed that the change from the tribal to territorial jurisdiction is to blame, and feel sure that the root of the trouble goes much deeper, I do not think the problem is insoluble provided there is a real change of heart on the part of the chiefs, and an entire change in the nature of the tasks they are to be asked to perform. No one could despair who, like me, numbers chiefs among his real friends, from whom he has received co-operation and advice which have time and again proved literally indispensable.

3. My proposals are that the chiefs should no longer be employed as revenue collectors and petty magistrates. To these tasks, with their inevitable atmosphere of bookkeeping, rules, codes, and inspecting officers, the chiefs are not suited either by character, upbringing or position. They can be performed far better by subordinate officials. My desire is to see the chiefs working as chiefs, with undiminished incomes and with an influence only bounded by their capabilities.

4 My proposals are based on :-

(1) A residence of two months in the Chittagong Hill Tracts where I toured some 500 miles, mostly on foot, visiting each chief at his headquarters, and taking to all sorts and conditions of men.

(2) A careful perusal of all available files and literature bearing on the subject (2)

(3) Long and close dealings with chiefs in Assam.

(4) Some years' study of anthropology, with special reference to the culture of Indonesia.

Facts I have everywhere eagerly sought for. Opinions I have carefully considered with due regard to the information at the disposal of those who formed them.

The primitive foundations of chieftainship in the Chittagong hill tracts.

5. Anthropology rarely finds a place in Government files but it sometimes provides the key to a problem nevertheless. It certainly shows beyond a shadow of doubt what is the primitive basis of the chieftainship we find here. The whole material culture of the tribes of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, under a specified layer of Bengali and Buddhist culture, is purely and typically Indonesian. They have the typical Indonesian tension-loom, the typical fire-thong, the typical fish-trap lined with cane thorns, houses, type of hearth, traps, method of cultivation, and so on.

6. To recognise Indonesian material culture was easy; to trace out the social structure required more care, the adoption of Buddhism having brought deep changes in its train. It was there to be found, however, and in the Bohmong's relations to his own clan and certain Kukis, for instance. I found a typical example of Indonesian chieftainship, such as I am entirely familiar with.

7. There has been a tendency in the past to discuss the Chakma Chief, the Bohmong, and the Mong Raja as if they were uniform members of a class. They are not, and I shall deal with each in turn. But underlying the position of each, though concealed at different depths, are the rights and status of an Indonesian Chief, and before dealing with them individually, I wish to indicate the nature of these rights and status, my object being both to show the basic foundations upon which the chieftainship rests here, and to indicate how entirely divorced are these rights and status from any connection with anything in the nature of a "Jhum" tax, the collection of which has so long been the principal task and source of income to the chiefs. To take an example, the Bohmong collects the "Jhum" tax and is regarded by Government as chief throughout his circle. But his primitive jurisdiction is over a much smaller number of people; over them it is very real. A subject of an Indonesian Chief calls his chief "Father". This is of fundamental importance. One does not ask a man who his chief is, but whom he calls "father". A man may owe allegiance to a chief for various reasons, through being born in the chief's clan, through being protected in war,

through receiving assistance in times of scarcity, and so on. As the term "father" implies, the relationship is reciprocal.

A chief has just as clear duties towards a subject as a subject has towards a chief. The subject must respect and obey his chief, must call him "father", must give him an offering of first-fruits from the produce of his fields, and a leg of all game he obtains from the jungle, must help him with labour when required, and with gifts when the chief is celebrating some big ceremony. In return, the chief must protect his "son" must see that he has land to cultivate in security, must help him through times of scarcity, and must feed him when he works for him.

8. There remains to be considered the relations between a powerful chief and his weaker neighbours of other tribes, who probably fear him, but do not love him. Here the situation is far more fluid and the ties more vague, and differences of opinion on either side are very common. A very weak group would probably place themselves definitely under the protection of a powerful chief, and would become his "sons." He in turn is bound to protect them, and I have often known this duty most effectively carried out. A more powerful group would probably grudgingly allow an occasional present to be extracted from them, but would never admit any claims by the chief to be suzerain. It is usually clearly understood that no alien group become "sons" of a chief unless they agree to the position, though great pressure may be put on them to make them agree (3). Nevertheless a chief can only claim what is given with at least outward willingness, and until he can make them agree he gets nothing, unless, of course, he raids and loots it, an action which changes the whole situation at once, for a group upon whom a chief makes war cannot be called the subjects of that chief.

9. The terms "tribal chiefs" and "tribal jurisdiction", which are constantly occurring in official papers are, I submit misnomers, and have possibly proved seriously misleading at times. They have given rise among officials without personal experience of this area to the belief that the inhabitants are divided into homogeneous tribes, ruled by three chiefs, and in a recent publication of a department of the Bengal Government I even find a reference to the "hill people known as Chakmas, Mongs and Bohmongs" (!) Even the word "chief" has given rise to the entirely erroneous impression that the chiefs of the Hill Tracts

in some way resemble the chiefs of India proper. The truth is that there are no tribal chiefs in this district.

The Chakma Chief is at first sight the nearest approach to one, but only as "sarbarakar" of practically all the Chakmas, as was clearly stated in Government order No.295 of 21st January 1870. What his exact status is will be considered in connection with his history. Certainly the Magh tribe has no one chief, nor have the Kukis, Mros, Khyengs and Khumis while such allegiance as Tipperas feel in their hearts they feel towards the Maharaja of Tripura. But there are 'Clan' chiefs representing the founders of clans, though the steady aggrandisement of the three principal chiefs by the paramount power for whom they collected tribute has for all practical purposes extinguished the smaller clan chiefs. Nevertheless each clan, as elsewhere in Indonesia, still in its heart of hearts regards itself as entirely independent of any other. The first question one Chakma asks another is "What clan are you?", and the Dewans, as representing the old heads of clans, have far more real influence than the chief. One finds the same clannish feeling among the Maghs. The Maghs of the Kokkadingsa clan, for instance, feel no loyalty and do not address as "father" the Bohmong of the Regretasa clan in whose circle they live, but respect old Ogaphru of Raikhali as their head. Clans other than the Reqratsa recognise the Bohmong as the 'greatest' clan chief, but not as their own chief, an important distinction. A realization of the strength of clan feeling and the weakness of tribal feeling is essential to a true appreciation of the real status of the chiefs, and of the way in which their chieftainship differs from the military chieftainship of nearly all Indian Princes. [↩](#)

HISTORY OF THE JHUM TAX.

10. For years the chiefs have maintained that their right to collect and keep a share of the 'Jhum' tax is inherent in their position as chiefs, and there has been a strong tendency on the part of Government to accept this claim without analysis of the ground on which it is based. This question is so fundamentally important that I feel it will be well if I make clear at the outset the views to which most careful consideration has led me.

11. The only capitation tax or household tax which an Indonesian subject pays to his chief is first fruits. To the assumption which I see so often tacitly made in files is that the 'Jhum' tax is some primitive tax of which the paramount power takes a humble share I ascribe much of the misunderstanding which has arisen with regard to the position of chiefs. Not a shred of evidence do I find that it is anything of the sort, and I know of no Indonesian example anywhere of a tax of this kind. Everything tends to show that it was first raised when the Moghuls demanded tribute from the tribes in the hinterland. It is important to note that the tribute was originally paid in cotton, money payment not being substituted until 1789. Now the tribute of first fruits to the chiefs also included cotton. One cannot believe that before he had to pay tribute to the Moghuls, a chief received two separate taxes from each house, one wholly in cotton, and the other also including cotton; and one wonders what he could have done with so much cotton before he came into contact with foreigners to whom he could sell it. A long conversation, too, which I had with the Bohmong's eldest son, seemed to make it quite clear that the 'Jhum' tax was one due to a paramount power (first, possibly, the King of Arakan, and then the Moguls), and not to a clan chief. Again in the "Wild Races of S.E. India," which contains a far fuller account of the tribes than does the "Fly on the Wheel", Lewin mentions hunters who do not cultivate as being exempt from the tax. They were exempt because they grew no cotton. (4) Had it not been a collection of cotton for the paramount power but a primitive tribute due from every able bodied man to his chief as chief, the hunter would have had to give some substitute. Those who collected this tax were in so doing only exercising right of 'talukdars' of human 'taluks'. The practice grew up of selling and sub-letting them; this could never have happened had any immemorial and primitive chiefly rights been involved. Indeed often the share which the chief got was very small. For instance Kalindi Rani in 1872 sub-let 5,370 houses in human 'taluks' to 108 Dewans for Rs. 5,516-6-3, while the Dewans' receipts were estimated to be some Rs. 23,000/-. I am convinced that there is nothing primitive about this cotton tax, and that it is quite easy to see how it arose. The Moghuls demanded tribute from the clan chiefs, who agreed to pay it. They in turn demanded payment from their men, doubtless telling them that a Moghul force would enter their country if the cotton were not

forthcoming, a threat which I have myself known used elsewhere by unscrupulous persons with extraordinary effect. So the cultivators paid, with no possible means of knowing what the Mogul demanded was, or how much of the cotton stuck on the way. And the middle men got rich and continued to find favour with the Moguls, while the cultivators were squeezed harder and harder. We, seeking our own convenience, continued to farm out this tax, and even today the 'Jhumiya' pays four times our demand. One cannot help contrasting this district, where the 'jhumiya' pays Rs.6/- of which Re. 4/12 never reaches the Government with the Naga Hills, where he pays Rs.2/- of which only four annas goes to the collecting agency.

12. In the early days the collection of the 'jhum' tax was by no means entirely in the hands of the big chiefs. Anyone who had households under his allegiance from whom he could squeeze tribute to the exclusion of anyone else applied for a 'mahal' of them, and a number of small 'mahaldars' arose. In 1792, for instance, the records show that the Chakma Chief and the Bohmong held between them less than half the 'jama' of the district, and of these two, the Chakma Chief was only a middle-man between the Dewans and Government. By 1867 this collection by small 'mahaldars' who often simply bought a 'mahal' in Chittagong and squeeze what they could out of the people by any means and agents, had become such a scandal and nuisance, that Government decided to put an end to them. In 1875 the rights of all small 'mahaldars' were extinguished apparently without compensation, and the Mong Raja, the head of the Palangsa Magh clan, was given the mahal of all outlying people in his area whom the Chakma Chief could not effectively reach, and the Chakma Chief and the Bhomong shared between them the rest of the district, excluding the Khas mahals. This division of the district into 4 blocks led inevitably to the abolition of such tribal jurisdiction as the chiefs had held, and the substitution of it of a territorial jurisdiction, which had been recommended as early as 1847. It was adopted in 1873, but later relaxed, and a strictly geographical jurisdiction was not finally enforced until 1892. I cannot help feeling that the importance of this change has been exaggerated. In the old days the Chakma Chief for instance may have claimed allegiance from all the Chakmas in the world (even from any which might be living in Calcutta as Lord Ulick Browne remarked in 1868), but I feel sure that he did not

receive it, and I think the territorial circles not only placed under each chief nearly all those from whom he had ever been able effectively to claim anything, but gave him equal jurisdiction over people of other clans and tribes who owed him little or nothing before. The Khyengs, for instance, a very small but ancient community, told me how they resented paying taxes through the Bohmong, whom they regard as a newcomer empowered by the British Government to lord it over them. They say he and his Maghs arrived in the hills long after they did, and that they never paid taxes or tribute to him till, without being consulted, they found themselves placed under his jurisdiction. I was also fortunate enough to meet Ogaphru, the last survivor of the old petty settlement holders. He is of the Kokkadinga clan, and emphatically denies any allegiance to the Bohmong in whose circle he lives. He also showed how very lucrative the position of a 'mahaldar' used to be; he obtained from the Collector of Chittagong for a 'jama' of Rs. 60.- the 'mahal' of 70 houses of his own clan, and he said he actually collected Rs. 6/- per house.

13. To sum up, the tribes of this area possess a typically Indonesian material and social culture. The ancient chieftainship was a clan chieftainship, under which a chief was addressed as father by men of his own clan and such outsiders as he had specially befriended or protected. The relation was reciprocal, and "fathers" owed duties to their "sons", just as much as "sons" owed duties to their "fathers". This clan feeling and clan chieftainship still exists. The 'jhum' tax was an innovation dating from the time when tribute was first demanded by an alien paramount power.

(5) To save trouble this power farmed the right to collect tribute from the individual household. The man who obtained a 'mahal' naturally squeezed as much as he could out of the ignorant people from whom he collected. Even now the 'jhumiya' pays four times the Government demand. It is thus seen that the portion of the 'Jhum' tax which is taken by the chiefs and headmen is not, as seems to have been supposed, something due to them from time immemorial, but the fruits of ancient extortion condoned by time. Naturally it was the heads of the more powerful clans who obtained the biggest 'mahals', and these were made still bigger by the merging in them of such smaller 'mahals' as survived. These 'mahaldars' thus became aggrandized and the collection of taxes

became the so much more lucrative and important part of their work, that their true nature has been entirely concealed from the Government, and they have almost ceased to function as real chiefs at all. The rule which lays upon them the duty of administering their circles is an absolutely dead letter. Save for tax collecting they regard their position as a sinecure. Money, dignities and status they demand, but never the work which a chief ought to do.

ABWABS

14. The discussion of the origin and real nature of the chiefs' share of the 'jhum' tax leads me to digress for a moment to deal with the so called 'abwabs'. Here I am convinced that the situation has been misunderstood. The collection of 'abwabs' was severely commented on by Mr Ascoli in his report, and matters were brought to a head in 1924 by the high handed exactions of the Bohmong. These led to the issue of Government letter No. 13 T - R of the 28th April 1924 in which the Bohmong was reprimanded. The matter was again discussed by Government in connection with the resettlement of the 'jhum' tax in 1925, and orders were passed in Government letter No.2405 L.R. of the 26th February 1926. I do not think there is any call at the moment to modify these orders but the situation will require watching. In paragraph 53 of his letter No.1408G of the 15th May 1925 containing his proposals for the resettlement of the 'jhum' tax, the Deputy Commissioner says, "There is not the slightest doubt that the chiefs could never realize any additional money if they did not collect the 'jhum' tax." This seems to me to be an overstatement, for I think that certain contributions would probably always be willingly paid to the chiefs by those who called them "father" that is to say, those over whom they have ancient chiefly rights older than and unconnected with the 'jhum' tax. But he is perfectly right in holding that the collection of the 'jhum' tax by the chiefs has given them far too much power to collect contributions to which they have no right.

15. I asked the Bomong's eldest son why his father had exacted first fruits from Mros and other people over whom he has no ancient chiefly rights. The reason he gave rings true to my ears, and even if it be not true, the very fact that it was given teaches a moral lesson. He said that when the Bhomong of the time told Mr Mawson that he always realized

first fruits from his own clan Mr Mawson, not understanding in the least how totally different was tie between the chief and his own clan and the rights given him by the Government over the other people of his circle, said, " Why do you not treat everyone the same?" Knowledge of this blissful ignorance on the part of the authorities proved too great a temptation, and unwarranted exactions began in the hope that they would be acquiesced in.

16. The chiefs in the past have consistently confused the issue. Sometimes they have openly claimed contributions to which they had no right at all, while at other times they have lost their heads and denied collecting 'abwabs' which they not only did, as a matter of fact, collect, but to which they were entitled by ancient custom. When I asked the Bohmongs son why no one had ever cleared up this subject by explaining to Government the ancient chiefly relationship of "father" and "son", he frankly said that this had not been done because no representative of Government had ever by his question shown any signs of knowing that such a basis of chieftainship existed, or being likely to understand the real position if any attempt were made to explain it to him. The trouble has been, in this question as in others, that it has never been realized that the position of a chief as collector of 'jhum' tax differs 'intoto' from that as a holder of ancient chiefly rights; the one he holds with regard to all the 'jhumiyas' in his circle, the other only with regard to some people, all of whom may not be 'jhumiyas'. (6) At the serious risk of over-riding my anthropological hobby-horse, may I comment briefly on the abwabs which have been till recently realized in this district? Throughout I have analogies from elsewhere in mind.-

(1). First fruits.- This was the ancient tribute of field produce to a chief from his "sons." In this district the old Bhuddhist custom, which is still observed by the Bohmong, is that the first fruits were used for the big feast given by the chief to his priests and people at the end of Wa (the Bhuddhist Lent). This feast is in origin a ceremonial eating of the first fruits.

(2). A leg of game.- This is also an ancient tribute.

(3). Collections for exceptional social and religious functions. This is also ancient, being due to a chief from his "sons".

(4). Payments to the chief on visiting him.- A very small present may have been brought in ancient times, but the present day amount and the

importance attached to it is nothing but an imitation of the practice of Indian zamindars. The really ancient custom, which still survives, I think, to a limited extent in this area, is that a visitor should receive a present. A chief or other important man would be given a present when he visits some one, and is to make a present in return when the visit is returned. These presents would be made and returned even when the person visited were not one of the chief's own clan subjects.

(5). Contribution made on the wearing of ornaments by women, and shoes by men, and when a permanent plinth or permanent wall round a house is put up.- At first sight this seems a very extraordinary type of contribution, and there must obviously be some memory in the racial subconsciousness to warrant it. I have seen it called a sumptuary tax. This term is misleading, as it implies that it is directed towards the suppression of excessive luxury. It is true that the chiefs in paragraph 26 of their memorial on Mr. Ascoli's report give this interpretation, but there is no evidence to show that this statement is any truer than the palpably false statement in paragraph 18 that the Chakmas are not imitating Hindu bhadrak. A tax imposed by a chief with the sole object of checking luxury would not win that minimum amount of consent which is required to make collection possible. Really, I am convinced, it is a very interesting survival. Note that it is levied on two things, and on two things only – the wearing of something, and the building of something, indicating a higher social grade. Now in the northern area of what is commonly termed Indonesia Feasts of Merit play an enormously important part in social life. A man does not increase his social status merely by acquiring wealth, but by spending it on these feasts. Each tribe among which the practice obtains recognizes a definite series; a man begins by sacrificing pigs, and then go on to cows, and then to gayal (*bos frontalis*). After the giving of each feast of the series, the man may make certain definite additions to his house, and he and his wife, and sometimes his sons and daughters, may wear certain clothes and ornaments to which they were not before entitled. He must also, from the animals killed at each feast, give a present of meat to his chief. Thus we get the same connection of a payment to a chief and an improvement in dress and building. These feasts of merit are no longer given by members of the Hinduised and Bhuddhist tribes of this area, but I have not the slightest doubt that they once were, and even the hurried

investigations I was able to make revealed them among the animistic Mrs. I did not however have the opportunity of finding out what privileges in the way of dress and building they carried with them there. These facts leave no doubt in my mind that the present-day so-called sumptuary taxes of this area are in reality survivals of the fiests of merit on the old days. They are of course only due from a chief's own "sons," and even from them they have not been demanded within living memory in some parts of the district.

17. I would repeat here that my note above is in no way intended to suggest that Government should issue any definite approval of the abwabs realized, on the ground that they are warranted by ancient custom, for any such approval would certainly be misused. Nor do I wish to imply that the amounts realized in the immediate past, even where some contribution is warranted by custom, have not been altogether excessive, or that a demand which might be justified by custom in one circle would be similarly in another. My only desire is to place on record what seem to me to be the real facts about them. (7) ↵

THE HISTORY OF THE CHIEFS

18. I have lightly sketched in this anthropological background in the hope that certain features of the hope that certain features of the histories of the chiefs will stand out more clearly against it than they have hitherto done in previous accounts. One is hampered, unfortunately, by the almost entire absence of any reliable widespread tradition. The ordinary man rarely knows the name of his great-grand-father, far less where he lived or anything he did. One therefore finds very few carefully preserved genealogies and family histories. What few exist however, together with recorded facts which seem to be undisputed give one, if due regard be paid to critical and careful interpretation, enough material to build up a history of each chief. ↵

THE BOHMONG.

19. The Maghs are an Indonesian people, with affinities scattered from Northern Arakan to Borneo and beyond. Of the earlier migrations of the tribe little is known, but it was from Arakan, where they seem to have been known as "Talaings". That they entered the southern portion of Chittagong district, whence they gradually moved up to their present

home, pushing the Chakmas ahead of them as they came. Those of the Mong Raja's circle arrived later than those of the Bohmong's circle and differ considerably in culture. To one who has become used to Bengali atmosphere, of the Chakmas and Mong circles, to visit Bandarban, the headquarters of the Bohmong, is to enter a new world. It is pure Burma, with yellow-robed priests, Bhuddhist temples and a populace clad in Burmese dress of all the colours of the rainbow. There Bengali culture is disdained as something alien, and all regard Burma as their spiritual home. This clear-cut and striking difference between the Bohmong's circle and those of the Chakma Chief and the Mong Raja cannot be too strongly emphasised.

20. The Bohmong is undoubtedly the head, and the acknowledged head of the Regratsa clan; he is indeed so described in the official darbar list. This clan is by far the largest and most important of the Magh clans in the district and its members outnumber those of all the other clans in the tribe put together. The Bohmong likewise is the most important of the three chiefs, and rightly so described by Captain Lewin (vide "A Fly on the Wheel," Page 211). His title is an older one than that of the Chakma Chief, and his clan a far more important one. I have recommended elsewhere that his seniority to the Chakma Chief by definitely recognized. How the impression arose that the Chakma Chief is the senior I have not been able to discover. No reasons are given by those who affirm it, and the idea is certainly subsequent to Lewin.

21. Since 1906, when Mr. Hutchinson compiled his "Account of the Chittagong Hill Tracts," the ancient records preserved by the Bohmong's family have been destroyed by fire. Fortunately however the information contained in them had been extracted, and there is no reason to doubt its substantial accuracy. About 1599 A.D., the King of Burma, assisted by the King of Arakan, conquered the King of Pegu, in return for which the King of Burma presented his ally with 33,000 Talaing prisoners and the son and daughter of the King of Pegu. The King of Arakan married the girl and showed favour to the boy, Maung Seo Pyn, making him Governor of Chittagong in 1614. In 1620 the young Governor attacked the Portuguese with their Bengali allies, and in reward for his gallantry was granted the title of "Boh Maung" ("Leader of Generals") by his overlord, the King of Arakan. This is the title commonly written as "Bohmong." It was about this time that the Talaings settled in Arakan -

these Talaings, who are now known as Maghs, began to split up into the clans which we find existing to-day. That of Maung Seo Pyn was the Regratsa clan; in 1630 he was succeeded as second Bohmong by his son Meng Rai Phru, who in turn was succeeded by Hari Phrue in 1665. During his time Arakan was weakened by internal quarrels, and Hari Phru, left without support, lost most of his territory to the Moguls. He was succeeded as fourth Bohmong by his brother's son Hari Ngao about 1687. A new dynasty had meanwhile arisen in Arakan, and the King, Chanda Wijaya, came to Hari Ngao's assistance. Between them they defeated the Moguls and Hari Ngao was raised to the rank of "Boh Maung Gri" ("Great Leader of Generals"). The success against the Moguls was however short-lived, and Hari Ngao was driven back into the hills of Arakan where he died in 1727, and was succeeded by his grandson Kong Hla Phru. Kong Hla Phru made an attempt to regain his possessions to the west, but was not at first successful, and in 1756 was forced to retire again to Arakan. Hearing later that the power of the Moguls was waning, and that of the British was waxing, he again returned to his territories in the south of Chittagong district in 1774 and began to work his way up north along the Sangu valley. He died in 1811 at a great age, and was succeeded by his son Sataing Phru, who died in 1840. Thereupon quarrels broke out among the sons and descendants of Kong Hla Phru, and the country was constantly raided by (8) Khumis and Shendus. Government eventually recognized Kong Hla Ngao as seventh Bohmong in 1847, but he was powerless to prevent raids, and the Hill Tracts were definitely taken over in 1860. In 1866 Kong Hla Ngao, whose conduct had been most unsatisfactory, was made to resign in favour of his cousin Mom Phru, on whose death in 1875 quarrels broke out anew, and Lieutenant Gordon was ordered to enquire as to the real custom regarding the succession. He reported that succession to the office of Bohmong was governed by fitness and age, and not by primogeniture. This finding was accepted both by Government and the Bohmong's family, and Sansio (Tsaneyo) was acknowledged as a ninth Bohmong. On his death in 1901, the succession passed to Chao Hla Phru and thence in 1916 to Mong Cha Ngao, and in 1923 to the present holder Keozan Phru, who is thus twelfth Bohmong from Meng Seo Pyn in the male line, and ninth holder of the title of Boh Maung Gri. He is therefore holder of an hereditary title of very considerable antiquity.

22. The Bohmong of the time undoubtedly paid a tribute of cotton to the Moguls, but when it was first paid, and what the amount was is not known. He held the mahal of his own clan, and it was from them that he first collected it. Kong Hla Phru paid a tribute of cotton to the British, and this was commuted in 1789 to a cash jama of Rs. 703 a year. By degrees the mahals of the other Magh clans living in the southern half of the Hill Tracts were given to the Bohmong in addition to that of the Regratsa clan which he had held from the beginning, till the time was ripe to grant him the entire mahal of his present circle, and nothing outside it. This policy, long contemplated, was finally brought into effect by the rules of 1892.

23. The chequered career of the Bohmong or Phru family makes clear how deeply ingrained and how important to the Magh tribe are clan feeling and clan rights. The connection between the Bohmong and the Regratsa clan is one permanent feature of their history. More than once the Bohmong was driven from the land he occupied, but he never lost his clan chieftainship, and when he eventually moved up from the south to his present home the Regratsa clan formed the bulk of his followers, other clans, notably the Palangsa clan to which the Mong Raja belongs, moving up into the Chittagong Hill Tracts by another route. To this day the Regratsa clan are "sons" of the Bohmong and it is through his rights as clan chief of the most numerous of the Magh clans that he has been able to extend his entirely distinct jhum tax collecting rights over other communities. ↩

CHAKMA CHIEF.

24. A Chakma, when asked the origin of his tribe, either says he does not know, or repeats like a parrot the modern tale that they are the descendants of Kshatriyas from Chamapanagar. I agree with almost everyone who has considered the question that this is a myth unsupported by any evidence whatsoever, and that they are of mixed origin. The basis of the tribe is Magh, almost certainly of clans left behind on one of the occasions when the Bohmong had to retreat from the Moguls and take refuge in Arakan. There is possibly a slight admixture of Tippera blood, due to intermarriage when the tribe moved up from the coast into the Hill Tracts, but the main foreign strain, and that a very strong one indeed, comes from the Mogul army of the Governor of

Lower Bengal and from Bengali subjects of the Mogul with whom they were in close contact while occupying the country round Cox's Bazaar during the latter half of the seventeenth century. As late as 1799, the greater part of the tribe were still living near the Naf river, and only a colony had gone up the Karnaphuli (Asiatick Researches, Volume VI, page 227). Writing in 1841 Phayre, speaking of the Doingnak section of the tribe, says they are probably the offsprings of Bengali slaves. (J.A.S.B. 117 of 1841) [Bernot's comments in his copy of the Report I indicate a disagreement with regard to the sources Mills had mentioned]. The name "Chakma" is derived from "Soak", the Maghi term for them. Soak, I have always been told, is a somewhat offensive term, and it has been variously translated to me as meaning "of mixed blood" or "of impure worship." Their underlying culture is purely Indonesian, and has nothing Kshatriya about it, but their foreign blood is shown by their features, their cephalic index, their national characteristics, and certain details such as the Muhammudan ornaments that women still were are in their ears. This mixture of race has given them racial instability. Their original Maghi language has gone, a corrupt Bengali having taken its place, and their interesting Komer [Khmer] script is fast going. At one time Muhammdan names were all in the rage, as the list of chiefs testifies and apparently many of the tribe at one time embraced Islam. But their conversion was never thorough, and in the time of Rani Kalindi it was felt that they must have a definite religion of some kind. So in 1873 she issued orders that they were to be Buddhists as they were originally, and this they are in a mild way to this day. Nowadays they all have Hindu names and have adopted a good deal of Hindu culture. They are divided into a number of originally endogamous clans or gozas, which show a constant tendency to split up into (9) sub cans. Each clan with the exception of the Rajparrias is named after the place or man whence it originated, descent being strictly in the main line. The head of a clan was called a Dwan [Dewan] or, by the Taungchengya Chakmas, Amu. These gozas with their heads are important, for they can be no doubt that a struggle between them and the chiefs went on throughout much of the later history of the tribe. It was a struggle between an ancient clan chieftainship and a new type of chieftainship founded on the right to collect tribute in the name of, and supported by, an alien paramount power.

25. The account of the Dewan given by Mr Oldham in paragraph 14 of his letter No. 1136 N.T. of the 19th August 1891 is correct. They do not derive their position from their relationship with the chief. It was because of their position as heads of clans that the chiefs intermarried with them, with a view to consolidating their power as chiefs. An account of the former importance of headman is given on pages 90 and 91 of Hunter's Statistical Account, and Lewin gives a clear description of the Dewans and the goza system on page 67, 68 of his "Chittagong Hill Tracts and the Dwellers therein."

26. I have spared no pains to unravel the history of the Chakma chieftainship. In the days of Kalindi Rani, things were simpler; that intensely practical woman confined her attention to cold fact, and in inscription she set up in the Mahamoni temple she recognised no chief earlier than Shermust Khan, the sixth before her late husband. Yet the present chief, the second after Kalindi Rani, signs himself "45th Chakma Raja," so greatly has the antiquity of the line increased! Outside aid has been called in to invent a line stretching back to an Aryan invasion of India, and Burmese histories - records as fantastic as Burmese are - have been rifled for sentences which might be twisted into references to the Chakmas. I was told that the only reliable accounts of ancient Chakma chiefs existed in two "old manuscripts" of which I was given true copies. The copies are, alas, written in modern Bengali, and the originals were not forthcoming. Yet these two records, fakes though they clearly are and often inconsistent, contained the modicum of historical truth and some very interesting admissions to the true state of affairs. It is definitely stated, for instance that Chakmas were of mixed blood, and admitted men married women of any race. This mixed population must gradually have become stabilized and fairly homogeneous by intermarriage within itself. Being in the main of Indonesian (Maghi) stock, it retained the indigenous system of clans (gozas) each under a tribal chief (Dewan). They collected the tribute, but paid it to a middle man, who was never a tribal chief, and at first was not even a Chakma. It is these middle-men who are now called "Chief" by Chakma historians, but they are to be clearly distinguished from the Bohmong and Mong Raja, who are clan chiefs as well as tribute-collecting chiefs. So divorced has the Chakma Chief always been from his tribe and its clan chiefs that I can find no evidence that any of them, except for one short period, ever

lived in the Hill Tracts till the father of the present chief was ordered to do so.

27. The early history, as recorded, consists mostly of a list of names, embellished with a few miracles. It is significant that the first "chief", of whom there seem to be any authentic record was a Bengali, and was known as "Bengali Sirdar": He married a Chakma woman, who, in present day history has been given as a father a Raja who was found and brought out of the jungle by a white elephant. Evidently the Chakmas were at this time in the unpleasant position of buffer tribe between the Maghs of Arakan and the Moguls. After the death of Bengali Sirdar, the Maghs over-ran their territory and they retreated into the hills. Some years later they emerged again, and Bura Burua, who was probably a plains Magh, became "chief", or in other words, tax mahaldar. He married a Chakma woman, who, as usual, has been provided with a Raja father. Bura Borua's son was Satna Borua, better known as the Mad Raja. Probably he tried to obtain some real power and set himself against the Dewans of the clans. He and his relations were all murdered, and his remains are supposed to have been thrown into the sea at Pagla Mora, a place on the coast south of Cox's Bazaar. At this time the Maghs under the Bohmong of the time were exerting pressure and the Chakmas began slowly to move up from the coast into the country they now occupy. The death of the "chief" left the clan system free to function, and the power was concentrated in the hands of the Dewans of the four most powerful clans – the Mulima, the Dhamai (or Dhabin), the Bugya and the Thurjya. It was they who continued to collect the tribute, and enjoy such privileges of chieftainship as abwabs and compulsory labour. No subsequent chief down to the time of Kalindi Rani was more than a middle-man to whom the Dewans handed a share of their collections to be passed on to the paramount power. It was because of the power of the heads of the four big clans that Dharam Bux Khan to a small extent and Kalindi Rani systematically, increased the number of Dewans and succeeded in turning them into a class instead of holders of an office. Our creation of the mauza system completed their ruin and made (10) an entirely artificial chief supreme, though this does not have been realized at the time.

28. For some years after the death of the Mad Raja, the Dewan dealt direct with the paramount power, but it was felt that an intermediary

would be convenient and the post went to a member of the Mulima clan. He was probably the first Chakma Chief who was a Chakma. All the early Mulima chiefs had Muhammadan names, and almost certainly embraced the faith of their Mogul overlords. Some Chakma hold that these chiefs were descended from the line of the Mad Raja, but the ordinary sane account is that the Mulima line was a new one. Certainly it is the first line of which the goza (clan) is known; indeed one well educated Chakma told me that the goza of no chief before Dharam Bux, the great grand-father of the present chief, is known.

29. Very little is known of the early Mulima chiefs. The first seems to have been Chaman Khan, who lived about 1650. Another called Jalal Khan or Fateh Khan paid tribute to the Mogul Governor of Chittagong about 1715. Kul Fateh Khan near Ramu is called after him. He was followed by his son, Shermust Khan, the first chief recognized by Kalindi Rani. Shukdeb, the adopted son of Shermust Khan, obtained settlement of the cotton tribute mahal from the British in 1757, though it is not till 1772, the year in which the company "stood forth as Dwan" that this mahal appears as a regular item of revenue. Shukdeb was succeeded by Sher Dowlat who died in 1776. According to one account, he was assassinated and he, not Satna, was the Mad Raja. I prefer the earlier date. There was however pretty clearly a period of confusion at this time. The Maghs, under Bohmong Kong Hla Pru, were re-establishing their power in the south, and this pressure hastened the hitherto gradual migration of the Chakmas into the hills. Touch with the British was lost, raids were encouraged by the Chakmas, and it became necessary to take punitive measures.

30. Here I must digress for a moment. It was during the time of the early Mulima chiefs that the Rajparia clan was created. At first 150 men were taken indiscriminately from various clans and made into a small labour and protective force for the chief. In return, these men were granted remission of contribution to the cotton tax. The duties were so light, and remission from all taxes so highly esteemed that this small body grew into a clan, called the Rajparia clan, as the custom grew up of members of other clans attaching themselves to it of their own free will. They increased so rapidly that by 1883 they numbered one-sixth of the whole tribe. At this time they waxed fast and kicked, and not only demanded complete remission of all taxation and compulsory labour,

but refused to render their due service to the chief. In his letter of the 24th August 1883, the Deputy Commissioner reports that they “had long ago withdrawn all their allegiance from the Raja, and refused to obey him in any way.” It was therefore decided to tax them, but this was done in the face of fierce opposition and appeals to the Government of India. The existence of an artificial clan of this kind throws much light on the true nature of the Chakma chieftainship. The present chief does not regard himself as head of any of the old clans – even of his own Wangsa clan – but of the Rajparias. Had any of his forebears been clan chiefs, they would have had their own clan to call on for labour and protection. It was because the chieftainship stood outside the clan system that this special force had to be created. This clearly distinguishes the Chakma Chief from the Bohmong and the Mong Raja. This point the chiefs obscure when they lump together the Rajparia, Reqratsa and Palangsa clans in paragraph 7 of their memorial of the 28th February 1898. The same mistake is deliberately made again in paragraph 98 of the chiefs’ memorial on Mr. Ascoli’s Report.

31. To resume the historical outline. A chief Jan appears about 1782, but he also encouraged raids on the plains, and had to be punished. He made his submission to Mr. Irwin in 1787, and the tribute was raised. Up to 1789 Jan Bux paid his tribute to a relative called Ranu or Ramu Khan, who in turn handed over the cotton to a tax farmer in Chittagong. In that year, however, Government made a direct settlement with the chiefs and his tribute was altered from 500 maunds of cotton to a sum which is variously stated as Rs. 1,872 and Rs. 2,224-4-4. His son, Tabor Khan, succeeded in 1800, but died next year, and was succeeded by another son, Jabbar Khan who was in turn succeeded by Dharam Bux Khan in 1812. A letter of Mr. Halhead, the Commissioner, dated the 21st April 1829, may refer to this chief or to an intermediary. He says that “the tribute is guaranteed by a third party, resident in our territory, who alone is responsible. He is merely an agent or mukhtear or medium of communication between his constituents and the authorities. He is not the ruler of the clan he represents, and has no control over the members of it.” Mr. Halhead was clearly writing of someone whom he knew personally (11) and the letter, if still exists, would throw light on the period. Captain Lewin quotes it on page 59 of his “Wild Tribes [Races] of S.E. India.” About 1819 the Taunchangya section of Chakmas, who

retreated from the neighbourhood of Naf-river to Arakan during the years of confusion, migrated again and entered the Hill Tracts, evidently not liking the rules of the Raja of Arakan, who refers to them in a letter of the 17th June 1787 to the Chief of Chittagong (Lewin op.cit, pp.74 seq) They, however, refused to acknowledge Dharam Bux as chief, and most of them returned.

32. Dharam Bux Khan died in 1832, leaving no son, but three widows, of whom the eldest was Kalindi Rani. This masterful woman at once set about consolidating her power. Knowing that her position might well be questioned by the British on one hand and her own tribe on the other, she lost no time in arranging her defence on both flanks. She first lodged a claim in the Judge's Court, Chittagong, to the sole management of the estates in that district on the entirely false ground that she was a Hindu widow. The necessary order was passed on a summary proceeding and in complete ignorance of the facts. Having obtained the management of the landed estates, she appropriated to herself the monopoly of the jhum tax, getting Gobardhan and the other collateral male heirs put in jail on a charge of rebellion and riot. This effectively stopped their mouth both then and for the future. The English were so completely in the dark as to what went on in the Hill Tracts that they did not deprive her of the power she had usurped; probably they did not greatly care what happened as long as the tribute was regularly paid. But she knew that her own tribe would never acknowledge that she had any right to the chieftainship; since they could not be deceived, they had to be coerced. She was clever enough to learn from history, and realized that, if the old clansystem had once been strong enough to cause the assassination of the chief the same thing might happen again. She therefore followed with vigour the policy already initiated by her husband Dharam Bux, of weakening the power of the heads of the clan. This she did by creating new Dewans so that the term "Dewan" soon ceased to be the name of an office and became that of a class, as it is now. Further to protect herself she surrounded herself with Bengali advisors, giving them a strong interest in her retention of power by granting them human taluks in her tribe from whom they were allowed to extract as much as they could. This marked the beginning of years of such oppression as the Chakmas have never known before or since. Bitterly did they complain that they were "sold like goats to Munshis [munsiffs] and Bengalis." Nor were her

relations with the English any better. There is no need to go in detail into the long list of her misdeeds. It suffices to say that save for the capture of some sepoys during the mutiny, she was a continual thorn in the side of Government until her death in 1874.

33. The death of Dharam Bux Khan without a son and the suppression by Kalindi Rani of the claims of such collaterals as they were brought to an end and the line of chiefs of the Mulima clan. Government felt it incumbent on them to select a successor to Kalindi Rani, who naturally could not be expected to live for ever, and finally chose Harish Chandra, the son of Gopinath Dewan, one of the three headmen of the petty Wangsa clan, who had married Chikanbi, also known as Menaka, daughter of Dharam Bux by his junior wife Haribi. The choice was therefore an entirely artificial one, and in no way dictated by Chakma custom, for the Wangsa is an insignificant clan, and inheritance through the female line is contrary to tribal custom. Since Harish Chandra's mother could not herself inherit the chieftainship according to Chakma custom, it follows that she could not hand it on. I think Lord Ulick Browne is wrong in describing Harish Chandra as the rightful heir in his letter No.2/A. of 12th November 1868. No precedent can be found in authentic Chakma history.

34. Probably the Chakmas were only too glad to accept Harish Chandra or anyone else in place of the oppressive Rani. Harish Chandra was born in 1841, seven years after the death of Dharam Bux, and after his selection as the future chief was educated and brought up as a ward of Government. In 1868 the proposal was made that Kalindi Rani's flagrant misrule should be ended by deposing her and putting Harish Chandra in her place. The letter was however far too frightened of her to agree to this, or even suggested it, and the matter was dropped (vide Government letter No.270 of the 23rd January 1869).

35. Harish Chandra therefore did not become chief till her death in 1874. The title of Raja which he was granted was a personal one. Hitherto Kalindi Rani had lived at Rajanagar, and it was not till he became chief that Harish Chandra "was compelled to leave Rajanagar and live among his subjects at Rangamati by the Government," as it is naively put in the printed history issued under the authority of the present chief. Residence (12) among his own people was no more to the liking of Harish Chandra than it had been to that of Kalindi Rani (vide Commissioner's letter No.

206 H. of the 23rd July 1883), and I doubt not that the tendency which made such an order necessary is as strong as ever, and that the present chief could only too readily exchange Rangamati for Chittagong as place of residence.

36. The reign of Harish Chandra was an inglorious one, and reflects no credit on his upbringing as a ward of Government. The administration report for 1881-2 says of him "his present position is in no way superior to that of a stipend-holder possessed of no influence, and thoroughly despised by his people."

Finally his drunkenness, incompetency and contumacy exhausted the patience of Government and his desposition was ordered in letter No.121 P.-D. of the 23rd April 1884. In view to the fact however that he could not possibly live long, these orders were suspended for some months. Before the expiry of that period, he paid the penalty of his excesses, and died on the 23rd January 1885.

37. When Harish Chandra became utterly incapable of acting as chief, Government decided to put it in two Dewans as Managers. They were chosen by a free vote of the principal Dewans of the tribe, and it is interesting to note that Nil Chandra and Trilochan, who were elected by an overwhelming majority, are of the Mulima and Dhamai clans – the two old powerful clans. Nil Chandra was the most influential Chakma of his day (far more influential than the puppet chief), and being the nephew of Dharam Bux, must really have possessed a good claim to the chieftainship, had he put it forward. Later in life I believe he and Trilochan both proved very troublesome.

38. Bhuban Mohan Ray, the present chief, was a minor at the time of his father's death, and was, like his father, brought up as a ward. In 1897 he was made chief and granted the personal title of Raja.

39. The Chakma Chief shows leanings towards Bengali culture, and this tendency, so strongly fostered by the chief and by the Rangamati High School, with its purely Bengali staff and curriculum, is thoroughly bad for the tribe, not because it is Bengali, but because it is alien and unsuitable. A generation of idle students is growing up, eager for clerical posts which do not exist, and probably unfitted for the hard life of the Hill Tracts. Captain Rattray whose knowledge of Ashanti is unrivalled, in the Colonial Office Report for 1921 says that there the people are in the parting of the ways "one path leads, I believe to the unrest and ferment

we see on every hand among the peoples whose institutions we have either deliberately broken down or as deliberately allowed to decay. The other path at least leads to some surer hope, because it has landmarks which the genius of the people will recognize, and which will keep them upon the road when in difficulties... Among the younger generation there is a tendency to ridicule the past. A youth who had passed the 5th, 6th or 7th standard, and who by clerical work earns a few pounds a month and is dressed in European garb, in his heart despises his own institutions and his own illiterate elders. But he takes his cue from the European, whom he regards as all and end-all it is to copy. I firmly believe that once the Government and political officers are seen to take more interest in his ancient customs, and are seen to encourage such customs and institutions as are good, the younger generation will themselves follow suit, and come to realize that they should not throw away their priceless heritage."

These words, with very few institutions [substitutions, cf. OM I:37], could be applied to the Chakma tribe.

40. Certain points are clear from this outline of Chakma history, unreliable though the earlier portion is. Whether the earlier chiefs were foreigners or Chakmas, their line came to a dead end at the assassination of the Mad Raja. We can therefore disregard them in estimating the status of the present chief, whose claim to be "45th Chakma Raja" is meaningless. After the death of the Mad Raja, the heads of clans selected their own "chief," whose sole function was to hand on their tribute to the paramount power. The post went to the Mulima clan and probably grew in importance. This line came to an end at the death of Dharam Bux Khan in 1832, and there followed by the usurpation by Kalindi Rani. The chieftainship of her successor Harish Chandra was an artificial creation by the British. The present chief is the second of this line.

41. The chieftainship of the Bohmong has been seen to be based on the old clan chieftainship, though greatly aggrandized by the lucrative privilege of collecting tribute for a foreign power. The Chakma chieftainship has sometimes been opposed to, and sometimes fearful of, the old system of clan chieftainship. Doubtless it was the power of his clan which enabled a (13) Mulima man to obtain the tribute monopoly after the death of the Mad Raja, but every chief since has based his power solely on that monopoly. Lewin in his report of 1867 says that

Kalindi Rani headship of the Chakmas is contrary to custom, and arose from the custom of regarding the chieftainship as a taluk which could be bought and sold, and disposed of by a court. The true situation was recognized by Government, who as early as 1870 stated clearly in Order No.295 of the 21st January that "the Lieutenant-Governor declines to recognize the claim of Kalindi Rani to a permanent settlement or to any status higher than that of sarbarakar, and also wishes her to be informed that if she is obstructive or falls short of her duty, he will not hesitate to remove her from her sarbarakarship as she has already been warned."

There is little trace now among the Chakmas of the old clan chieftainship - the measures of Dharam Bux and Kalindi Rani were too effective. No Chakma now recognizes any such position, but curiously enough one sees traces of attempts to usurp its privileges by the modern mauza headmen. In a sense the mauza, among the Chakmas, is beginning to take the place of the clan. The clans, for instance, are no longer strictly endogamous, and a man is not fined if he marries a woman of another clan, but he is required to pay a fine in the form of an addition to the marriage feast if he marries a woman of another mauza.

42. This weakening of the clan chieftainship among the Chakmas has made easy the monopolising of the cotton tribute by one man. To this day the Chakma circle contains nearly all the Chakmas and comparatively few members of other tribes. By written agreement between the Bohmong and Rani Kalinidi in 1869 a boundary was laid between their jurisdictions. This gave some Chakmas to the Bohmong and some Maghs to Kalindi Rani. Later in 1872, when the eastern frontier was extended as a result of the Lushai campaign, a considerable addition was made to the territory under the control of Kalindi Rani. When the jurisdictions of the chiefs was eventually confined within territorial limits, the circle boundaries only defined the area within which each chief was actually collecting the jhum tax. Finally the granting in 1913 of the control of the Maini Valley to the Chakma Chief brought a considerable number of members of other tribes under his influence. Yet his circle still is, and always has been, the most homogenous of the three, and it is this, combined with the absence of any rival clan chiefs that has enabled his predecessors for so long to hold an absolute monopoly of

jhum tax collection which contrasts strongly with the gradually acquired monopolies of the other two chiefs. ↵

THE MONG RAJA.

43. The clan system is the very foundation of the social fabric of the Maghs of this district. These clans are endogamous (though not as strictly as they were), and I was even told that in the old days members of different clans could not eat together. It was as clan chief of the Palangsa clan that the ancestor of the present Mong Raja first obtained the tribute mahal of that clan, and it was because they held the biggest clan mahal of that area that his successors were granted the monopoly of what is now the Mong Circle on the Extinction of the smaller mahals which had existed. In official papers the Mong chieftainship is sometimes referred to as something modern, and artificial, and quite different from the other two chieftainships. This is incorrect. A consideration of the facts shows that the Mong chieftainship is older than the new line of Chakma chiefs created when Harish Chandra was selected as chief, and no more artificial than the Bohmong's chieftainship. Both the Bohmong and the Mong Raja trace their position back to clan chiefs, who were the heads of the principal clans of their areas, and who were gradually granted a monopoly of other and smaller mahals under the policy of concentrating all tribute in the hands of the principal clan chief of the area. The two cases are strictly parallel, the only difference being that the Palangsa clan has never attained anything approaching the numbers and importance of the Regratsa clan and that the conversion of the head of the Palangsa clan into a monopolist mahaldar of the jhum tax was more deliberate and took place later than in the case of the Bohmong.

44. The Maghs of the Mong Circle are of the same stock of those of the Bohmong's circle. They did not however enter the Hill Tracts by the same route as did the Regratsa and its companion clans. Instead they travelled north of Cox's Bazar and settled first on the Sitakund range. Having exhausted the jhums there they came straight across the hills and now occupy the portion of the Hill Tracts bordering on Tripura State. They found the low hills they entered sparsely populated by the Tipperas, and were able to spread themselves over the country till Kuki opposition put a limit to any further advance. This split from the

southern Maghs and longer sojourn in the country inhabited by Bengalis has led to a very slight difference in dialect (14) between the northern and the southern Maghs, and extensive substitution of Bengali for Burmese dress by the former. The northern Maghs seem to have reached their present home about three generations ago. The two estates of the chief in Chittagong district lie on the route of migration.

45. The area occupied by the northern Maghs is remote from the Chakmas, and whatever claims the latter may have made, they were never able to enforce them. There being in the first half of the 19th century no one of sufficient influence to obtain the jhum tax mahal of the whole of that area a large number of small mahaldars sprang up. The largest mahal was then that of the Palangsa clan. Whether, had the area been independent, that clan would ever have brought all the smaller clans and scattered Tipperas under its control in the ordinary course of events, it is impossible to say; at that time the Maghs were comparative newcomers in the area and had no time to work out their destiny.

46. The original home of the Palangsa clan, from which it takes its name, is the Palangkhyong in Arakan. From there Mrachai led his people about 1782 and settled in the Matamuri Valley. He was given the cotton tribute mahal of his clan. On his death in 1787, his grandson Saileng succeeded to the chieftainship of the clan and to the cotton mahal. In 1793 the tribute in cotton was changed to one of money. Saileng was succeeded by his nephew Khedu, who left the Matamuri Valley with his clan and settled on the Sitakund range. He died in 1800 and was succeeded by his son Konjai. In his time the clan again migrated, and entered the Hill Tracts. On Konjai's death in 1826, the Court of Wards administered his estate and tribute mahal till his son Keoja Sain took over in 1840. It is said that Keoja Sain was accorded the title of "Mong Raja" "by the voice of the people" in 1848 (vide letter No.765 G. of the 9th December 1892 from the Assistant Commissioner, Chittagong Hill Tracts). He was given the mahal of his clan for ten years, and this settlement was renewed at intervals. In 1862 it was first proposed that some of the smaller mahals should be combined with that of the Mong Raja (vide Captain Graham's letter No.101 of the 18th. November 1862 to the Commissioner), and in 1867 Captain Lewin reports that he has so settled some. There was considerable hesitation however in granting the Mong Raja the mahals of other tribes, and the claim of the Tipperas to a

mahal of their own was seriously considered, but as the only man proposed as mahaldar by them had been implicated in a murder, the project fell through (vide letter No. 544G. of the 11th September 1883 from the Deputy Commissioner to the Commissioner.)

47. In 1870 Keoja Sain was succeeded by his son Nurabuddi, and next year all small mahals of that area were finally given to the Mong Raja. In 1872 Nurabuddi, partly as compensation for loss of river tolls and partly as reward for services rendered in the Lushai campaign, was granted a permanent reduction in his jama of Rs.153, which is still enjoyed by the present chief. Nurabuddi died in 1879, and was succeeded by his brother Keoja Phru, who died in 1883, leaving no male heir.

48. Thus, as in the case of the Chakma Chief, Government was faced with the alternative of finding a successor or of abolishing the chieftainship. The chief's family and the clan selected Thuraong, second son of Pomai, daughter of Keoja Sain. To this choice Government agreed, and passed over the claim of Dikha, Thuraong's elder brother. Thuraong's name was changed to Nee Phru Sain, and as he was a minor, the property and mahal were placed under Government management. He was installed as chief in 1893 and still holds this position. He does not possess the title of "Raja", the word "Raja" in the appellation "Mong Raja being a corruption of a Maghi word" [rwa:ca:]. The Mong Raja has no heir." ↩

SUMMARY.

49. These brief historical notes have, I trust, shown the basis upon which rests the present position of the chiefs. Lewin has often been quoted as saying in his report of 1867 that " in the first instance the authority of the chiefs was paramount, and subsequently our ignorance subverted his authority in some measure." Five years' further experience however brought him to the precise conclusion which I have reached independently, and in his letter No. 532 of the 1st July 1872 he says: "In the first instance undoubtedly their rights only extended to the men of their own clans, but as their position became assured and their power consolidated, they collected from other and weaker tribes and villages." In the pure Magh chieftainships of the Bohmong and the Mong Raja we find the ancient clan chieftainship still alive, though overgrown with accretions due to their positions as collectors of the alien jhum tax. The

Bohmong however possesses the oldest title in the Hill Tracts, and is the head of by far the largest clan. In the case of the Chakma Chief, (15) the old clan system is dead, and he is nothing more than the inheritor of the jhum tax of a tribe of mixed origin and of such other communities as have from time to time been added to his sphere of influence.

50. Captain Lewin says he found the people of the Hill Tracts "ground down by ignorant, narrow- minded chiefs; harassed by litigious, lying Bengali usurers, and oppressed by constant dread of the Lushai and Shendu raids." Never were the chiefs able to protect their people from external enemies, and it was for this reason we were compelled to take over the Hill Tracts. It is true that, in the words of Sir George Campbell's resolution of the 21st of 1873 "Government recognizes in the chiefs only a delegated power to collect the tax (i.e. the jhum tax.) on its behalf, " but we are to blame for delegating that power too readily. The Commissioner in the report sent with his letter No.191 T.- G. of the 12th June 1917 severely criticised the chiefs. It was this report which led to Mr. Ascoli's valuable enquiry. The latter in paragraph 143 of his report unsparingly but justly sums up the situation in words very one of which applies with equal force today.

51. So much for the history of the chiefs. Many and great though their faults may be, one cannot but feel that some of the blame must fall on Government, for not only has Government deliberately aggrandized them without insisting on any administrative assistance in return, but two of them were brought up and educated as wards of Government. ↵

THE MAUZA SYSTEM.

There can be no question of abandoning the mauza system. Government is committed to it, the people are getting used to it, and an immense amount of time and trouble has been expended on it by local officials. One is however continually being reminded that it is a purely artificial arrangement, unsupported by any indigenous custom. The success or failure in each mauza depends on the character of the headman. Sometimes he is the natural and obvious leader of the people; sometimes he emphatically is not. In selecting a headman, the Deputy Commissioner is guided by his own opinion, that of the chief concerned, and that of the people of the mauza. He undoubtedly fails to receive from the chiefs opinions of the standard of soundness which he has the

right to expect. In some cases the right man is recommended by the chief, while in others ulterior motives come into play. In other cases the recommendation appears to be entirely haphazard. To take an instance which I saw in the Bohmong's circle, the chief, having no knowledge of the respective merits of two candidates for the headmanship of a Magh mauza, sent out a Bengali peon to hold a local enquiry in due course the peon arrived back with a blank sheet of paper decorated with thumb impressions, which purported to be the votes for the candidates - which one, only the peon knew, for there was no candidate's name on the paper; on this the chief made his recommendation. In the election of a headman, honest well-informed recommendations by the chiefs would be most useful, and I think they might reasonably be reminded of this and requested to mend their ways.

The people of the mauza express their opinion at a sort of simple election. Each candidate comes in with his supporters and they are counted. This method seems eminently unsuited to the people. It is often the man who is most feared who gets most votes. In Part XII of his report, Mr. Ascoli discusses the mauza system. It has vastly improved since he saw it, but I emphatically agree with him that more use should be made of the village headmen, who are the natural indigenous leaders of their little communities, though I do not recommend anything so cut and dried as the formal panchayat he proposes. The opinion of the mauza with regard to the election of the headman could however be far better ascertained by privately consulting each village headman in it (on the clear understanding that his opinion would not be divulged) than by counting the heads of a small mob. Lewin fully realized how valuable the village headmen were, and proposed having all their names registered in his office (page 4 of Printed selections.) Since then they have been unduly neglected, but they do more quiet work and get less for it than anyone else in the Hill Tracts. In theory, under Rule 42 (1) the mauza headman collects the jhum tax, receiving in turn for his toil a handsome commission and the right to call on the jhumiyas for labour; in practice the headman of each little village collects the rent from his people and brings it to the mauza headman. Many, if not (16) most, of the petty cases are settled by the village headman, and never get as far as the mauza headman. In theory, under rule 46, the village headman, as a village official, is entitled to a share in the service land in return for his

services; in practice such land has only been granted for a few of them, the mauza headmen getting the lion's share. I consider that the village headmen, who are the leaders of the little communities, selected by the people of those communities themselves, and are a natural institution of immemorial antiquity, should be made far more use of, not only as advisers when a new mauza headman has to be selected, but in all matters concerning their people. The village headman, for instance, should invariably be asked for his opinion when a tribal dispute is being heard and indeed in any case where the people of his village are concerned. He will know what the feeling of the village is, and in my opinion the feeling of the village is rarely wrong for they are judging people whom they have known from their youth up. In return for this he should get his full share of service land and should be protected against any usurpation of his position by some nominee of the mauza headman. Such a practice would not only bring all communities into closer touch with the Deputy Commissioner, and make for a smoother working of the mauza system, but it would help to protect the rights of all such minorities as those of a single Mro village in a Magh mauza, or scattered Magh villages in a Chakma mauza.

The very essence of my proposals is that bygones should be bygones, and that the chiefs should be given an absolute fair chance of justifying their position and earning their incomes by the performance of definite duties. They should be given clearly to understand that the duties are real and not nominal, and that due note will be taken of whether they perform them or not. ↩

13.2. Part II. [The London Manuscript]

PROPOSALS REGARDING THE CHIEFS.

From this melancholy story of rapacity and failure in the past, I turn to the future. The whole blame, as I have said, does not lie on the Chiefs. Government has paid, and the Chiefs have been allowed to pay, far too much attention to their activities as tax-gatherers to the neglect of the services they owe to their people as Chiefs. The rules give them the wide duty of administering their circles. No one can deny that they have entirely failed to carry out this duty; on the other hand, no one has ever made prolonged and consistent efforts to make them to carry it out. Administration cannot wait, and it has always been tempting to carry it on with very little reference to them, for their laziness and lack of interest in anything but the acquisition of wealth has made co-operation well nigh impossible. They, on their part, have consistently demanded more money and more privileges, never more work. But, however useless they may have been in the past they cannot be ignored, and there is no reason why, if they take the opportunities offered them, they should not be as invaluable parts of the administration as Chiefs have been and are elsewhere today. It is a big "if," I admit, and involves a complete change of heart on the part of the Chiefs, such as can hardly be hoped from them at once, but it is an "if" which cannot be avoided and must be faced. You must lead the horse to the water, even though you cannot make him drink. A clue to their future conduct will be afforded by their reaction to such orders as Government may pass on this report. Will the Chiefs cheerfully accept such orders for the good of themselves and their people, or will they make yet another addition to the dreary series of memorials?

My proposals fall into two parts:- (2) First, I propose that they should be relieved of certain tasks to which, as the past had shown, neither their status nor character and upbringing fit them.

Secondly, I propose that they should be offered certain duties such as will benefit them as Chiefs, such as no one can carry out better than can a Chief, and such as Chiefs are performing to the enhancement of their own reputation, the good of their people, and the assistance of Government. In addition, I propose not only that the ample emoluments they at present enjoy should suffer no diminution so long as the Chiefs justify their existence by carrying out the duties assigned to them, but

that they be granted such additional marks of distinction as their future position will demand. ↵

COLLECTION OF JHUM TAX.

Under the present system the Chiefs collect the jhum tax through the mauza headmen, who retain 25% as their commission. The Chiefs pay them jama, which is 25% of the tax less certain remissions, to Government, keeping the remaining 50%. The first duty of which I consider the Chiefs should be relieved is the collection of the jhum tax. This is by far the most important proposal I have to make, and the foundation upon which I have based my hopes and my schemes. My grounds for this proposal are various. Much of my report has been directed to showing that the collection of the jhum tax is the duty of a tax farmer, and in no way that of a Chief as such; that the tax is an alien thing, and that the income which the Chiefs draw from it is nothing but stereotyped loot, first gathered under threat of intervention by an alien power, and condoned by time. This discussion was only intended to show the position of the Chiefs in its true perspective, and I have only dealt with the matter at length (3) because no situation can be judged until it is analysed. I do not wish to stress this point as a reason for relieving the Chiefs now of the collection of the jhum tax. Their share of it was undoubtedly originally the proceeds of sheer extortion but the practice has equally certainly been condoned by time. They have for years regarded their share as a perfectly legitimate source of income, and two of them have been brought up as wards of the British Government to expect to enjoy it as a rightful heritage. To turn round now and say that they have all along been collecting it in sin would be unthinkably unjust.

The grounds for my proposal are other than this, and are set forth below:-

(1) Under the present system the Chiefs are always in a state of financial uncertainty. They do not know whether their next jama will be increased or not, and they are ever on the look out for new sources of income. This leads to undignified appeals for financial concessions, entirely unbecoming persons of the status they claim, and to what can only be described as wrangles between them and Government about that most sordid of all subjects - money. My proposal is to give them assured

incomes dependent only on the carrying out of duties well within their capacities.

(2) As long as they collect the tax, well nigh every administrative reform affects or may affect the Chiefs' incomes. This places in their way a temptation which few men could withstand, and makes it practically impossible for them to give unbiased advice on any change proposed. A perusal of files reveals ample examples. Plough cultivation, which has immensely (4) increased the wealth of the Hill Tracts, was at first actively opposed and later ignored by the Chiefs, simply because they thought (wrongly as it happens) that it would entice away a certain number of jhumiyas, from whom they got more profit than they did get from plough cultivators (Vide Hunter's Statistical account p.92). An attempt was made to buy their co-operation by the monetary concessions granted them under the Rules of 1881. The price proved too low for their tastes and was revised by the Rules of 1892. Even this did not prove enough, and their commission was later again raised. Again, the khas mahals which were proposed in 1868 as a refuge for those persons who preferred not to live under the control of chiefs to whom they owed no ancestral allegiance were abolished by the Rules of 1892. This was a retrograde step which merely added to the Chiefs' incomes and gave them as unwilling subjects not only those who had moved to these mahals as places of refuge from their oppression, but people such as the Khyengs, who, without being consulted on the subject at all, found themselves compelled by order of Government to exchange immemorial independence for the control of a Chief of an alien race. Again in his letter No. 1335 R. of the 4th July the Commissioner says he cannot advocate an insurance fund for the benefit of jhumiyas because the Chiefs, since their elimination from the agency for the collection of plough rents, are in a hostile mood and might misrepresent the nature of the fund.

One more example will suffice. When asked his opinion regarding the re-settlement of the jhum tax in (5) 1925 the Chakma Chief recommended that the tax should be increased, giving as a reason "the rise in the price of all necessaries" which had led Government to increase the salaries of its employees, and which made it "advisable that his income should also be increased so as to allow him to keep pace with the increasing economic difficulties." He is the richest man in the district,

and if he feels the pinch of rising prices, what will be the effect on the poor jhumiya of the same increased cost of living combined with a 20% rise in taxation imposed with no other object than that of giving the Chief money to squander? This objection he curtly forestalls with the remark that the increase of taxation "will not be felt by the people." Such biased advice is neither helpful to Government nor creditable to the Chief. My proposal is to remove the temptation to give such advice in the future by making the incomes of the Chiefs independent of reassessments, reforms, or administrative changes.

This ground for a change from the present system I cannot but regard as overwhelmingly cogent. Unless it be made, any efforts directed towards progressive administration for the good of the people are liable to be hampered if the Chiefs think that there is the least chance of their financial position suffering from them. Of course, advice from a Chief which is obviously not disinterested can be ignored, but for a Chief repeatedly to give advice which he knows to be only as "try-on," and for Government to be compelled on every occasion to disregard it makes all mutual confidence and co-operation impossible. Further, even if a Chief's advice be ignored and some reforms which seems to be against his own financial interests be introduced in the face of his (6) opposition he will, as has happened in the past, attempt to make it unworkable in the hope that it will be withdrawn in despair, and his success is likely to be the greater the greater be his influence, and consequently, if that influence were rightly directed, his potential power for good.

Were these first two grounds the only ones which could be advanced for the transfer of the collection of the jhum tax from the Chiefs, I should feel amply justified in advocating it. But there are other strong grounds.

(3) My third reason is the oppression and extortion connected with it. This is the reason which would appeal most strongly to the ordinary villager, and say without hesitation the every jhumiya in the district would welcome the change I advocate. From personal information derived direct from the people I have satisfied myself that this oppression and extortion is really serious.

Each chief has his own methods; as recently as April 1924 the Bo.hmong was reprimanded for demanding an unjustified abwab along with the jhum tax. Unabashed he is still trying to realise money to which he has no right. This year he issued written notices to headmen to say

that if one family has two separate jhums in the same mauza they must pay double tax. This is of course quite illegal. At the same time he issued orders that all persons who had remission of tax should send in to his punyaha (ceremonial reception of taxes) a hazar, a chicken and a bottle of liquor. The hazar expected was from Re. 1/- to Rs. 3/-, so that the Bohmong loses little by remitting (7) revenue, the only loss being shared by Government and the headmen. Not only does he do this, but he sells remission of revenue. This complaint was a bitter one, and one which I heard wherever I went in his circle. No man may have remission of revenue who does not get a written order from the Chief to that effect, and for such an order the Chiefs charges anything from Rs.30 to Rs.40. This is keenly resented, for though the pernicious practice of selling remissions of taxation was introduced before his time the present Bohmong has more than doubled the price. Even a widow, who is by custom excused from payment of the tax, still has to pay it unless she can raise the money to buy remission. A karbari (village headman) is also entitled to remission by custom and mauza headmen complain that they have to pay their karbaris' tax themselves, since the Chief insists on getting either the tax or the price of remission, and the karbaris refuse to pay a tax for which they are not liable. Besides this the mauza headmen have to pay hazar to the Chief when they bring in the tax, and even Rs.3 to his staff for the receipt. If any jhumiya fails to pay his tax the Chief does not go to the trouble of formal proceedings against him. Instead a "dhamai" (das-holder) is sent out, who sells the man up and gets what he can for himself and the Chief. In one case I noticed a poor widow, who had naturally been unable to purchase an order of remission, was sold up. She had practically nothing in the world, and all the dhamai got was a rupee for himself. The dhamais are nothing but a permanent staff of professional bullies, and are a pest and (8) terror to the circle. They are paid low wages which they supplement as best as they can; they insult the headmen and loot what they can get, while nothing can be done to them since they are the chosen vessel of the Chief. I consider they should be disbanded at once.

The Chakma Chief is not the bluff brigand the Bohmong is, and his methods are less direct, though no less effective. He prefers to use the headmen of his circle as his instruments of extortion. For instance in December 1925 he demanded through the headmen Rs. 4 a house from

all in his circle, both jhumiyas and plough cultivators, as a contribution towards the expense of his son's weddings. Since he inspires very little love or loyalty many refused to pay, though a few did probably pay willingly. He therefore this year issued demands for what he is pleased to call "arrears of marriage subscription." Headmen whom I saw were in great trouble saying that if they do not get the money out of the cultivators and pay it in, the money they pay in as jhum tax will be credited to the Chief's marriage subscription account, and they will have the arrears of marriage subscription debited to them as arrears of jhum tax. On such the Chief charges 18 3/4% interest, without any legal justification at all. His accounts against the headmen of his circle, which I have seen, pass the wit of man to understand, and it is clear that according to them the average headman is always in debt to the Chief, and always must be. The Chief persists in acting as if he had sublet each mauza to the headman on a fixed jama, and tries to make the headmen responsible for the amount, running him in his own court for whatever he assumes to be the arrears. This practice was commented on by the Commissioner in his letter (9) No.1335 R of 4th July 1925, and is now forbidden by the Rules, but the Chief still attempts to realise old arrears in this way, and his accounts make it quite impossible to discover what arrears are old and what are new. I have seen cases in which headman A having been dismissed for misappropriation of taxes collected, the Chief has claimed the money misappropriated by A from headman B his successor. Unless headman B opposes the claim (thereby running the risk of incurring the enmity of the Chief) he must either pay the money out of his own pocket or squeeze it out of the jhumiyas who have already paid their tax once to headman B [must be A]. With claims of this sort and mysterious additions of interest the running accounts kept by the Chief show such chaos that no headman can either get clear or know for what year he is in arrears. One of the latest orders of the Chakma Chief is that no widow is to be granted remission of tax, though widows are expressly exempt by custom, as recently certified by the Chief in writing to the Deputy Commissioner, in accordance with Rule 42 (5). The reason he gives is that he cannot afford to grant them remission, since Government allows him only 10% for remissions. The Commissioner's order in his letter No.2258 R of the 12th November 1925 to the Deputy Commissioner laying down that the exemption of persons belonging to

the exempted classes is automatic are merely ignored by the Chief, though his attention has been drawn to them. Needless to say that such persons as his khishas, who are his agents and spies in the villages are granted remission without demur; it is the widows (10) who are too feeble to protest effectively, who are penalized. His staff, too, make money out of the jhum tax. His tauzi with 46 headings (!) cannot be filled up by any headman who is not a fairly skilled clerk, and the Chief's staff fill it up for the headmen and charge absolutely exorbitant sums for so doing. The rate given me by headmen was Rs. 7 for the smallest tauzi.

The MONG Raja is too feeble and ineffective to be oppressive, though his staff make what they can. He has been trying to make the headmen realise jhum tax from persons who do not jhum, but without great success. Such demands as he makes for money he usually makes in person, often to find them treated with the contempt they deserve. There is of course no objection whatever to the payment of abwabs by persons who wish to give them. What is objectionable is that the jhum tax collecting machinery is used to extort money from persons who are neither liable nor willing to pay it.

(4) The present system makes impossible the position of the headmen upon whom depends the mauza system to which Government is definitely committed. As the Commissioner says in his letter No. 1310 R of the 5 th July 1924 "the longer we maintain the Chiefs between the Government as landlords and the headmen, the more difficult it will be to get the best work out of the headmen who admittedly are the most important factor in the revenue system." No man can serve two masters, especially when one master looks to the good of the people and is always liable to transfer, and the other thinks only of his own pocket and is (11) permanent. It is too much to expect that a headman should definitely burn his boats by refusing to aid a Chief in his extortion and so offending him, for the Deputy Commissioner who would support and protect him is to be transferred sooner or later, a stranger hampered by lack of local knowledge taking his place. The Chiefs' attitude towards the headmen system is clear from the candidates they often support, bad characters who would be nothing but tools in their hands.

(5) The change I suggest would also allow certain harsh anomalies to be done away with. For instance the tribes such as the Kukis and Tipperas live on the crests of ranges, jhuming the slopes on either side. It

sometimes happens therefore, where a range forms the boundary between two circles, that a man's house may be in one circle and his jhum in another. Under Rule 42(6) he has to pay double tax, viz., one to the Chief in whose circle he jhums and another to the Chief within whose circle his house is. This Rule may be an easy way of avoiding disputes between Chiefs but it is unfair on the jhumiya, who pays double for single value received.

(6) Much needed relief cannot be granted under the present system because it would directly affect the incomes of the Chiefs. In times of scarcity total or partial remission of jhum tax is an obvious remedy. Where this applied, the Chiefs would protest on the ground that it involved direct loss to them, just as during the scarcity of 1916-17 the Chakma Chief objected to the remission of plough rents in parts of his circle. The present system, too, is (12) insufficiently elastic to admit of temporary relief to persons who may urgently need it. I have myself frequently had to grant individuals remission of jhum tax for a year on the ground of temporary illness, damage to crops by wind or hail, destruction of crops by elephants, ruination of sown lands by landslips and so on. Such remissions are never granted by Chiefs but would be granted by Government, the Deputy Commissioner being empowered, as he is elsewhere, to grant them promptly and without reference.

(7) The most cherished mark of appreciation shown by Government of the fine work done by the Naga Labour Corps in France was the granting to all its members of remission of jhum tax for life. The financial benefit to the individual is small, but the glory is life-long. No such reward could be given here without strong protests from the Chiefs who would lose more money than would Government. That the relieving of the Chiefs of the duty of collecting jhum tax would be immensely popular there is not the shadow of doubt. It is equally certain that it would be legal. Government has always rightly maintained that the Chiefs have no rights in the soil and are only jhum-tax settlement holders during the pleasure of the Government. I have already quoted the important resolution of 1873 which lays down that Government recognises in the Chiefs only a delegated power to collect the tax on its behalf. Again Government Order No.1581 of the 24 th July 1878 defines the position of the Chiefs as belonging to "a superior class of tahsildar." This is unquestionably the correct view of their position as jhum tax

collectors, which differs in no way from that of the smaller settlement holders. These had (13) their settlements abolished solely on the grounds of administrative convenience, and apparently without compensation. Such compensation as I recommend should be given to the Chiefs is only proposed in view of the special position they have acquired. Such claims as they have to it is a moral and in no way a legal one.

It remains to consider when this change should take place. In my opinion it should be brought about at once and should not await the end of the present settlement. The longer it is postponed the longer will reforms be blocked, and oppression and extortion continue, while the Chiefs will almost certainly attempt to make hay while the sun shines by squeezing their people harder than ever. On general principles too, if a thing ought to be done the sooner it is done the better. There seems to be no legal bar to an immediate change. The old settlements have, I believe, always been regarded as revocable at will, and the first thing that caught my eye on glancing through an old list in original was a note to this effect opposite the entry of the Chakma Chief's jama. It is only of recent years that a ten year settlement has become the rule. The jhum tax settlement with the Chiefs never seem to have done more than bind Government not to raise the jama during the period of settlement. Even the Chakma Chief has himself shown only within the last few months that he sees nothing sacrosanct in the ten year settlement, for, fearing that some reforms inimical to his financial interests might follow the recent report of the Conservator of Forests he wrote to the Deputy Commissioner offering to relinquish the present settlement and substitute a perpetual one at the same jama. If one party to a settlement can relinquish it at will so can the other, and if the Chakma Chief regards it terminable at will on one ground (14) he cannot deny that it is equally so on another. Finally it is hardly necessary to remind the Chiefs that any income which Government might grant them in view of their status and in return for services rendered would be entirely on the good will of Government. Should they therefore obstinately continue to put their own interests before those of their people, and should they, by maintaining on legal grounds that the settlement cannot now be brought to an end, succeed in delaying a reform which is clearly most necessary, they can hardly expect lavish treatment in 1935.

I am aware that the change I advocate is contrary to the opinion expressed by his Excellency Sir John Kerr in April 1925 that the collection of the jhum tax had been in the Chiefs' hands from time immemorial and should not now be taken out of them. I feel however that possibly His Excellency had not full information as to the true nature of the tax at his disposal. Unless the change be made I feel that no increase in the usefulness of the Chiefs be looked for, and if their usefulness be not increased there can be no grounds for granting them new dignities and privileges. The possibility of this serious step being shown to be necessary was clearly foreseen in No. 6 of the Proceedings of August 1926 on the re-settlement of the jhum-tax. ↩

CHIEFS' COURTS.

My second proposal is that the Chiefs be relieved of their Magisterial powers as Chiefs, retaining their powers as headmen of their khas mauzas, and that powers as honorary Magistrates for the trial of criminal, civil and tribal disputes be granted to any individual Chief who at any time, after due enquiry, proves fit to hold them. With the possible exception of the Bohmong none of the present Chiefs show any sign whatever of being fit (15) to exercise such powers.

For the last ten years, the state of the Chiefs' Courts has from time to time been noticed, but the question has never been seriously tackled. In 1916 the Chiefs asked for increased powers, but were told that this could not be considered unless they put their house in order and submitted to inspection, vide Government letter No.881 P.D. of the 23rd May 1917. Nothing was done however to carry out either of these conditions. In 1918 Mr. Ascoli found the Courts still unreformed. As a result of his report, the powers of the Chiefs were more clearly defined. It is only recently however that any proper inspection of the Chiefs' Courts has been carried out; indeed that of the Chakma Chief's Court had not been completed when I arrived at Rangamati. It is ten years ago now that the Chiefs were first urged to improve their methods, but they have done nothing. I have seen all three Courts and am voicing the opinion I heard expressed in the villages when I say that they are scandalously oppressive. Endless delays and endless extraction of money were the grounds of complaint everywhere. Fortunately the Courts are not busy, as the honest man who has a grievance which he wishes promptly

settled avoids them like plague; the emphasis with which one sometimes hears an opinion expressed on the Chiefs' Courts is almost amusing. They are ordinary only resorted to by three classes of persons (a) inhabitants of the Chief's mauza for whom it is their headman's Court;

(b) persons who have claims which they think another Court may not recognise, or who hope for special treatment, and who, themselves being bear at hand, know they can harass a distant defendant by endless adjournments with their attendant journeys; and

(c) persons whose tribal disputes are transferred by the Deputy Commissioner to a Chief for a settlement. (16) ⇐

THE CHAKMA CHIEF'S COURT.

The Chakma Chief had objected strongly to a proper inspection by the Deputy Commissioner, and in view of what the inspection revealed I am not surprised that this attitude. There is nothing of the swift, patriarchal methods about his procedure, which is unbelievable dilatory, and this in spite of the emphasis laid by the Rules on the expeditious disposal of cases. Cases are often adjourned twenty times or ore, and go on month after month, in some cases involving journeys on foot totalling over fifteen hundred miles for each accused. The end of such a case is often a fine of Rs. 5 or less, unless the Chief has managed to order someone to forfeit bail, which he pockets. But this is not the end of the expenses of the parties. There are in addition process fees payable to the Chiefs, living expenses while on the journey and in Rangamati, and never-ending petty payments to the Chief's Bengali staff who charge a fee on no fixed scale every time they put a pen to paper. The Chief makes no effort to be present on the dates he fixes for hearing, and records show that he is often absent three or four times running on dates fixed. In one case alone at least nine out of some thirty adjournments were due to his absence. More may have been due to this reason but this I could not ascertain as, following the practice of his Court, clerks had granted adjournments without recording any grounds at all. This practice of endless adjournments is in itself gross oppression, and is further quite unnecessary. I have myself tried thousands of hillmen's cases of an exactly similar type, and doubt if more than 10% have ever gone beyond one hearing. Not only (17) are the most frivolous complaints admitted (since the more cases the more money comes in) but the Court is

habitually used by the Chief's near relations and office staff. They are all moneylenders and can obtain decrees with machine-like regularity, and with no trouble to themselves since the Chief allows those of them who find it inconvenient to come, to appear by agent on the ground that they are "respectable gentlemen," the defendant having to appear in person. Comment is needless. Worse still is the practice of complainants to carry on their own cases; a not infrequent complainant is the Chief's brother-in-law Krishna Kishore Dewan, who deals with cases during the Chief's frequent absences in Chittagong, so that in one case in which he was both complainant and, for the time being, judge, he was able to order the attachment of the defendant's property for his own benefit. The Chief also does not hesitate to act simultaneously as complainant and judge, and without any consideration of evidence attaches his own sub-tenants' property for such rent and damages as he chooses to claim. In one case he claimed in his own Court and awarded himself 25% damages for rent only a few days in arrears. Not only does he pocket all criminal fines which he levies, but also nearly the whole of the damages he awards in tribal cases. For instance, he takes 75% of the damages due to the injured party in divorce cases. This is grossly unfair and is improper and contrary to custom. The whole essence of a trial by custom is that the only question to be decided is what damages, if any, are payable by one party to the other; all thoughts of prisons and an external power which can extract and take fines have to be entirely dismissed from the mind. This is the immemorial method I have found (18) elsewhere and the one which I have adopted in the countless cases I have heard. My position has been not that of of a Court, but of a mediator between two parties. ↩

THE BOHMONG'S COURT.

What few records the Bohmong keeps seem to show that his Court is the least bad of the three. But certain things need drastic change. He is far more prompt in settling cases than are the other two Chiefs, and he seems to settle tribal cases in accordance with the custom of the tribes concerned, and to award such damages as are due to the aggrieved parties instead of pocketing them himself. But the costs he allows are altogether excessive. Of many things too no record is kept. For instance he undoubtedly realises rent most harshly through his staff of dhamais, but there is nothing on paper. In Civil cases he admits claims on

unregistered bonds bearing excessive interest. The distance of Bandarban from any registration office may excuse the lack of formality, but one cannot excuse the claiming of interest in excess of Rule 7. Many claims are recorded as "admitted," but the papers containing the admissions and decorated with thumb impression fill me with the utmost suspicion, since I have myself seen that the Bohmong is not above obtaining thumb impression of the edges of blank sheets for other purposes. Better though the Court may be than those of the other Chiefs, it is bad enough; and this is particularly to be deplored since there is no Subdivisional Officer in his circle to whom aggrieved persons can apply. (19) ↩

THE MONG RAJA'S COURT.

Finally there is the Mong Raja's Court. The inspection of this gave me a little trouble as, with masterly inactivity, the Chief failed for some hours to produce any registers at all. When they were eventually found they revealed little work done. There are no criminal records at all, nor is there anything to show that in any case of any kind he has either heard a witness or recorded a decision. Incredible though it may seem he admitted to me that he had neither heard a witness nor come to any judicial decision for three or four years, at any rate. This is partly due to his laziness and incompetence, and partly due to his prolonged periods of absence from his circle. Such cases as are brought in his Court are invariably recorded as being withdrawn, compromised, or simply dropped. Few villagers apply. One such told me that a case in the Chief's Court would drag on for two years and would involve an expenditure of Rs. 400 to Rs. 500 in bribes and expenses. This is probably an exaggeration but it shows the opinion held of the Chief's Court and explains why moneylenders find a complaint lodged there a useful method of squeezing money out of their victims. The unfortunate persons sued cannot appeal as no decision is ever reached – all cases remain indefinitely sub judice till they are withdrawn or compromised. Relatives and clerks of the Chief use his court as do other moneylenders, and he admits claims of any sort, whether on unregistered bonds or barred by limitation. If the case be not withdrawn it is "compromised" on a document which often includes outrageous interest. A poor defendant finds it cheaper to admit defeat than to go on with a case which he knows will never be decided on its merits, and in which his

statement will never be recorded. I could find no record (20) of any trial at all.

I trust the above firsthand descriptions will suffice to show that the present Chiefs are unfit to exercise the judicial powers they now hold. A good Chief would make a good honorary Magistrate and the time may come when it will be desirable to confer those powers on one or more Chiefs. But at present the Chiefs should in my opinion only exercise the judicial powers of headmen.

The changes I suggest would cause no inconvenience. Apart from cases deliberately lodged in their Courts with the object of harassing the opposite party, most of the Chief's cases come from their own khas mauzas. These they would continue to deal with, with the ordinary powers of headmen. The Deputy Commissioner and his Subdividsonal Officers would themselves settle tribal disputed brought to them on appeal from headmen. Very few are brought, largely, I think because of the practice of transferring them to the Chiefs for disposal. This is undoubtedly unpopular because of the expense and delay it involves for the parties. While I was in Rangamati a man whose case had been transferred to the Chakma Chief month before came in to see if something could not be done to bring it to some sort of conclusion; one party, exasperated at the way he had been needlessly dragged to Court time after time, had assaulted the other party. Further I frankly think it most desirable that the Deputy Commissioner and his Subdivisional Officers should try tribal cases. Nothing teaches one custom so well as cases turning on it, and knowledge of custom is valuable beyond all words to anyone administering a backward tract. A man too who brings a tribal dispute to the Deputy Commissioner presumably does so because he wants it settled by him, and a British subject would seem to have a right to have his cases tried in a British Court. (21) ↵

DUTIES TO BE SUBSTITUTED.

Relief from tax-collecting and Court work is not intended to give the Chiefs time for idleness. Rather it is meant to leave them free for other duties which, if properly performed, will keep them fully occupied. To describe these duties is not easy; to use general terms is to incur the charge of vagueness, while to be precise is to risk seeming to omit what is not specified. It will be well therefore to give a broad description first

and them to make clear my meaning by definite suggestions, which are intended as examples only. A Chief has a duty towards his people and a duty towards Government. By leading the one and advising the other he can prove himself a strong link in the chain of administration. The methods followed in Sarawak, which has an Indonesian population, may serve as an example. Speaking of the almost miraculous progress which has been made without any undue disturbance of indigenous customs Mr. Hose says –

“but this result has been attained only by a carefully considered policy by which the people and their Chiefs are constantly kept in touch with the administrators by sympathy and consultation. In this way the co-operation of the people has been obtained in the Government of the country, and the leading Chiefs and influential men have thus been harnessed into the work of progress and responsibility.”

My experience has been precisely similar. To me the Chiefs have been eyes, ears, hands and feet, keeping me closely informed of all that goes on, ever ready with sound advice, and, when such advice resulted in orders, conveying them with speed and seeing that they were carried out. They have been as ready to consult me as I have been to consult them, and I could know that their voice was the voice of their people. For they were the leaders of their people, and in that lay their value. For instance when Volunteers were wanted for (22) the Naga Labour Corps for France there was no issuing of notices which no one would have understood. Instead the Chiefs were called in and talked to, and their questions answered. Then they, full of enthusiasm, went home and brought men. They did not send their men, but insisted on accompanying them or, if they were too old, that a relation should go. It was all the natural procedure, and there was no shortage of recruits, but without the co-operation of the Chiefs the result would have been very different. Again it was decided to introduce irrigated terraces among the Sema tribe who had outgrown their available jhum land. It was the Chiefs to whom the project was proposed, and it was they who first made terraces. Any other method would have seemed unnatural to the people, and the opposition which such a novel method of cultivation naturally encountered from a conservative tribe would never have been overcome. As it is, persistent effort backed by the co-operation of the Chiefs has made the scheme a great success, and the Semas are now

definitely saved. For such work the Naga Chief gains little in the shape of material reward. His principal rewards are the social precedence and deference accorded him and the satisfaction found in the exercise of authority. The Chiefs of the Hill Tracts will, it is proposed, continue to enjoy their large emoluments as long as they act as Chiefs. A good Chief must needs possess knowledge and influence of a kind which can come to no official. I propose therefore that they be asked, in return for what they receive, to place their knowledge and influence unreservedly at the disposal of Government, and to give continual and active assistance and advice, both on (23) the broader questions of general policy, and on all those smaller details which together make up the administration of the district. This is their natural duty and one which no one has such opportunities as they have of carrying out well. ↵

EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC DUTIES.

The duties I have broadly outlined above are, as I have tried to show, inherent in the office of Chief. As examples of how they can be exercised are not far to seek in this district where there are many problems calling for the immediate and combined attention of the Chiefs. The short list I give is, of course, in no way exhaustive, and could be extended indefinitely. ↵

AGRICULTURE.

(1) The first and main problem is that of agriculture. Since it is the sole means of livelihood of the vast majority of the people and the source from which the Chiefs have always drawn their very considerable incomes it is only right that they, if they wish to justify their claim to be the leaders of the people, should take far more active interest in it than they have hitherto done. An Experimental Farm has been started at Rangamati on their representation of the difficulties of the jhumiya arising from the deterioration of the jhums, but up to date they have taken no interest in it. Close though it is to his home the Chakma Chief has never visited it, and Santals have to be hired to work it because none of the hillmen for whose benefit it was founded will condescend to such a menial occupation. Agriculture here is without doubt in a parlous state. There is practically no more available plough land, and the greater part of the people must always, as now, live by jhuming. Even (24)

plough cultivators make small jhums in addition if they find suitable land near their fields. Important though jhuming is it never seems to have been considered scientifically. Always in papers I seem to find a sort of implication that it is a makeshift mode of cultivation, unworthy of serious attention. Lewin even hoped eventually to stop it. This is one of the few mistakes to be found in the records he has left us, and one must blame the times in which he lived; Englishmen do not jhum and in the sixties and seventies of last century English customs, were considered model ones, and we were very busy "raising" savages to our own standard by the distribution of flannel waistcoats and chemises, and in trying in general to destroy their culture and substitute for it a caricature of our own.

Jhuming is very far from being a makeshift business. In certain places, of which the hills of this district are one, it is the only possible method of cultivation. Its only real rival for hillsides of any steepness is the method of irrigated terraces, but this requires certain conditions of soil and water supply which are not found here. Dry terraces in this sandy soil would not, I fear, retain enough natural moisture to give a good crop, and would produce a soil as quickly exhausted as that of an ordinary jhum. It is also an inherently good method of cultivation. For some years I have lived among a thick and prosperous population supported entirely by jhuming where the villages are all large and permanent, and where the same hillsides have been cultivated for on unknown number of generations without any sign of deterioration. (25) In the Chittagong Hill Tracts the slopes are quite definitely being jhumed out. The same land is being jhumed too often and the trees left are insufficient for regeneration. This is plain to the eye. Never have I seen such bad jhums as I have seen here. It is sometimes argued that figures seem to show there is no shortage of land. If one subtracts the forest reserves, the plough land and the estimated area under periodic jhum from the total area of the district one finds that about half the total area is left. It is considered incredible that such a large portion of the district should be useless for any kind of cultivation. Observation however leads me to regard the figures as substantially correct; there are very large areas entirely jhumed out, and rendered useless - possibly for ever, certainly for many years; there is a large area consisting of the banks and beds of rivers and streams; there is steep ground; there is grass land; there are blocks neglected because they

are large enough for one or two year's jhuming, but not enough for a rotation; there are a few areas definitely abandoned for one reason or another; there are odd bits of land everywhere; there are villages, gardens, paths and roads; all these added together might well make up half the district. I am of the opinion too that the area of jhum land required to support a given number of persons has been greatly underestimated e.g., by the Commissioner in his letter No.1335 R of the 4th July 1925.

Further, the weed aggeratum which made its appearance here some 30 years ago has spread with astonishing speed. The land here is not as it was a generation ago, and it may be that new methods are needed to meet a new situation. I (26) have in an appendix indicated what seem to be suitable lines of experiment. The experiments suggested are perfectly simple and I would suggest that each Chief be asked to have similar ones carried out over a series of years near his own home and under his own personal supervision. The land he can get for nothing and the labour will only cost him a very small sum which he can well afford for the good of his people. To make each a small grant would be an insult to men of their means, and would only introduce that atmosphere of the cash ledger which has detracted so much from the smoothness of their relations with Government in the past. If the Chiefs take up this work with vigour there will be created a valuable little experimental station in each circle, which it will be one of the principal duties of the District Agricultural Officer to inspect, and the Chiefs will have personal experience and knowledge to assist them in pressing upon the adoption of any innovation of proved utility. What is wanted to spread improved methods is persuasion, not orders. It should be the aim of all concerned to carry the reform through without any orders at all. Orders are easily passed, and persuasion is uphill work, but orders will inevitably create suspicion and will be interpreted as aimed at the restriction rather than the improvement of jhuming.

(2) Another problem is that of jungle produce. Bamboos give a good jhum, but repeated burning kills them out, and bamboos are commercially valuable. On the other hand a man cannot substitute bamboo cutting for jhuming as a means of livelihood, or he will find himself in sore straits when the bamboo seed and die over large areas. Also bamboos are only commercially valuable only where they can be

extracted with reasonable ease; they are not everywhere worth preserving. It might be possible to reserve (27) definitely a strip of fixed width along either bank of certain streams down which they could be floated. These strips should be reserved for the sole use of the inhabitants of the mauza in which they are situated, since it is they who have given up the land for them and will look after them. There must be no question of the Forest Department giving passes for outsiders to cut from them, or of their controlling them in any way. Again, the Bengali competes with the jhumiya by cutting, on the strength of a pass from the Forest Department, bamboos on land required for jhuming. Bengalis are particularly troublesome because they do not select bamboos, but fell an area clean, and, as anyone who has ever had anything to do with bamboos knows, a clump which is entirely cut down often dies. Might they not be required to cut from places shown him by the mauza or village headman? The Chiefs could be asked to find out exactly what is happening in their circles and advise. They could later assist in enforcing any measures decided on.

(3) There are also additional sources of income for the agriculturalist to be looked for and experimented with. Lac, which is such a source of wealth to the Assam jhumiya ought to do very well here. I know of no source of seed lac near enough for it to be brought direct to Rangamati, but some could be brought to Chittagong and set there, and from there rushed up in the day to Rangamati at the first hatching. Once it was established at the farm the local supply would be assured, and, some Mikirs could be obtained to demonstrate the method of cultivation. This, though eventually most lucrative, is tedious in its early stages, and it would be slow work persuading (28) the local jhumiyas to undertake it. Here again it will lie in the power of the Chiefs to do most valuable work both by exhortation and remonstrance at their own experimental stations.

Another plant which might be tried is hill pan. It is grown on land too steep for jhuming, and is of considerable commercial value. I know Naga villages which make at least half their income out of it. What little is grown here seems to be of an inferior, coarse kind. The best hill pan is regarded as superior to that grown in panbaris in the plains.

(4) Cattle and buffaloes are now kept in numbers far in excess of those required for ploughing, and are nothing short of a pest. They are left

untended and do a vast amount of damage to crops on the unfenced jhums, for, aggeratum having smothered all tree growth, the jhumiya can find no stakes at hand wherewith to make fences. Hardly less is the damage they do to young bamboos, but this is apt to pass unnoticed, since no one will bring a suit for damage to no-man's property. Buffaloes, further, not only damage crops and bamboos, but in time make jungle useless for jhuming; there are places in Manipur State laid completely waste by them. Here the cattle problem is becoming really serious, and in this too the Chiefs might advise and assist. ↵

Cattle-breeding.

The cross of gayal with cattle gives a heavy beast, and crosses are themselves fertile. As the hill tribes with which I am familiar do not drink milk I am only familiar with the use of the these hybrids for beef. But there is no reason why they should not give good milk and be useful for the plough. The Chiefs could make experiments. They could also be given stud bulls to look after and hire out. ↵

EDUCATION.

The Chiefs do not as present concern themselves in any way (29) with the education of their people. The Chakma Chief used to be a member of the Committee of Rangamati High School, but resigned after the issue of Government's order on the plough rents. Yet once they have been brought to realise their position and the true needs of their people there is no reason why they should not give useful advice. ↵

It is rather pathetic to remember that Macaulay supported the arguments in his Minute by pointing to the civilizing influence which the teaching of Western European culture had had on Tartar Russia! Yet even now education is only too rarely a "drawing-out" of what is already in the people who are being taught, and often means nothing but thrusting down the throats of one race the indigestible mental food of another. To speak the blunt truth and to say that the only conceivable legitimate object of education is to make those taught more fitted for their environment is to risk being accused of uttering a platitude which tactlessly omits all mention of Matriculation examinations and University degrees.

What the Hill Tracts require is far more and far better primary education imparted through men of the district, and the abolition or drastic reform of Rangamati High School, the only High School in the district. Mr. De in the last paragraph of his report sent with his letter No. 191 T.G. of the 12th January 1917 says that the present method of education here is wrong; the Matriculation examination of Calcutta University is not a desirable goal; where the conditions differ from the plains, schools should differ. Mr. Ascoli again, in paragraph 27 of his report appeals for a complete change in the educational system. Though no notice has been taken of these considered opinions I can but strongly endorse them, and the view of the present Inspector of Schools, with whom I have discussed the matter, agrees in general with mine.

The staff of the Rangamati High School is almost entirely (30) Bengali and the teaching wholly so. The boys have everything done for them and refuse even to keep their own compound and quarters tidy. The more respectable the boy the thicker the cottonwool in which he is wrapped. For instance the sons of the Chakma Chief, the Civil Surgeon and the Head Master are excused all games rougher than Badminton. The technical class is a farce. The strapping youth who attend it are not expected to lift any plank which could be described as heavy and even asked that a menial might be employed to sharpen their tools for them. The magnum opus which a student submits as proof of his skill at the end of three years desultory training is usually either a badly made ruler or on inkstand. Far more importance is attached to the English class, where Rupert Brooke's poems were being taught about the time I left Rangamati.

On this institution, which not only in no way fulfils the needs of the hillmen but does immense positive harm by inculcating idleness, a sum is spent almost equal to that spent on all the Lower Primary Schools of the district put together. I would suggest that it be either abolished or entirely altered in character and made more like these Mission Schools in which boys are made to use their hands as well as their brains. Most of the construction and repairs could be done by the pupils after a little instruction; the wood work is very simple and the bamboo walls are only what the boys ought to help their fathers to make for their houses in the holidays. They should be taught carpentry by a practical carpenter and learn to turn out useful things. All weeding and clearing round the

School should, of course, be done by them. Further the School should be linked with the Experimental Farm – an (31) important point - and what amount of jungle clearing, weeding and reaping is required there should be done by the boys under supervision, while they learnt meanwhile the why and wherefore of the experiments which are being carried out. If any boy considers this course of instruction too strenuous and beneath his dignity he can seek an education elsewhere.

It will be argued that the scheme would hamper preparation for Matriculation. I would meet that by ceasing to make Matriculation the goal. Hill boys cannot compete with Bengalis in the type of learning which Calcutta University demands and they and their parents have wasted much time and money in attempting to do so. Not only do they obtain no posts outside the district but they hold nothing approaching their share in it - simply because in filling posts the efficiency of candidates is judged by the Calcutta University examinations they have passed. Could not Government consider the case of this district solely on its merits and in selecting candidates waive hard and fast qualifications as has been done in backward tracts elsewhere? For instance in the Naga Hills Naga clerks are selected on general fitness, and compounders, by special order of Government, are trained in the hills and are not allowed to go down to the plains to be turned into foreigners. In the Hill Tracts some training might be devised for candidates for the Forest Department, for instance, as well as for other departments. If Government could banish from the mind the educational system of the plains of Bengal, where conditions are entirely different and sanction a special scheme suitable to the district, the High School would cease to be an alien institution and a gate leading to nowhere, and would become a place where hillmen could be trained to be useful to their own people.

(32)

EXCISE.

(5) Excise is another matter which demands their attention. Opium smuggling for instance, is rife in the Bohmong circle, but with the aid of the information he could doubtless collect, and the expulsion of foreigners who are known to be smugglers under a Rule such as I suggest later, much could be done to check it. ↩

GAME PRESERVATION.

(6) Game reservation is another subject which should appeal to them. No real interest ever seems to have been taken in this. Poaching has been universal for so long that very little is now left outside the forest reserves. But there is still a small stock of bison, sambhur, serow and barking deer, which would soon increase if game laws were strictly enforced. Frankly I consider the number of guns in the district altogether excessive and the amount of powder allowed to each licensee is exactly four times that which I have been accustomed to see permitted. The guns may nominally be held "for the protection of crops", in reality they are used for the destruction of game in and out of season. This assertion can easily and legally be tested by calling in all the guns for the months when there are no crops to be damaged. If this order be obeyed without a murmur I am wrong. Last, but not least, gunshot murders are unpleasantly frequent in this district. ↵

COMPULSORY LABOUR.

(7) Compulsory labour in the district also seems to require further regulation and re-organisation, and here too the Chiefs could help first with their advice, and later with their influence. I have ventured to make certain suggestions, based on my own experience, in an appendix attached to this report. ↵

COMMUNICATIONS.

(8) Communications might also engage the attention of the Chiefs. (33) By this I do not mean the simple task of asking for more roads to be made by the P.W.D. at Government expense. By far the greater volume of foot traffic is and always will be on village paths. These could be greatly improved. At present for instance, anyone who finds it convenient to do so does not hesitate to block a path, apparently without any protest from those who use it - they meekly have to find the best way round they can. Further there are many streams which are unfordable after heavy rain. This temporarily isolates considerable areas and causes great inconvenience. Nowhere have I seen the cane suspension bridges stretched from tree to tree across streams with which I am so familiar and which have so often found invaluable. Things were not so in Lewin's time, for he speaks of the abundance of cane in the

district, and of the bridges made of it (vide Wild Races of S.E.India p. 28). Now cane has been practically exterminated except in the forest reserves by the hillmen themselves, who, with their usual shortsighted eagerness for whatever they may want at the moment, have been in the habit of gathering the young shoots to eat as vegetables instead of letting the plants grow and seed. No cane means no bridges. To meet the shortage of cane required for bridges in one heavily jhumed area of the Naga Hills I established small cane reserves under the care of the Chiefs. The same might be done here, seed being obtained from the Forest Department. Once some cane has been grown the villagers could be put to make bridges by their own labour for their own use. ↩

CONCENTRATION.

The tendency is for some tribes in the Hill Tracts to split up into very small communities. This is only possible because British control has put an end to raids by enemies (34) from outside, so that mutual protection is no longer necessary. The motive which induces a man to go off and make a separate village with two or three companions is usually nothing more than a desire to avoid rendering either assistance or obedience to anyone. It is to be deplored from every point of view. Not only does it make any sort of control very difficult, but it is a comparatively modern innovation which tends to destroy the old village system, and also leads to haphazard and wasteful jhuming. In some areas I know it is definitely prohibited, but probably it would be difficult to enforce such orders here. In that case a graduated scale of jhum rent might be imposed, after consulting the Chiefs. This is a method of checking the splitting up of villages which obtains in some areas. I would suggest that an extra Rs.2 per house be levied on all villages of five houses and under, and Re.1 per house on all villages of less than eleven or more than five houses. This tax would be in no wise unjust, for if a man did not want to pay it he would only have to attach himself to a village of reasonable size. ↩

PROJECTING LICENSES ETC.

(9) Nothing has given me more anxiety at various times than the question of granting prospecting licenses for oil and minerals in areas occupied by a primitive people. Arguments about “developing the resources of the Empire” are all very well, but what really often happens

is that land which used to grow food for poor jhumiyas as is made to produce dividends for rich shareholders instead, the jhumiya being compelled to overwork more than ever the land which is left to him. Often jhuming has to be stopped not only on the land leased to the oil company, but on all land anywhere near it, so great is the risk of fire. Further the moral effect in a (35) district of a large number of highly paid single men is often forgotten, but is nevertheless sometimes revolting; I need not describe in detail what I know. I have always contended, not without success, that licenses and leases should not be granted just because they are asked for. In future the Chief concerned might be asked to advise on the desirability of granting any prospecting license applied for, and the Deputy Commissioner, without being formally bound by the Chief's opinion, should hesitate before he overrides a recommendation to refuse such an application. Where land is taken up compensation should be paid, and here too the Chief should be consulted. All this district, outside the Reserved Forests, is treated as Unclassed State Forest, though, by some curious omission, all of it has not been so notified. What this term really means I have never been able to discover, but cases occur of compensation for land taken up being refused on the ground that it is State Forest. How a mere declaration can abolish the periodic jhuming and occupancy rights of the inhabitants of a district is difficult to grasp.

Even the few examples I have given of duties which might fall to the lot of the Chiefs would provide enough occupation to make them busier and far more useful than they are now, for it should always be insisted that what is wanted is the personal assistance of the Chief, and not that of someone sent as his deputy. Further it cannot be too clearly pointed out to them that their duties will not cease, but will only begin when they have given advice on some policy. It will be for them to assist materially in carrying out that policy, and they will be able to (36) achieve this only by touring and personal inspection; the very worst method is that of serving written notices broadcast and leaving the crop to look after itself. ↵

MONETARY COMPENSATION.

Though I am convinced for reasons I have attempted to make clear, that the jhum tax, being an alien thing, has nothing to do with ancient

Chiefly rights, and that the share which the Chiefs keep represents nothing more or less than tribute which the old mahaldars wrongly extorted by the vicarious power of their overlords and never paid in, it would in my opinion be unfair to deprive them without warning and without a chance of earning it of money which we have so long allowed them to receive. My proposal therefore is that the whole of the jhum tax save the commission of the headmen be received by Government who would collect it through the mauza headmen, and that Government pay the Chiefs a yearly income not less than that which they now receive from it, this income being paid on the perfectly distinct understanding that while it will not fluctuate with jhum tax collections, it will be diminished or even cut off altogether if the Chiefs do not perform the simple and suitable duties which I have suggested for them. Obviously they cannot expect to be paid allowances equal to the salaries of high officials in return for nothing. If they will live among their people and work they will enjoy a position of wealth and dignity. If they cannot or will not be useful it is difficult to see what other course is open to Government than that of ceasing to pay them their allowances and dispensing with their services. Should things reach this stage Government might well cease to take the Chiefs' share from the jhumiyas, since the burden was originally one unjustly laid on them. Thus the diminution or cessation of (37) the Chiefs' allowances would mean relief of taxation, and there would be no question of the jhumiya being taxed for something he did not receive.

It remains to consider the amount payable to each Chief under this scheme, *i.e.*, his present income from jhum tax. In 1925 in order to calculate the jama which should be demanded from each Chief they were asked to state the number of families of jhumiyas in their circles. The Chakma Chief gave a figure obviously short of the truth, the Bohmong a figure based on a misunderstanding, and the Mong Raja some valueless figures. The Chiefs' statements being unreliable I base my calculations on the figures arrived at and accepted by Government. As the Chiefs' share is double that of Government their incomes from it may be reckoned as twice their jama before the reduction of remissions, less the costs of collection. These last I have taken at a considerably lower figure than the obviously exaggerated one given by the Chiefs. The figures will be as follows:-

	<u>CHAKMA</u>	<u>BOHMONG</u>	<u>MONG</u>
Number of assessable Families	9162	7307	4172
Chief's share of tax	22905*	18267-8	10430
less cost of collection	1500	1500	1500
DIFFERENCE	21405	16767	8930
or in round figures ...	21400	16800	9000

* this includes the income from the Miani Valley, which is not in the Chakma Chief's circle. He has only been granted control of it, and it might be advisable to settle his claim by payment in a lump sum of Rs.15,000, the amount which was paid to the Mong Raja, reducing his yearly income accordingly.

The Chiefs declare that there are large arrears outstanding and it would not do to let these drag on for years. The simplest method would be to call for full statements from each Chief and deal with the claims in the ordinary way. Many will probably be found to be groundless and many unrealisable. Money realised could be handed to the Chief concerned. (38)

If it be thought desirable to let the Chiefs have still further emoluments I recommend that they be allowed to realise a rupee a year from all Bengali traders' boats entering their circles, establishing toll stations or collecting the money as they found most convenient. Since my proposals involve their being placed over all in their circles and not only over jhumiyas I do not see why the traders should pay nothing towards the upkeep of their status. These traders give rise to a great deal of work and make enormous profits, yet the only tax they pay (unless they build a house or shop) is Rs. 2 a year to the Bazaar Fund, and they can well afford another Re. 1/- and even then will only pay half the tax paid by the infinitely poorer jhumiya from whom they draw their wealth. This concession would certainly be greatly appreciated by the Chiefs. It would be no new tax, for it is probable that in the old days all foreigners entering the hills had to pay something to the Chief. To restore it would prove practically to the Chiefs that though they have been relieved of certain duties there is no desire to destroy their power and influence, provided neither are unjustly used. [↩](#)

DIGNITIES.

My impression is that in the course of years the Chiefs have come to feel - though the feeling may never have taken definite form - that Government regards them as faintly ludicrous figures, and even when most polite it puts a hand before its mouth to hide a smile, that they are looked upon as unnecessary, and that the Rules are vague as to their duties because they are meant to have no real duties. I believe that it is partly a reaction against this almost subconscious feeling that has led them to put forward such (39) pretentious claims, and to expend their entire energies on the acquisition of private gain. The boaster is usually he who fears he may be thought little of, and energies which find no outlet in one way will find it in another. It may be too late to remedy the situation during this generation, for we are dealing not with pliable youths but with three middle-aged men of set character - rather tragic figures for all their faults. But the attempt is worth making. I have therefore proposed that they be offered duties which will give them ample scope and which no one could carry out quite as well as a Chief can. If they undertake them they will be free from any financial anxiety. While performing the duties of Chiefs I feel most emphatically that they should be treated with the punctilious and friendly courtesy due to that office. Below are some suggestions which are intended to focus that courtesy. They are slight things in themselves, but to my mind important pieces of ritual. The rite often begets the dogma, the dogma the faith, the faith the actions. Chiefs who are treated as Chiefs are more likely to realise and act up to their position than those who are not.

(1) To mark the that, according to my proposals, the Chiefs will cease to be mere parts of the revenue system I would suggest that all questions regarding them be dealt with by the Political Department in future, instead of by the revenue Department. I would further suggest that the Deputy Commissioner be designated "Deputy Commissioner and Political Officer of the Chittagong Hill Tracts" and that he be instructed to wear political uniform at all functions at which the Chiefs wear durbar dress.

(2) Whenever a Chief makes a formal visit to Rangamati he should be received with a guard of honour of the Armed Police. The Bohmong and the Mong Raja dislike the place and rarely come. As for the Chakma Chief it would be as (40) wearisome for him as for the police if he were

received with a guard of honour every time he came across the river from his home. It would be sufficient if certain occasions were laid down on which a guard of honour would be provided. The Chiefs will not know at first what to do in the presence of such a guard; this can be easily remedied by the Deputy Commissioners giving them a little private instruction to prevent their floundering in ignorance or feeling embarrassed. When the Bohmong and Mong Raja visit Rangamati or when the Chakma Chief occupies his house in the bazaar a small guard of armed police might be offered them for their houses. Such an offer is always made as a matter of courtesy to the Maharaja of Manipur when he spends a night in Kohima.

(3) At small expense an arched gateway of teak could be constructed at the top of the pukka ghat at Rangamati, with a path at either side, but which would be opened only for the Governor, high officials and the Chiefs. The idea in my mind is that of the Marble Arch on a very small scale, that is to say some central gate which is only opened for privileged persons. Under Rule 42(9) only jhumiyas are liable to render labour to Chiefs. Why a Chakma who happens to take to plough cultivation, for instance, is relieved of this very light duty I do not know. It appears that the restriction of the Chiefs' labour rights to jhumiyas dates from the time when the word "jhumiya" was synonymous with "inhabitant of the Hill Tracts." In view of the wide jurisdiction of the Chiefs I would suggest that they be given the same labour rights as those exercised (41) by a Government servant under Rule 42A. The amount of labour used by the Chiefs is very small indeed and this alteration will make no practical difference to the individual inhabitant of the district. It will however show the Chiefs that there is an end of the tendency which has shown itself in recent years of regarding their duties as practically confined to the jhuming portion of the population. The right I suggest should, of course, be purely personal, and not shared by the Chief's relations and employees.

(4) I would suggest that Government give to each Chief a suitable State Umbrella. The Mong Raja does not appear to possess one, and those of the other two are frankly in need or renovation. I would also suggest that each Chief be given a plaque suspended from a handsome gold chain to be worn round the neck and bearing on it his coat of arms in enamel. The details can be ascertained from their notepaper, the exact wording

depending upon the orders passed with regard to their titles. The Chiefs seem to be well-supplied with tulwars, so I do not suggest that any more be given them. The gifts of Government should be held as regalia of the Chieftainship and not as personal property.

The Chiefs should be excused the formality of renewing their arms licenses and should be granted life licenses for such arms as they possess.

The Chiefs should be placed on the list of those entitled to use P.W.D. Inspection Bungalows in the Hill Tracts. At present they ask permission, which is, of course, always granted to them. (5) The uniforms of their retainers should certainly be regulated. Those of the Chakma Chief are distinguished (42) by a red and yellow puggaree, but those of the other two Chiefs are identical with those worn by untidy constables, and no villager could easily distinguish them from each. The uniforms of the retainers of all the Chiefs should be smart, distinctive, and approved by Government.

If there be no legal objection it would be a compliment to permit the Chiefs to own unlicensed motor cars for use in Chittagong and the neighbourhood. A board with a coat of arms or title (e.g. Chakma Chief) would take the place of a number plate. ↩

TITLES.

This is a thorny question, I deal with each Chief in turn.- ↩

THE BOHMONG.

Of recent years the Chakma Chief has come to be regarded as in some way the senior Chief. This is not the fact, and I can imagine no reason for this assumption that he is senior to the Bohmong, save that since 1925 he has collected jhum tax from a slightly larger number of houses, and enjoys the personal title of Raja, the significance of the Bohmong's older and more important title being overlooked because it happens to be a Burmese one. Lewin relates (Fly on the Wheel p.211) that the Bohmong is the most important Chief, and in my opinion he is undoubtedly right. My history of him has I trust made it clear that his title is a more ancient one than that of the Chakma Chief, and that he is to this day far more a Chief in the ancient sense. The seniority of the Chakma Chief seems to date only from about 1873, when Harish Chandra was granted the title of

Rai Bahadur. Though I have, to avoid the use of unfamiliar terms, spoken of him as the Bohmong throughout this report, his correct title is Boh Maung Gri ("great ruler of generals"). The title of Boh Maung, I see no reason to doubt, was originally conferred on his (43) ancestor Meng Sao by the King of Arrakan about 1620, and that of Boh Maung Gri on Hari Ngao about 1700. From him the present holder of the title is directly descended in the male line and is the twelfth Boh Maung Gri. The title is without doubt de facto an hereditary one, and I propose that it be made so de jure by its recognition as such by Government. The title is a high one and its holder should rank above non-ruling hereditary Rajas. The correct designation for his sons and the one actually in use is "Thadow", I think that this should be used officially for the sons of the present Bohmong and for surviving sons of deceased Bohmongs. The present Bohmong has taken to calling and signing himself Raja. He is thoroughly Burmese and dislikes this title, but since the Bengalis in Chittagong do not understand the significance of his proper title he feels compelled, he complains, to adopt something which they will understand. I would propose to meet this difficulty by conferring upon him a title borrowed from the Shan States, whose Chiefs seem to hold positions very analogous to his, and are also of the Tai Race, adding the title "Shawbwa"* [footnote *I find more than one spelling of this title. The Government of Burma could advise which is recognised as correct.] of Bandarban" to that which he already holds. This title seems entirely suitable and would be readily understood. In brief therefore by proposal is that the Bohmong be designated "Hereditary Boh Maung Gri and Shawbwa of Bandarban." His sons would be designated Thadow, but the Bohmong's title would not necessarily be inherited by one of them but would follow the Chieftainship. He would be recognised as senior Chief in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and elsewhere would rank above non-ruling hereditary Rajas. There would be no difficulty in the immediate future (44) in finding a suitable successor. ↩

THE CHAKMA CHIEF.

With regard to the Chakma Chief the position is that he is a man of unbounded conceit, and though he only holds the personal title of Raja, he has of his own motion attempted to make it into a hereditary one. Even when writing officially to the Commissioner he now speaks of his

eldest son as Yuvaraj heir apparent and has dubbed his other sons "Kumar." To these titles they have of course no shadow of right, though it is true, as Mr. Oldham points out in his letter No. 735 C. of the 22nd July 1895 to the Legal Remembrancer, that the present Chief and his brother had the title of Kumar by courtesy only. There is nothing to show that the present Chief was ever called Yuvaraj. It is open to Government either, to place the seal of their approval on the assumption of the Chief, or to remind him definitely that his title is a personal one. In any case I feel the situation should be regularised, either by confirming by courtesy the title which their father has conferred on his sons, or by forbidding them the use of that to which they have no right. I find nothing to warrant the confirming of a hereditary title on the present Chief. His history has shown how far inferior his position is to that of the Bohmong either from the point of view of antiquity or of real Chieftly rights. Apart from his position as Tahsildar hallowed by time though it may be, he has nothing, and the tribes regard him, some with dislike and some with indifference, as nothing more than a person who collects taxes and unpopular abwabs. Up to the death of the Mad Raja certainly some and possibly all of the so-called "CHIEFS" were not Chakmas at all. There is no evidence either that any of them were even called Raja in their lifetime. There followed an interregnum during which the (45) heads of four clans divided the power between them. Eventually a man of the Mulima clan succeeded in the whole capitation mahal, but he was never more than the intermediary who conveyed to the paramount power the tribute collected by the Dewans. This arrangement lasted till the time of Kalindi Rani, who drew from the tax a very small profit compared with that of the Dewans. She managed to usurp the Chieftainship by posing as a Hindu widow, thereby obtaining an order from the civil Court at Chittagong, who were ignorant of the true situation, authorising her to manage her husband's property. The Chieftainship should have been continued in the Mulima clan, but Government wrongly rejected the claims of Gobarchan and other members of collateral branches of the late Chief's family (Lord Ulick Browne's letter ZA of the 12th November 1869). In default of anyone else Government decided to confer the Chieftainship on Harish Chandra, a minor of the petty Wangja clan, and a son of Dharam Bux Khan's daughter. Thus a new line began of a new clan. The personal title of Raja was conferred on Harish Chandra, but

there is no evidence that any previous Chief ever held any title at all. He died leaving two minor sons, the elder of whom is the present Chief, on whom also the personal also title of Raja was conferred on his coming of age and taking over the management of his affairs. Not only does the past history show no grounds for conferring an hereditary title on a family which has only held the Chieftainship for two generations, and which has never treated the tribe as anything but a source of income, but there is little hope of any grounds for such a title appearing in the immediate future. The Chief 's eldest son is a youth who has lived too little with his tribe to know (46) or care much about them. Contrary to Chakma custom he has married a Calcutta lady, so that his children will not even be pure Chakmas. It is likely that he, and still more likely that his eldest son will never be either capable or desirous of performing any of the duties of a Chief other than that of drawing the emoluments attached to the office. I do not therefore recommend the creation of an hereditary title which he would automatically inherit. If on his father's death Government sees good to invest him with the Chieftainship, a personal title can be conferred on him then. Partially Burmese though the tribe is in origin, so imbued is the Chief with Bengali ideas and culture that no Burmese title would please him. Should Government desire to emphasise his position as Chief by a change in his style I would suggest the title "Raja Bhuvan Mohan Ray, Chief of Chakmas." For reasons given above I do not recommend the addition of the word "hereditary" before "Chief," He would rank after the Bohmong in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. [↩](#)

THE MONG RAJA.

I recommend no alteration in the title of the Mong Raja, as apart from his utter incompetence he does not even pretend to take any interest in the affairs of his circle, which he regards only as a source of income out of which he spends as much of his time as he can. Further he has no direct heir, so that it may be found advisable to abolish the office on the death of the present holder. The title "Raja" which he has assumed is no title at all, but a corruption either of an improper Maghi nickname or of the word "Rwaza", meaning "headman." I recommend that the appellation "Mong Raja" be allowed to stand in its present form.

In view of the fact that the three Hill Tracts Chiefs are descended from Chiefs who were certainly (47) semi-independent, and have always held a position distinct from that of the zemindar class of Rajas, I would propose that a new class be created for them in the in the Civil List under the heading of "Hill Chiefs" and placed next to and above that of Raja (personal). It lies with Government either to recognise the title of Boh Maung Gri as deserving separate and higher classification, or to place the holder of it at the head of the proposed class of Hill Chiefs, with a note to the effect that his title is an hereditary one. ↵

SUCCESSION AND INHERITANCE.

There seems to be no good reason for adhering to the practice obtaining in the past by which Government does not nominate a successor to a disputed Chieftainship till the death of the holder. The death of the late Bohmong gave rise to a whole crop of disputes. No successor had been nominated and the present holder was away from Banderban. A relation who did not succeed had to be put in to hold charge for a few days, and as it was a time when revenue was coming in he undoubtedly made as much hay as possible during the brief spell of sunshine. I would suggest that in future successor be nominated, subject to good behaviour, during the lifetime of a Chief. This will permit of the question being considered at leisure and will avoid an interregnum with its subsequent squabbles.

A connected question is that of the destination between the personal property of a Chief and property attached to the office. Disputes have arisen in the past and are very likely in the future. In my opinion each Chief should be asked now to declare in writing what property is attached to the office. This declaration should be irrevocable by any later Chief, i.e., no property, whether land or regalia, inherited as Chiefly property by a Chief can be sold by him or willed away from the Chieftainship. Any Chief would of course be at liberty (48) to add to the Chiefly property inherited by himself, and such addition would likewise require an irrevocable declaration. ↵

FURTHER RECOMENDATIONS.

There are certain other points which require notice, in that they directly affect both the Chiefs and the people. ↵

CONTINUITY OF ADMINISTRATION.

Nothing has struck me more forcibly in this district than the lack of continuity of administration from which it has suffered. At times officers have been posted here for long periods, but there have been interregna marked by frequent transfers. No officer left any transfer notes, without which a newcomer is in the dark as to what reforms are on hand and what work requires special attention; each new head of the district was left to work out his own salvation. Even tour diaries, which are most valuable records, were recently destroyed after two years. The result has been that no one knew what his predecessors had done or thought. At Ramgarh I find the same state of affairs. Officers who are entirely unsuited to and hate the work follow each other in quick succession. As to how they are selected I have no information, but the man I found there regards it as a penal station and fills in his time with as little trouble as possible to himself till his longed-for orders of transfer shall come. The Subdivisional Officer who joined in December 1926 is the fifth since 1922, and in writing to the Deputy Commissioner he first complains of the difficulties of touring which he foresees, and then proceeds as follows :— “It is not particularly inviting for a newcomer to be told that the station to which he has been posted is a penal station. Yet it is what my predecessor has told me. I have done nothing to merit (49) this. Actually it is found that from June 1922 to December 1926 four Subdivisional Officers have changed hands, and I am told that all had to break their heads to get away.” This quotation gives, without further comment, sufficient indication of the keenness and efficiency that he is likely to display in his work. These ever-shifting officers can at best only assist the Deputy Commissioner in routine matters. They can never gain either experience or influence in their subdivision. The hilly areas are left untoured and only the easiest journeys by road and boat are undertaken. As an example of the lack of influence of Subdivisional Officers I found that on the rare occasions when the Mong Raja visited Ramgarh he did not even think it worth his while to call on or see the Official who should be his closest adviser, and with whom he is jointly responsible for the administration of his circle.

This lack of continuity not only tends to leave the Chiefs without any embodied administrative experience from which they can seek aid, but

partly accounts for their lack of close touch with the officials of the district. It must seem rather laborious waste of time to make friends with a new man who knows nothing of local conditions and who may be gone tomorrow; it is much more tempting to trade on his inexperience. The people also suffer, and I was urged when I was in the district to ask Government to transfer Officers as infrequently as possible. This is a request I have heard voiced scores of times elsewhere. There is nothing a hillman dislikes more than "always having a new Sahib." The rogues profit, for a newcomer can sometimes be imposed upon. But the honest man may find his protector suddenly whisked away. Nothing had, I am convinced, assisted the Chiefs more in their oppression than frequent transfers. The protectors of the people have been temporary, but the Chiefs are permanent and ever ready to deal with anyone who has drawn upon them the wrath of a departed official. (50)

Therefore I am convinced that transfers be as infrequent as possible, that the Officials be carefully selected, and when the right man is in the right place that he be allowed a free hand and his decisions upheld whenever possible. The habit which is growing especially among the Chakmas of appealing against every order as a matter of course is obviously not one which can be encouraged without undermining the influence of the man on the spot. If an Officer cannot give sound decisions the Hill Tracts is no place for him. In the last paragraph of his book "The Chittagong Hill Tracts and the Dwellers Therein" Capt. Lewin exactly describes the type of man which will always be needed for this district.

A man who is kept for a long time in the Chittagong Hill Tracts ought to have no more ground for complaining that he is in a backwater than has a man in the Secretariat. There are problems here to provide ample thought for the keenest minds the Province can produce, and there seems to be no reason why this District, like similar districts elsewhere, should not be recognised as leading to higher things. ↩

BANDARBAN.

It was, I understand, the intention of Government to make the Bohmong Circle into a residential subdivision, the project being abandoned in 1923 owing to temporary financial stringency. I most strongly recommend that this project be revived without delay, and a

carefully selected Subdivisional officer posted at Bardarban itself which is an excellent site; Chandraghona, which was proposed at one time, is on the extreme edge of the circle and quite unsuitable. There is far more necessity in my opinion for a Subdivisional Officer at Bandarban than there is for one at Ramgarh. The area is too remote and difficult of access to be effectively administered from Rangamati, and the Deputy Commissioner can only tour in it at intervals. The result is that it is (51) hardly administered at all, and there were until the last year or two large communities which had never been visited by any Officer within living memory. This arrangement is not fair on the Bohmong. He is a man (and his sons are like him) who might make an excellent administrator if he had a guiding hand. Without it he cannot but go astray. All the guidance he obtains is from the Deputy Commissioner on his occasional tours, for the journey to Rangamati is a difficult one for a man of the present Chief's age, and he feels so out of place in the Bengali atmosphere of headquarters that he never comes in except on the occasion of the Governor's visit. What he requires, and what he is entitled to, is an Officer at hand to whom he can turn as a friend for advice.

A Bengali officer would not be suitable for this particular post; not only did I arrive at this conclusion from my own observations, but I was spontaneously approached and asked to request Government not to place the Burmese Maghs under a Bengali Officer, as such a man would inevitably seem to them the embodiment of a racial culture with which they had nothing in common. The post would be an ideal one for a young Civilian. He would have most interesting work, not only among the Maghs but among tribes about whom far too little is known, as well as opportunities for sport. He could be sent there after a period of training at headquarters, and could remain there for a few years till required to take over the district. If he were urged to learn Maghi, and say one other tribal language would stand him in good stead later. If the climate were found too trying in the hot weather he could be posted to Chittagong for a couple of months, where the Collector could doubtless find ample work for him, and where he could keep his knowledge of plains revenue procedure polished up. In urging this correlated posting of the Deputy Commissioner and Subdivisional Officer with a view to the latter in due course following the (52) former I am only advocating a system which has elsewhere worked well for years where, as in the

Chittagong Hill Tracts, the work of administration requires specialised knowledge.

A very strong desire was expressed to me that the Governor should visit Bandarban. A cold weather visit would be enormously appreciated. The journey is easy and the place fascinating and infinitely more typical of the Hill Tracts than Rangamati. There is a great wish that the Governor's visits should not be confined to the Chakma Chief's circle. ↵

THE MAUZA SYSTEM.

There can be no question of abandoning the mauza system. Government is committed to it, the people are getting used to it and an immense amount of time and trouble has been expended on it by local officials. One is however continually being reminded that it is a purely artificial arrangement, unsupported by any indigenous custom. The success or failure in each mauza depends on the character of the headman. Sometimes he is the natural and obvious leader of the people; sometimes he emphatically is not. In selecting a headman the Deputy Commissioner is guided by his own opinion, that of the Chief concerned, and that of the people of the mauza. He undoubtedly fails to receive from the Chiefs opinions of the standard of soundness which he has the right to expect. In some cases the right man is recommended by the Chief, while in others ulterior motives come into play. Sometimes a Chief will recommend a man in whom he sees a useful tool for extortion, at other times he will put forward the name of a relation desirous of "otium cum dignitate" whom he would otherwise have to support. I fear too that there is little doubt that Chief's recommendation is sometimes bought by the highest bidder. In other cases the recommendation appears to be entirely haphazard. To take an instance which I saw in the (53) Bohmong's circle, the Chief, having no knowledge of the respective merits of two candidates for the headmanship of a Magh mauza, sent out a Bengali peon to hold a local enquiry, in due course the peon arrived back with a blank sheet of paper decorated with thumb impressions which purported to be votes for one of the candidates - which one, only the peon knew, for there was no candidate's name on the paper; on this the Chief made his recommendation. In the election of a headmen honest well-informed recommendations by the Chiefs would be most useful,

and I think they might reasonable be reminded of this and requested to mend their ways.

The people of the mauza express their opinion at a sort of simple election. Each candidate comes in with his supporters and they are counted. This method seems eminently unsuited to the people. It is often the man who is merely most feared who gets most votes (one candidate whom I saw was supported by the large majority of voters, and secretly backed by the Chief; he was a man who had only escaped being hanged for murder by the suppression of evidence; he was not appointed). In Part XII of his report Mr. Ascoli discusses the mauza system. It has vastly improved since he saw it, but I emphatically agree with him that more use should be made of the village headmen, who are the natural, indigenous leaders of their little communities, though I do not recommend anything so cut and dried as the formal pan chayat he proposes. The opinion of the mauza with regard to the election of a new headman could however be far better ascertained by privately consulting each village headman in it (on the clear understanding that his opinion would not be divulged) than by counting the heads of a small mob. Lewin fully realised how valuable the village headmen were and proposed having all their names registered in his office (p.4 of Printed Selections). Since then they have been unduly neglected, but they do more quiet work and (54) get less for it than anyone else in the Hill Tracts. In theory under rule 42 (1) the mauza headman collects the jhum tax, receiving in return for his toil a handsome commission and the right to call on the jhumiyas for labour; in practice the headman of each little village collects the rent from his people and brings it to the mauza headman. Many, if not most of the petty cases are settled by the village headmen, and never get as far as the mauza headman. In theory, under rule 46, the village headman, as a village official, is entitled to a share in the service land in return for his services; in practice such land has only been granted to a very few of them, the mauza headman getting the lion's share. I consider that the village headman, who are the leaders of the little communities, selected by the people of those communities themselves, and are a natural institution of immemorial antiquity, should be made far more use of, not only as advisers when a new mauza headman has to be selected, but also in all matters concerning their people. The village headman, for instance, should invariably be asked for

his opinion when tribal dispute is being heard, and indeed in any case where people of his village are concerned. He will know what the feeling of the village is, and in my opinion the feeling of the village is rarely wrong, for they are judging people whom they have known from their youth up. In return for this he should get some nominee of the mauza headman should protect his full share of service land against any usurpation of this position. Such a practice would not only bring all communities into closer touch with the Deputy Commissioner and make for the smoother working of the mauza system, but it would help to protect the rights of all such minorities as those of a single Mro village in a Magh mauza, or scattered Magh villages in a Chakma mauza. (55) ↵

RECORDS AND DIARIES.

The very essence of my proposals is that by-gones should be by-gones, and that the Chiefs should be given an absolutely fair chance of justifying their position and earning their incomes by the performance of definite duties. They should be given clearly to understand that the duties are real and not nominal, and that due note will be taken of whether they perform them or not. To this end I advise that the Deputy Commissioner be instructed to prepare and forward to the Political Department through the Commissioner a careful confidential half-yearly report on each Chief, showing clearly what assistance he has been asked to give, and what he has actually given, and how he has behaved in general. Of this the Deputy Commissioner will file a copy with his own confidential papers. This will ensure the keeping of an accurate record of the doing of each Chief. The absence of such a record is at present a severe handicap to a newcomer, who is dependent on opinion and casual references to be found in files. If this deficiency in accurate and detailed record be not made good in the future it may prove unfair to the Chief, "for the evil that men do lives after them..." If my proposal regarding emoluments and the duties upon which they will depend be accepted, such a record will be essential, for without it Government would be seriously handicapped should the question ever arise of depriving a Chief of his income.

Another practice I would recommend is that an extra copy of the Deputy Commissioner's tour diary should be sent to the Governor direct, the other copy going through the usual channels. This is most

valuable in areas like the Hill Tracts where the duties of the Deputy Commissioner are largely political. The diaries keep the Governor informed of everything that is going on, and enable him to call for any further information he may require. (56) ↵

EXPULSION OF UNDESIRABLES.

In paragraph 80 of his letter 83 C of the 5th February 1919 the Commissioner in forwarding Mr. Ascoli's report agrees with Mr. Ascoli and the Superintendent that definite powers should be granted to expel undesirable persons from the Hill Tracts. No orders however appear to have been passed by Government on this proposal. In Assam the Chin Hills Regulation is in force in all hill districts. Either that regulation should be applied to this district, or the rule proposed by Mr. Ascoli should be brought into force. Not only is it needed to deal with opium smugglers and habitual criminals who find the hill people an easy prey but to enable foreigners who intrigue against the Chiefs to be dealt with. Only this year a priest from Arakan entered the district and stirred up opposition against the Bohmong and the high priest of the temple at Bandarban. He has gone now, but has left much trouble behind him. When I was in the circle feeling was running very high, and at Christmas, the Bohmong received an anonymous letter threatening his life. Had the rule proposed been in force, the Bohmong would have reported the foreigner's arrival and he could have been turned out as soon as he had shown his hand and before he could have done much have done much harm. ↵

THE CHIEFS AND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

The more branches of administration the Chiefs are in touch with, the better. If therefore it were ever decided to send the Armed Police for a week's field work in the cold weather to each circle in turn, it would be a compliment to the Chiefs to invite a son or near relation of each to attend the camp of exercise as guests of Government (I fear the present Chiefs are hardly young enough to attend themselves). Should the Armed Police ever be called out they would be dependent on local transport, in the provision of which the (57) Chiefs, as in the past, would be required to assist. Guests attending the camps of exercise would obtain useful information as to how arrangements worked in practice.

When, too, officers of the Forest, Public Works, Education and other departments visit the district it would be well if they arranged to exchange calls with any Chief at whose headquarters they might be. Such a practice would continually remind the Chiefs that they too are part of the whole machinery of Government. ↵

GENERAL SUMMARY.

Wholesale embezzlement of plough rents in the Chittagong Hill Tracts compelled the Government in 1925 to issue orders relieving the Chiefs of their duty of collecting these rents, and made it clearer than ever that the Chiefs were in danger of becoming highly-paid figure-heads who performed no useful function. I have therefore been directed to enquire into their history and status and to advise as to what part they may be given to play in the administration which shall be both suitable to their position and beneficial to their people.

The problem set me I have attempted to attack from a new standpoint, discussing first the basic nature of Chieftainship here, and then attempting to indicate to what extent it has been warped and smothered by later extraneous influences and accretions. Having thus cleared the ground I have submitted proposals which are aimed at giving the Chiefs a perfectly fair chance to perform useful work that is well within their capacities, in recognition of which they will enjoy certain emoluments and dignities.

The first part of my report is historical. It is clear that both the underlying culture of this area and the indigenous foundations of the Chieftainship are of the type commonly called Indonesian. The collection of the jhum tax, (58) despite the exclusive stress so long laid on it, has nothing to do with the primitive rights of the Chiefs, but is the direct result of demands for tribute made by an alien power. In taking a share of it Government is not receiving a portion of something to which the Chiefs have immemorial rights; it is the Chiefs who have always retained a share of a tax they collected solely on behalf of the paramount power of the time. I have given a short history of each Chief, an opinion on his personal character and a note on his presumptive successor. Analysis has shown that while the chieftainships of the Bohmong and Mong Raja still have their roots in the old clan system, that of the Chakma Chief has for long depended solely on his relation with the paramount power as

monopolist collector of the jhum tax, being not a modified clan Chieftainship as in the case of the Bohmong and Mong Raja, but something additional to the clan Chieftainships which the Dewans hold among the Chakmas.

My proposals are contained in the second part of my report. The most important is that the Chiefs should in future be relieved of the duty of collecting the jhun tax in view both of the way in which administration has been hampered by the fact that they are at present financially affected by every change, and of the very serious abuses which have arisen. The second duty of which it is proposed they should be relieved is that of trying cases as Chiefs, their powers as headmen being still retained by them. In support of this an account is given of their courts. In place of the duties from which they are freed it is proposed to give them other duties, no less extensive, and more suitable to their position and character. These are described in general terms, and detailed examples are also given. Provided they take up the responsibilities offered to them it is proposed that they should receive an income not less than their present one, and that certain dignities be accorded to them. Their titles (59) are examined with a view to regularising them, and to restoring to the Bohmong the position of seniority which he enjoyed in Capt. Lewin's time, which his ancient title demands, and from which he has apparently been allowed to slip by error. Finally certain recommendations are made on aspects of district administration which closely touch the Chiefs. ↵

13.3 Appendix

Appendix A

To show the contrast between the treatment which the Chiefs have in the past demanded from Government and that they consider suitable for those in their own power I give below a translation of a subtenant's lease from the Chakma circle. The fact that no Court would enforce its harsh terms does not affect the attitude of mind it reveals, but actually the Chief does attempt to enforce some, at any rate, of its terms in his own court. To the tenant it gives no security of tenure, and to the Chief the right to demand supplies to an indefinite amount on any occasion without payment.

To....

This etnami patta for ... of land within the undermentioned boundaries is granted to you on receipt from you of an etnami kabuliya, at an annual rent of

(1) You shall pay this fixed annual rent according to instalments in default of which you will pay 2 annas in the rupee compensation. All rents to be paid by 22nd March each year, otherwise you will not be able to object to my realising 4 annas in the rupee compensation for arrear rents, which is recoverable through the courts by attachment of your moveable property.

(2) In the occasion of a marriage, a sradh, or any other occasion, on demand from me of curds, milk, fish, and such other abwabs as goats, fowls, khay, kharcha, rations, paltar and begar, you will supply the same otherwise I shall realise their value from you as part of the rent. No objection will be allowed.

(3) You may not sell the land without permission.

(4) If land becomes salt, dried up or eroded by the river, or if you are ousted from it, or if hashila land becomes khilla you will not receive any remission of rent.

(5) This gives you no title to any river, stream, dheba or mine which may be found on the land.

(6) You may not dig a tank in the land without my permission, and if do so, you will fill it up again at your own expense.

(7) If within the terms of this settlement any unreclaimed land is brought under cultivation you will get remission of rent for it for one year, after which the ordinary rent will be paid.

(8) When required to do so by the Raja or his representative (2) you shall immediately without any objection surrender the land to him on receipt of compensation by him, and shall receive proportionate remission of rent.

(9) You may not object to enhancement of rent on expiry of the present settlement.

(10) This settlement is in force from ... to ... after which you shall obtain resettlement on a rent fixed by the Raja.

(11) On breach of any of these conditions your resettlement will be cancelled. ↩

Appendix. [Handwritten Manuscript]

Suggested Agricultural Experiments.

The problem of jhum land in the C.H.T. is the largely problem of aggeratum, which invariably takes possession of the soil of an abandoned jhum. It is not always realised that this weed is the new-comer + that it has as changed the face of the land that the forefathers of the present jhumias would hardly recognise their old home [some words illegible]. It is popularly supposed that high winds brought the seed from Assam about 1897. Very little is known of its effect on the soil. There is the belief that it abandons after thirty years any place on which it has established itself. Bamboos find it hard to content with, but my own observation entirely confirmed the opinion of Forest experts that malatta quickly gets the better of it. It is vaguely said that aggeratum does not give a bad jhum – certainly the Garos do not object greatly to it - but the exact knowledge which is so desirable is not yet available, + I am convinced that the mould formed by the fallen leaves of (malatta) is a far better fertiliser. This true has the further advantage of not killing out bamboos. It is plentiful in this district + grows very quickly. With this too, scientific experiments should be made, for I feel it, may be the key to jhum regeneration here. The present methods of jhuming in this district should also be investigated. They are doubtless very old, but it does not mean that they are ideal. Even on the lower ranges of the Naga Hills, where the soil + formation is exactly similar to that of the C.H.T. a non-shifting + far heavier population has been many generations entirely supported by jhuming. The inference is that the methods of the Naga, where they differ from those of the C.H.T. tribes, are better. The Naga uses all available land so that he can leave it under jungle for as long a period as possible a rest of seven to ten years being aimed at; he combines with his fellow villagers to jhum in as big a block as possible so that it can be encircled. (2) one ring fence, + can be more effectively protected from animals + birds than can scattered plots; he sows his rice + his cotton in different fields; and, most important of all, he sows each block for two consecutive years, also cutting a new block each year, so that each year he gets a crop both from a new + from an old block, that from the latter often being the better of the two. No tribesman of the C.H.T. on the other hand jhums the land near his village at far too

frequent intervals, while he tends to neglect the more distant land; he often jhums in isolated patches without any thought of cooperation; he sows rice, cotton + vegetables simultaneously in the same drills, being content with a light crop of each as it ripens; he only uses a piece of land once before temporarily abandoning it. Scientific experiments should be made to test the relative efficacy of these two methods. If the local jhumiya could be taught to get two good crops in consecutive years from the same land it would, of course, nearly double the time which he could afford to let land be under jungle, + the longer land has [been] under jungle the better crop it gives when cut. It may be objected that all instruction is bound to fail since, unlike the Nagas, the local tribesmen do not own jhum land as private property, so that no one is going to take the trouble to conserve a piece of land which someone else may use. This argument is not altogether a valid one, for I find that among the tribes here a man who has jhumed a certain piece of land has the first option of jhuming the same piece again, + can claim a fine from anyone who tries to forestall him. In order to investigate anew the question (vide p.16 of Ascoli's report) I have touched on I would suggest that experiments on the following lines be carried out at the Rangamati Experimental Farm:-

A number of equal plots of (3) convenient area should be marked out on the ridge near the farm.

First year

Plot 1+2 to be sown with rice only

Plot 3+4 to be sown with cotton only

Plot 5 to be sown with rice + cotton mixed

Next year

Plot 1+3 sown with rice

Plot 2+4 sown with cotton

Plot 5 sown with mixed crop

Five more plots (6 - 10) cut + sown as plots 1-5 were the first year.

3rd year abandon plots 1-5, + cut now plots 11-15.

In all cases the yield to seed sown should be carefully noted. The experiments should be repeated year by year for a time to lessen the chance of their value being vitiated by exceptional seasons. A plot used for the second time should be wedged + sown as early as possible before a new plot is sown with the corresponding crop is on a new plot. All

plots under cultivation should be weeded six times a year. The rate of growth of aggeratum should be noted, + since the history of each plot will be known information as to the value or otherwise of aggeratum of all ages as a jhum-coverer will automatically be collected. Similarly an area should be sown with malatta, + divided into plots. First its rate of growth + effect on other vegetation can be noted, + then its value as jhum-coverer as compared with that of aggeratum. There being no time like the present I would suggest that the experiments at the farm be begun this year, the chiefs being asked to begin their's next year. It is important that the work should be done, under close supervision, by local jhumias called in for the purpose, a supply of men being arranged for each day when land plots are being cut, burnt, sown + cropped. If Santal labour be used the experiments, however successful, will be scorned by the local jhumias, as (4) having been carried out by persons employing different methods from his own; he will be only too eager to find objections to anything intended to make him change his ways; to live as long as possible in peace on poor but easily grown crops, + borrowed money in his ideal. ↵

SPECIFIC DUTIES FOR CHIEF

The duties I have touched on above are inherent in any time chieftainship. There are besides certain particular problems in this district indicating lines of usefulness to which the attention of the three chiefs might be definitely drawn. Of these I wish to give some examples. The [illegible...] chief is concerned with agriculture. It is the sole means of livelihood of the vast majority of the inhabitants + the source from which the Chiefs have always drawn their very considerable emoluments. It is only right therefore that they, if they want to justify their claim to be the leaders of the people, should take far more active interest in it than they have hitherto done. An Experimental Farm has been founded at Rangamati at their request, but having once made the request + seen it granted their interests seem to have ceased. The Chakma Chief has never visited it, though it is due to his house, + Santals have to be hired to work it because no Chakma will condescend to undertake such menial work. Nevertheless agriculture here is in a parlous state. There is practically no more available plough land, + the greater part of the people must always, as now, live by jhuming. Even

plough cultivators jhum a little in addition if they can find any suitable land near. Important though jhuming is it never seems to have been considered scientifically. Always I seem to find an implication that it is a make-shift sort of mode of cultivation, unworthy of serious attention. Lewin even hoped gradually to stop it. This is one of the few mistakes to be found in the records he has left us, + one must blame the time at which he lived; Englishmen do not jhum, + in the (5) sixties + seventies we were very busy "raising savages" to our standard by the distribution of flannel waistcoats + chemises + by trying in general to destroy their culture + substitute a caricature of our own. Jhuming is very far from being a makeshift business. In certain places, of which the hills of this district are one, it is the only possible method of cultivation for terraced irrigation, its only rival, requires certain conditions of soil + water supply which are not found here. It is also an inherently good method; for some years I have lived among a thick + well-to-do population supported entirely by jhuming, where the villages are large + permanent, + where the same hill sides have been cultivated for an unknown number of generations without any sign of deterioration. In the C.H.T. the slopes are being jhumed out. The same land is being jhumed too often, + not enough trees are left. Then the weed aggeratum appeared here some thirty years ago + has spread with astonishing speed. The land here is not as it was in the old days, + it may be that new methods are needed to meet a new situation. I have in one appendix indicated what seem to me suitable lines of experiment. The experiments are perfectly simply, + I would suggest that each chief be asked to have identical ones carried out for some years under his own personal supervision near his own house. The land he can get for nothing + the labour will only cost him a very small sum which he can well afford for the good of his people. To make each a small grant would be an insult to men of their means, + would only introduce that element of the cost ledger which has detracted so much from the pleasure of our relations with them in the past. If the chiefs take up the work with vigour we should have a little experimental centre in each circle which it would be one of the (6) duties of the District Agricultural Officer to inspect. The chiefs would have personal experience to assist them in pressing upon the people the adoption of any innovation of proved utility. Another problem is that of jungle produce. Jhuming after a time kills out

bamboos, + bamboos are valuable. On the other hand a man cannot live solely on bamboo cutting instead of jhuming, or he may find himself in sore straits when the bamboos seeds + die. Bamboos too are only commercially valuable when they can be easily extracted. It might be possible to reserve for bamboos a strip along certain streams. Again the Bengali competes with the jhumiya by cutting on the strength of a pass fr. the F.D. [Forest Department] large quantities [of] bamboos on land required for cultivation. Might he not be made to cut in blocks shown him by the mauza Hdman? The Chiefs might well find out exactly what is happening in each circle + advise. They would later assist in enforcing any measures decided upon. Then there are additional sources of income for the agriculturist to be looked for + experimented with. Lac, which is such a source of wealth to the Assam jhumiya, ought to do very well here. I know of no source of seed lac near enough for it to be brought direct to Rangamati, but some could be set temporarily near Chittagong + brought up from there at the next hatching. Once live lac was established on the R[angamati] farm the local source would be assured. Some Mikirs could be obtained to demonstrate. Lac cultivation, though most lucrative eventually, is tedious in its early stages, + it would be uphill word to get the local jhumiyas to take it up. Here again it lies in the power of the Chiefs to do most valuable work both by exhortation + by demonstration on their own experimental stations.

Another plant which might be tried is hill pan. It is grown on land too steep + steady for jhuming, + is (7) of considerably commercial value. I know Naga villages which make at least half their income out of it. This again would require popularising. The spread of plough cultivation led to a great increase in the number of cows + buffalos kept. These are untended + do a great deal of damage to crops on the jhums which the jhumiya cannot fence his fields, for aggeratum has established such an immense monopoly that there are no stakes at hand wherewith the make fences such as the Nagas put up. Further buffalos not only damage crops, but in time make jungle useless for jhuming. There are places in Manipur State where jhuming has become impossible because of them. This cattle problem is really serious, + here too the Chiefs could advise + assist.

Excise is a matter which demands their attention. Opium smuggling for instance is rife in the Bohmong's circle, + with the aid of the knowledge at his disposal + the employment of something in the nature of the Chin Hills Regulation of [illegible] much could be done to check it.

Game preservation is another subject which should appeal to them. Poaching has been universal for so long that very little is left outside the reserved forests, but there is still a small stock of bison, sambhur, seraw + barking deer, which would soon increase if game laws were strictly enforced. Frankly I consider the number of guns in the district altogether excessive, + the allowance of powder to each is exactly four times that which I have been accustomed to see permitted. Last, but not least, gunshot murders are unpleasantly frequent. The chiefs could assist in the enforcement of the game laws + could advise whether guns + the powder allowed should not be reduced + whether all guns should not be called in when the crops are off the fields, as was the custom (8) in the N.C. Hills, [North Cachar] where the shooting was exceptionally good.

Compulsory labour in the district also requires further regulation + organization, + here too the chiefs could help first with their advice + later with their influence and knowledge of what goes on in their circles. I have ventured to make, in an appendix, certain concrete suggestions based on experience. Communication might also engage the attention of the Chiefs. By this I do not mean simple task of asking for more roads to be made by the P.W.D. [Public Work Department] at Govt. expense. By far the greater part of traffic of this district is + must be on village paths. These could be greatly improved. At present anyone who finds it convenient to do so blocks a path, apparently without any protest from those who use it. This might be gradually stopped. Further there are many streams which are unfordable after heavy rain. This entirely isolates considerable areas at times. Nowhere have I seen the cane suspension bridges stretched between two trees with which I am so familiar, + value of wh. I have found so often proved. The reason is that there is no cane. It has been exterminated except in the reserved forests by the hillmen, who, with their usual short-sighted desire for nothing beyond the convenience of the moment, have gathered the green shoots to eat as vegetables instead of letting the plant grow seed. To meet a shortage of the cane required for bridges in one area of the N.H. [Naga Hills] established small cane reserves under the care of hdmn. The

same might be done here, seed being obtained fr. the F.D. [Forest Department]. Once the cane is in ground the villagers could be put to make bridges with their own labour, for their own use. For long stretches I have found cable such as is used on Telfer lines a cheap + effective substitute for cane. This cable, when once it can no longer carry the heavy loads for wh. it was intended is worthless for most commercial purposes + can be bought very cheaply. A bridge of this type could perhaps be put across the Mahalfrun stream which at present breaches the important Mahalchari Rd. at a tenth of the estimated cost of the proposed P.W.D. bridge. (For continuation see on (9) ↩

COMPULSORY LABOUR.

In areas where it is employed I have always found it considered one of the first duties of a district official to watch + regulate compulsory labour. The nature of this labour is often misunderstood. It is a form of taxation, + has nothing whatever to do with slavery. Payment of dues in labour is no more an anachronism than payment of dues in money. In districts where it is in force the prompt + punctual giving of labour due should be as strictly enforced as the payment of taxes, + failure should be punished without fail. Where this is done labour is cheerfully + readily given, + punishment, in my opinion, is very, very rarely necessary. While provision of labour to Government servants should be insisted upon, the obtaining of coolies by unauthorised private persons should be heavily punished; they cannot claim it as a form of taxation + are in no way entitled to it. Such people as oil prospectors are, in my experience, apt to attempt to bribe the headmen to compel coolies to work for them, + Missionaries too are not infrequent offenders. Secondly a standard weight of loads for one coolie, + for two coolies carrying with a pole should be fixed + adhered to; a coolie must be bound to carry up to that weight, + no load exceeding that weight should ever be permitted. This has not yet be done here, though the loads carried are usually almost ridiculously light. Thirdly a standard daily rate should be fixed, with special rates for distances of say, over twelve miles or for particularly difficult marches. Six annas is the usual rate here, but I have noticed a certain vagueness, + one wonders if wandering process [illegible] et hoc genus omne always pay as much. Fourthly requisition on (10) Headmen for coolies should be on a printed form with a

counterfoil. Books of these forms should be used by authorised persons. This enables the inspecting officer to see who is using labour + for what purpose. Fifthly coolies called but not employed should be paid half the standard wage. Anything like the practice of calling for fifteen coolies when only ten are wanted is to be deprecated. It indicates that the person calling for them anticipated that the full number will not be supplied, + when this anticipation is known the full is naturally often not forthcoming. Sixthly the evasion + attempted evasion of labour by the physically fit which goes on here is bad; not only does it make touring tedious, but it means that the old + poor often carry instead of the young + well-to-do. Bolting into the jungle at the sight on anyone coming for coolies is not unknown here. This should be visited with punishment of the village as a whole, + for this + other offences involving whole village the D.C. C.H.T. might well be definitely invested with powers of punishment similar to those held by the D.C. Naga Hills. Chiefs + Headmen are permitted under the Rules to employ compulsory labour. This is as it should be. The claim of the chiefs to free forced labour has rightly been disallowed; it was not, I think, based on valid primitive custom, for in primitive communities a chief is bound by reciprocal ties to his men, + is almost invariably expected to give free entertainment in return for free labour. (Add on Rajparia clan)

Compulsory labour is very light indeed in this district, + I doubt if the average man does one day's work a year for a Govt. official; indeed I have even heard people grumble at having to give this very small amount. But if the practice was abolished the administration would come to a standstill; no official, in this country where no wheeled traffic exists, could move his baggage across country on tour, + the Armed Police (11) if they were ever called out, would find themselves immobilised through lack of transport. To discuss this subject may seem outside the scope of my enquiry, but my excuse is that it is a matter with which it has long been my duty to deal elsewhere, + which is of great importance to the administration of this district, an administration with which I hope the chiefs will be closely associated throughout. Further it is a burden, though an exceedingly light one, + the more vigorous the strictness with which it is regulated + the more inevitable the punishment of evasion, the more evenly + fairly will it be distributed.

Seventhly certain classes of persons, including the old + infirm, but not including the lusty relations of headmen, should be definitely exempted by written order. It is ridiculous that a headman, as one did during my visit, should attempt to fine a blind old man for sending his son instead of coming himself when called upon for coolie work. One would have like to have inspected some of the people in the village who were not called on that day. (12) ↵

SPECIFIC DUTIES OF CHIEFS (CONT.)

Nothing has given me more trouble at various times in the past than the question of granting prospecting licenses in areas occupied by a primitive people. Arguments about opening up the resources of the Empire are all very well, but what really only too often happens is that land which is used to grow food for poor jhumiyas is made to produce dividends for rich shareholders instead, and the jhumiyas has to overwork more than ever the land left to him. It is not only on the actual area occupied by the oil wells that he cannot jhum; so great is the risk of fire that complaints backed by powerful interests are liable to be made if he jhums anywhere near. Further the moral effect on a district of a large number of highly paid single men with money to burn can only be described as revolting; I need not describe in detail what I know. In future I think the Chiefs concerned should be asked to advise on the desirability of granting any application made for a prospecting license, + that the D.C., without being formally bound by the chief's opinion, should hesitate long before he overrides a recommendation to refuse such an application. (13) ↵

CHAKMA CHIEF'S HISTORY

I have spared no pains to unravel the history of the Chakma Chiefs by most carefully enquiry. Kalindi Rani, as the inscription she set up in Maharani temple shows, knew of no Chief earlier than Shermust Khan. Recently however outside aid has been called in to invent a line stretching back to the first Aryan invasion of India, + Burmese histories – records no less fantastic than Burmese art – have been rifled for sentences which might be hoistered into references to the Chakmas. I was told that the only record of Chakma History existed in two “ancient manuscripts” , of which I was given “two copies”. They are written in

modern Bengali! [These copies are neither in the collections in the SOAS nor in the PRM Archives.] Though these two records are not only obvious forgeries, but are often entirely inconsistent the one with the other. A few interesting hints are to be found in them. It is definitely stated for instance that from the earliest times the Chakmas were a mixed race, who admitted men of any race into their tribe, + in turn married women of any race. This mixed population must gradually have become stabilised + fairly homogenous by intermarriage within itself. Such Chiefs as they had were never clan chiefs, but always were tax-collectors. The indigenous rulers of the tribe were the Dewans (the real clan chiefs), + these were often opposed to the tax mahal chief. This clearly distinguishes the Chakma chieftainship from that of the Bohmong + Mong Raja whose positions are firmly based on the clan system. So divorced has the Chakma Chief always been from his tribe that, except possibly for one short period, I can find no evidence that any Chakma Chief ever lived in the Hill (14) Tracts till Harish Chandra [was] even ordered to do so.

The early history of Chakma Chiefs as recorded consists mostly of a list of names with a few miracles interspersed. It is significant that the first "Chief" of whom there seems to be any authentic record is a Bengali - known as Bengali Sirdar. He married a Chakma woman, who in present day history has been given as a father a Raja who was found throughout of the jungle by a white elephant. Evidently the Chakmas were at this time in the unpleasant position of buffer tribe between the Maghs + Moghuls. After the death of Bengali Sirdar the Maghs overran the Chakma territory + the Chakmas retreated into Burma. After staying there for about two generations they emerged again. A man called Bura Barua who was very likely a plain Magh who obtained the mahal fr. the Moguls married a Chakma woman, who is now considered to have been the daughter of a Chief. Bura Barua's son was Satua Barua, + was known as the "Pagla Raja". He tried to set up as a real Chief + was probably oppressive. He + all his relations were assassinated + his remains are supposed to have been thrown into the sea at Pagla mora, a place on the coast S. of Cox's Bazaar. This left the Chakmas without a Chief, + the old indigenous clan system, which must always have been dominant, became prominent. The tribe was controlled by the heads of the four most powerful clans - the Mulima, the Dhamai (or Dhabin), the Buga +

the Thungja. It is most important to note that this arrangement, continued right down to the time of Kalindi Rani, + it was she who deliberately broke the power of the four big Dewans. There were people known as chiefs, but they were never more than tax farmers +, stood right outside the clan system. It was the Dewans who collected the cotton tribute + made most profit out of it, + handed on a share to the Chief, who in turn kept a portion + paid the rest first to the Moguls, + later to the British. (15) ⇐

EDUCATION

None of the Chiefs at present concerns himself with the education [of his people?]. The Chakma Chief used to be a member of the committee of Rangamati High School, but on being relieved of the duty of collection plough rents he resigned out of annoyance. Yet once they have been brought to realise their own position + the real needs of their people there is no reason why they should not give useful advice.

It is rather pathetic to remember that Macaulay supported the arguments in his Minute by pointing to the civilizing effect which the spreading of Western European culture had had on Tartar Russia. Yet even now education is only too rarely a “drawing-out” of what is in the people who are being target, + often means nothing but the thrusting down the throats of one race the indigestible mental food of another. To repeat the blunt truth + to say that the only conceivable legitimate object of education is to make those taught more fitted for their environment is to risk being accused of uttering a platitude which tactlessly omits all mention of matriculation examinations, + University degrees.

What the Hill Tracts require is far more far better primary education + the entire reform or abolition of Rangamati High School, the only High School in the district. Mr. De in his [space in text] remarked how entirely unsuitable to hill boys was the education there, I heartily agree with him, as does the present Inspector of Schools, with whom I discussed the matter. The staff of the School is almost entirely Bengali, + the teaching wholly so. The boys have everything done for them, + refuse even to keep their own compound + quarters tidy. The more respectable the boy the thicker the cotton wool in which he is wrapped. For instance the sons of the Chakma Chief, the Civil Surgeon + the Headmaster are excused all games rougher than Badminton. The technical class is a farce. The

strapping youth (16) who attend it are not expected to lift any plank which can be regarded as heavy, + even asked a servant might be employed to sharpen their tools for them. The magnum opus which a student submits as proof of his skill at the end of three years desultory training is usually either a badly made ruler or an inkstand. Far more importance is attached to the English class, where Rupert Brooke's poems were being studied about the time I left Rangamati. Almost as much money is spend on this High School as on all the L.P. [Lower Primary] Schools in the district put together. Yet the first does not supply what the hillman needs while the other class of schools does. I would suggest that if the High School be not abolished it be entirely altered in character + made more like those Mission Schools where boys are taught to use their hands. Most of the construction + repairs could be done by them; the wood work is very simple + the bamboo walls are only what the boys have to help their fathers to make for their own houses in the holidays. They should be taught carpentry by a practical carpenter + learn to turn out useful things. All weeding + clearing round the school should of course be done by them. Further they should do what small amount of jungle clearing, weeding + reaping is required on the farm learning at the time the why and wherefore of the experiments being carried out. This linking up of literacy with agricultural education is important. If any boy considers this course of instruction too strenuous he always has the alternative of leaving the school.

It will be argued that this scheme would hamper preparation for Calcutta University matriculation. I would remedy that by ceasing to make it the goal. Hill Boys cannot compete with Bengalis in the type of learning which Calcutta University demands + they + their parents have wasted much time + money in attempting to do so. Not only do they obtain no employment outside the district, but they obtain nothing approaching their share in it - simple because in (17) filling posts the efficiency of candidates is judged by the Calcutta Univ. Exam. they have passed. Could not Government waive this here as has been done in backward tracts elsewhere. In the N.H. we found that a dispensary increased enormously in usefulness + popularity if the compounder were a Naga. But it was realised that Nagas could not compete with plainsmen for the posts + further that if candidates went down to the plains for the ordinary compounder's course they tended to come back

denationalised + spoilt. So Govt. passed special orders + Nagas who have learnt to read + write at L.P. Schools are put through a special course of instruction by the C.S. [Civil Surgeon], + on being certified as fit by him are appointed compounders. Similarly Naga clerks are selected on general qualifications, of where foreign culture is not one. Naga carpenters + masons, while still remaining Nagas, are steadily ousting foreigners. Some system of preferential treatment of hillmen educated under a system devised to meet their special characteristics + needs ought to be possible here. For instance the F.D. employs a large number of men. Could not hillmen be given a hillman's training for employment in the district? By this similar methods far more posts could be allotted.

If govt. could banish fr. the mind educational system of the plains of Bengal, where conditions are entirely diff., + sanction a special scheme suitable to this district the High School could cease to be an alien institution + a gate leading to nowhere, + could become a place for training hillmen to be useful to their own people. ↩

[Handwritten Manuscript attached to the London Manuscript Pt II]

Appendix

To show the contrast between the treatment which the Chiefs have in the past demanded from Government and that they consider suitable for those in their own power I give below a translation of a subtenant's lease from the Chakma circle. The fact that no Court would enforce its harsh terms does not affect the attitude of mind it reveals, but actually the Chief does attempt to enforce some, at any rate, of its terms in his own court. To the tenant it gives no security of tenure, and to the Chief the right to demand supplies to an indefinite amount on any occasion without payment.

To....

This etnami patta for ... of land within the undermentioned boundaries is granted to you on receipt from you of an etnami kabuliyat, at an annual rent of

(1) You shall pay this fixed annual rent according to instalments in default of which you will pay 2 annas in the rupee compensation. All rents to be paid by 22nd March each year, otherwise you will not be able to object to my realising 4 annas in the rupee compensation for arrear rents, which is recoverable through the courts by attachment of your moveable property and that of your successors. No objection will be allowed.

(2) On the occasion of a marriage, sradh, or any other occasion, on demand from me of curds, milk, fish, and such other abwabs as goats, fowls, khay, kharcha, rations, paltar and begar, you will supply the same otherwise I shall realise their value from you as part of the rent. No objection will be allowed.

(3) You may not sell the land without permission.

(4) If land becomes salt, dried up or eroded by the river, or if you

are ousted from it, or if hashila land becomes khilla you will not receive any remission of rent.

(5) This gives you no title to any river, stream, dheba or mine which may be found on the land.

(6) You may not dig a tank in the land without my permission, and if do so, you will fill it up again at your own expense.

(7) If within the terms of this settlement any unreclaimed land is brought under cultivation you will get remission of rent for it for one year, after which the ordinary rent will be paid.

(8) When required to do so by the Raja or his representative (2) you shall immediately without any objection surrender the land to him on receipt of compensation by him, and shall receive proportionate remission of rent.

(9) You may not object to enhancement of rent on expiry of the present settlement.

(10) This settlement is in force from ... to ... after which you shall obtain resettlement on a rent fixed by the Raja.

(11) On breach of any of these conditions your resettlement will be cancelled. ↩

Appendix B.

Suggested Agricultural Experiments.

The problem of the poverty of the jhum land in the Chittagong Hill Tracts is largely the problem of the weed commonly known as aggeratum, which rapidly takes possession of all abandoned soil. It is sometimes forgotten that since this weed is a newcomer it involves a new problem. It has so covered the face of the land in this area that were the forefathers of the present jhumiyas to revisit their old home they would hardly recognise it. It is popularly supposed that high winds brought the seed from Assam about 1897. Very little is as yet known of its effect on the soil though there is the belief which has yet to be verified by experiment that after 30 years it abandons any place where it has established itself. Bamboos find it hard to content with, but my own observations entirely confirm the opinion of Forest experts that malatta (macaranga denticulata) quickly gets the better of it. The latter is a quick-growing tree with heart-shaped leaves which is very plentiful in the Hill Tracts. It is vaguely asserted that aggeratum for noy give a bad jhum. The Garos are said not to object greatly to it and I have found the same feelings among Nagas. But the exact knowledge which is so desirable is not yet available. Personally I am sure that the fallen leaves of malatta give a far better mould than do those of aggeratum, and the former has the additional advantage of not killing out bamboos. This tree, I feel, may be the key to the problem of jhum regeneration, and I strongly urge

that scientific experiments should be made with it. Mr. Ascoli in paragraph 17 of his report discussed the relative merits of aggeratum and malatta and urges that scientific experiments be (2) carried out. He says indeed that Mr. Harris is instituting such experiments, but there is no knowledge of them in this district, and if they were ever instituted they apparently joined the thong of useful reforms which had passed before into oblivion.

The present methods of jhuming in this district also require investigation; they are doubtless very ancient, but this does not mean that they are ideal, especially in view of the altered conditions brought about by the comparatively recent introduction and spread of the weed aggeratum. Even on the lower range of the Naga Hills, where the soil is exactly similar to that of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, a non-shifting and far heavier population has been for many generations entirely supported by jhuming, with a sufficient surplus of crops to ensure considerable comfort. The interference is that jhuming methods of the Nagas, where they differ from those of the tribes of this district, are the better. The Naga uses all available land in order that, having jhumed a block he may be able to leave it under jungle for as long as possible, a rest of from seven to ten or twelve years being aimed at; he combines with his fellow villagers to jhum in as big a block as possible so that it can be encircled by one ring fence and can be more effectively protected from birds and animals than on scattered plots; he sows his rice and his cotton in different fields; and, most important of all, he sows each block for two (and occasionally for three) consecutive years, at the same time cutting a new block each year, so that each year he gets a crop from a new and from an old block, that from the latter often being the better of the two. The tribesmen of the Chittagong Hill Tracts on the other hand, merely to save themselves (3) trouble, jhum the land near their village far too often, and tend to neglect the more distant land; the villager often jhums in isolated patches without any thought of co-operation; he sows rice, cotton and vegetables simultaneously in the same drills, being content with a light crop of each as it ripens; he only uses a piece of land once before temporarily abandoning it, thus giving a five-year rest to a plot after one crop where a Naga would give a ten year rest after two. Scientific experiments should be made to test the relative value of these two methods of jhuming. It may be objected that all instruction is bound

to fail because the local jhumiya, unlike the Naga, does not own his jhum land as private property, so that no one is going to take the trouble to conserve a piece of land without someone else is going to use. This argument is not altogether a valid one for I find that among the tribes here it is clearly understood that a man who has jhumed a certain piece of land has the first option of jhuming the same piece again, and can claim a fine from anyone who tries to forestall him.

In order to investigate the points I have touched on, I would suggest that experiments on the following lines be carried out at the Rangamati Experimental Farm. A number of equal and similar plots of convenient size should be marked out on the little ridges near the farm and jhumed and sown as follows:-

First Year

Plots 1 and 2	with rice only
Plot 3 and 4	with cotton only
Plot 5	with rice and cotton mixed

Second Year

Plot 1 and 3	with rice only
Plot 2 and 4	with cotton only
Plot 5	with rice and cotton mixed

In the second year also five more plots, 6-10 should be cut and (4) sown as plots 1-5 were sown the first year.

Third year

Abandon Plots 1-5 and cut new plots 11-15. The same experiments as were carried on the in the second year can now be carried on plots 6-10 and 11-15.

In all cases the proportion of yield to the seed sown should be noted and the experiments should be repeated year by year for a considerable time, to lessen the chance of their value being vitiated by exceptional seasons. The plots which are being used for the second time in succession should be weeded and sown as early as possible, before the corresponding crops are sown on the new plots. All plots under cultivation should be weeded four to six times between sowing and harvest. The rate of growth of aggratum should be noted, and since the

history of each plot will be known, information as to the value or otherwise of aggeratum of all ages as a jhum-coverer will be automatically collected. Similarly an area should be divided into plots and sown with malatta. First its rate of growth and effect on other vegetation should be noted, and then its value as a jhum-coverer as compared with aggeratum.

There being no time like the present I would suggest that the experiments at the farm be begun this year. It is important that the work should be done under close supervision by schoolboys or by local jhumiyas called in for the purpose on days when labour is required. If Santal labour be used the experiment, however successful, will be scorned by the local jhumiyas as having been carried out by foreigners employing different methods from his own; he will be only too eager to find objections to anything intended to make him change his ways; his ideal is to live as long as possible on poor but easily grown crops and borrowed money. In this attitude the Chakma Chief (5) unfortunately has hitherto strongly supported his people. In acknowledging the receipt of a copy of the note of the Conservator of Forests in which the absolute necessity for a reform in the jhuming system was clearly shown, he wrote on September 11th last as follows:-

“I do not find adequate words to express what will be the disastrous result if jhuming be regulated or prohibited. It will completely ruin the Chiefs, will make the headmen system unworkable, and will drive thousands of people out of the district.”

Even before I left Rangamati alarmist questions asked me in the Chakma Circle showed beyond doubt that opposition to any sort of reform is already being organised. ↵

Appendix C.

COMPULSORY LABOUR.

In areas where it is employed one of the first duties a District Official is to watch and regulate compulsory labour. The nature of this labour is often misrepresented. It is a form of taxation, and has nothing whatever to do with anything in the nature of slavery. Payment in labour is no more an anachronism than payment of dues in money. The prompt and

punctual giving of labour should therefore be as strictly enforced as the payment of taxes, and failure should be duly punished. Where this is done labour is readily and cheerfully given, and punishment, in my experience, is very, very rarely necessary. While the provision of labour for those entitled to use it should be strictly insisted on, the obtaining of coolies under compulsion by unauthorised persons should be heavily punished. Such people as oil prospectors are, I have found, apt to attempt bribe headmen to compel coolies to work for them, and missionaries who want transport are not infrequently offenders.

Secondly, a standard weight for one coolie's load and for two coolies carrying with a pole, should be fixed and strictly adhered to. A coolie should understand that he is bound to carry up to that weight, but no load exceeding it should under any circumstances be permitted. This has not yet been done here, though the loads carried and are usually ridiculously light.

Thirdly, a standard daily wage should be fixed, with special rates for distances of, say, over 12 miles or for particularly difficult marches. Six annas is the usual rate here, but I have noticed a certain vagueness, and one wonders if wandering process-servers *et hoc genus* always pay as much.

Fourthly, requisitions on headmen for coolies should be on a printed form with counterfoils, books of such forms being issued only to authorised persons of whom a list should be kept. This enables an inspecting officer to see who is using labour (2) and for what purpose.

Fifthly, coolies when called for any day but not employed should be paid half the standard wage. Anything like calling for 15 coolies when only 10 are required is to be deprecated. It indicates that the person calling for them anticipates that the full quota is unlikely to turn up, and if this anticipation be known it will assuredly be fulfilled.

Sixthly, coolies who are prevented from getting back to their homes for the night should be paid an additional half-day's wage.

Seventhly, the evasion and attempted evasion of labour by the physically fit which goes on is bad; not only does it make touring tedious, but it means that the old and poor often carry the loads of Government officials instead of the young and well-to-do. Bolting into the jungle at the sight of anyone coming for coolies is far from unknown here. This should be visited with punishment of the village as a whole,

and for this and other offences involving whole communities, the Deputy Commissioner, Chittagong Hill Tracts might well be vested with powers of punishment similar to those held by the Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills.

Eighthly, certain classes of persons, including the old and infirm, but not including the lusty relations of headmen, should be definitely exempted by written order. It is ridiculous that a headman, as one did during my visit, should attempt to fine a blind old man for sending his son instead of coming himself when called upon for coolie work. One would have liked to have inspected some of the people on the village who were not called upon that day.

Under Rule 42 (9) Chiefs and headmen are permitted to employ compulsory labour on payment; this is as it should be. The claim of the Chiefs to unpaid forced labour has been rightly disallowed; indeed I am doubtful whether the rights (3) of begar which were commuted into money payment to headmen should ever have been recognised by Government. Had the Chiefs ever had the right which they claimed to an indefinite amount of free labour, there would have been no object in the creation of the Rajparia clan by a former Chakma Chief. This clan was artificially made up of persons taken from all clans with the object of forming not only a frontier guard but a labour force. It was not really unpaid for its duties, payment taking the form of remission of taxation. Had the whole Chakma tribe been available as a labour force there would have been no object in creating a special one. Moreover, entirely unpaid labour is not in accordance with the primitive basis of Chieftainship. In primitive communities reciprocity is the basis of the social system, and a Chief is expected to give food in return for the labour he received. If reduction of taxation is ever considered, this tax of Re. 1 each jhuming family on account of commuted begar which the headmen now pocket might be abolished.

Compulsory labour is very light indeed in this district and I doubt if the average man renders one day's service in a year to a Government official; indeed I have even heard people grumble at having to give this small amount. But if the practice were abolished, the administration could literally come to a standstill; no official, in a country where no roads for wheeled traffic exist, could move his baggage across country

on tour, and the Armed Police, if they were ever called out, would find themselves immobilised through lack of transport.

To discuss this subject may seem outside the scope of my enquiry. My excuse is that it is a matter of great importance to the administration of the district, an administration with which it is hoped the Chiefs (4) will be more closely connected in future. Further, it is a burden, as is all taxation, though an exceedingly light one, and the more rigorous the strictness with which it is regulated and the more inevitable the punishment of evasion, the more evenly and fairly will it be distributed.

[←](#)

Appendix D.

The Collection of the Jhum Tax.

As I understand that the collection of jhum tax by Government direct from headman is a new idea in this Province, I venture to add this note, in the hope that it will make it clear that the method is easy, expeditious, cheap and just. I can best begin by describing the duties I have myself carried out for some years in the Naga Hills.

There is nothing in the nature of a jhum tax settlement for so many years. The Deputy Commissioner in Sadr Subdivision, and the Subdivisional Officer Mokokchung arrange their tours so as to visit each part of their jurisdiction in turn. On reaching a village it is counted and assessed, unless this was done a very short time before. That is to say, villages which one often has to pass through are not assessed every visit, but remote villages are. Every effort is made to leave no village unassessed for more than three years, and a list of villages kept in office, with the date of the last reassessment opposite each show how duties are being carried out. Another point stressed is that the Deputy Commissioner and Subdivisional Officer are expected to reassess many villages as possible themselves, only deputing the duty to someone else when it proves physically impossible for one of them to get round his Subdivision in 3 years. This personal counting of houses, and the reassessment, ensures that the officer visits every corner of his Subdivision, and is accessible to every inhabitant of it; and, after all, one might just as well take the opportunity of counting a village when one visits it as not.

The assessment is by houses, double tax being paid only in the rare cases where two families inhabit one house. In reassessing the village, therefore, all the houses are first counted. The persons who have had (2) remission of revenue in the past are looked at, to see if they are still alive, and if for any reason, such as remarriage by a widow, they ought no longer get remission. Then fresh applicants for remission are heard, their houses being personally examined if there is any doubt about a plea of destitution. Remissions are deducted from the total, and the headman is told from many houses he has to collect the tax; he is required to bring in the whole tax, receiving his commission for it in office. The assessment is recorded in a register, and stands till the next assessment, which may be in two years' time, or maybe in three, alterations between assessments

being made from time to time on reports by the headmen, who are bound to notify any change in the number of houses in their villages. Assessment in this way can be carried out very quickly, and is absolutely accurate. Everyone who ought to get remission gets it after personal inspection by the officer and personal enquiry, and no one who ought to pay gets off. It is certainly most popular, and equally certainly effective. As far as I can remember there was not a single rupee of arrears all the time I was at Mokokchung, and if there were any at Kohima, on which my memory is not clear, they were insignificant.

I give below an imaginary page with imaginary names from a Naga Hills assessment register. It compares favourably with the tauzi with 46 headings which the Chakma Chief tries to make his headmen fill up. The left hand page of the register is as follows:- (3)

Village --- Bhaimho

	Total houses	Remission	Revenue paying	Remarks
	67	9	58	recounted 11./7./21 J.M.
plus	<u>2</u>	9	plus <u>2</u>	
	69		60	reported by headman on 2-12-21.
-	<u>1</u>	- <u>1</u>		
	68	8	60	ditto on 4-5-21.
-	<u>2</u>	- <u>2</u>		
	60	6	60	ditto on 22-10-22
-	<u>2</u>	6	<u>2</u>	
	64		58	ditto on 2-1-23
	64	+ <u>1</u>	57	granted remission 8-12-23. J.M.
		7		

The right hand page contains details of remissions and would be as follows:-

Hotoi	ex-headman
Gwochaha	headman
Lhuzekhu	Government interpreter
Lushali	old woman

Zukheshe	old man
Natali	widow (for 4 years from 8-12-23 or till
Luvishé	Labour corps remarriage)

This system has always worked perfectly smoothly in the Naga hills, and I cannot see why it should not work in the Hill Tracts, assuming, of course, that no Deputy Commissioner or Subdivisional Officer is ever appointed to the district who is not physically able and mentally keen to visit every part of his jurisdiction. What relics there are left, too, of the old evil custom of absentee headmen would have to be swept away; such men would not be able to report increases or decreases in the number of households in their mauzas. Since the villages here are far smaller and more scattered than they are in the Naga Hills it might be necessary to lay down 5 years instead of 3 as the maximum period for which a village should be left unvisited. Mauza headmen would have to be made personally responsible for reporting changes in all (4) the villages of the mauzas. At present they do very little work in proportion to the emoluments they receive, and I do not think it would hurt them to move about in their own mauzas a little more even if they had to tuck up their long dhotis and discard the wonderful shoes with which they deck their extremities.

The method of assessment of jhum tax will also require further consideration. Probably the best method will be found to be to assess every house except those which can be proved to contain no person liable to assessment. This will make assessment easy and rapid, and will not entail enquiries as to whether two families in the same house are separate or not. It will also prevent persons who ought to pay the tax from evading it by living with some one who is exempt. If it be found that this method leads to evasion of tax by jhumiyas living in joint houses it can be altered and each couple can be taxed.

The present system is vague and unsatisfactory. The orders of Government are contained in their letter No. 10435 of the 15th December 1924. Mr. Hopkyns was later asked by the Chakma Chief direct for further interpretation of these orders. This he gave in his d.o. No. 24 of 31st January 1925. This letter however does not clear matters. By custom among the Maghs, for instance, a young man lives in his father-in-law's

house for the first three years of his marriage and works off his marriage price. By custom he has always been exempt from jhūm tax for this period. But now, I understand, young married men often go on living with their fathers-in-law after the three years is up in order to evade taxation. They may not jhūm a separate patch but by their help they double the size of the household jhūm, which comes to the same thing. Even if Government do not accept my proposal to relieve the Chiefs of the duty (5) of collecting the jhūm tax I consider that this question should be considered at leisure and in consultation with the Chiefs before the end of the present settlement. ↵