SOCIAL CHANGES IN THE JAMATIA COMMUNITY OF TRIPURA SINCE INDEPENDENCE

32

Project Submitted for
Junior Short-term Fellowship Programme

By
MILAN CHANDRA DATTA

Under the supervision of
Dr. Satyadeo Poddar
Lecturer, Department of History
Tripura University, Agartala.

Department of History
Tripura University
Agartala

January-1995.

1993-94

307.709541 5
DAT
N23-95
JRF

OKDISCD

SOCIAL CHANGES IN THE JAMATIYA COMMUNITY OF TRIPURA SINCE INDEPENDENCE

Project Submitted for
Junior Short-term Fellowship Programme

By
MILAN CHANDRA DATTA

Forwarded
Satyadeo Poddar
25.1.95
Lecturer,
Department of History
Tripura University
Agartala.

ORDISCD

OMEO KUMAR DAS INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT
LIBRARY
ACC. NO. 32
DATE: 8/11/04

Under the supervision of
Dr. Satyadeo Poddar
Lecturer, Department of History
Tripura University, Agartala.

22.3

Department of History
Tripura University
Agartala

January-1995.

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

TRIPURA UNIVERSITY, AGARTALA

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that Shri Milan Chandra Datta has worked under my supervision for the full prescribed period and completed his project entitled " Social Changes in the Jamatiya community of Tripura since independence". His research work embodies the results of his investigation during the period he worked as a North Eastern Council Scholar under Junior Short-term Fellowship programme of Institute of Social Change and Development, Guwahati.

Satyadeo Poddar 25/1/95

(Satyadeo Poddar)

Lecturer,

Department of History,

Tripura University.

PREFACE

The present work is an attempt to study and analyse the social changes in the Jamatiya community of Tripura since independence. With the end of British government and the beginning of the democratic and parliamentary system of administration led so many impacts on the social milieu of the tribal life of Tripura. The society of Jamatiyas faced multifacetechanges in its structure. Before independence , the tribes of Tripura remained isolated from the main stream of national life and so was the British policy towards the tribes of India.The welfare measures of the kings of Tripura didnot penetrate deeply to the societies of Tripura and during their rule the tribes remained encircled in the domain of ignorance, superstitution, illiteracy and forest culture. Time and again they raised protest against the exploitation of feudals and hence they possess the spirit of social development and whenever it came in any form , they embraced it whole-heartedly. The zeal and tribal welfare policy of integration of the Government of India was being welcomed and there started a change in the very structure of the tribal society.The changes in the environment facilitates the changes in the field of education , occupational pattern, status of women, habits, food, marriage, handicrafts and social and political organisation of the Jamatiya community.

For the convenience of academic analysis the present project has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter 'Introduction' deals with the concept of social change and structure, research design and methodology and the sources of information.

The second chapter entitled "The Land and Jamatiyas" deals with the physical background of Tripura. The prevailing tribal situation, their social organisation, custom, Jhum cultivation, Tang ghar, artistic sense , trade and commerce, changing demography and the Jamatiya Revolt of

1863 has been dealt briefly to make the background of the study.

The third chapter deals with the social structure of the Jamatiyas. In this chapter, the kinship system, the life cycle, marriage , rites connected with the disposal of the dead body, traditional dress, ornaments, handicrafts, wine, political organisation, religion hasebeen focussed with a view to diagnosis the social change.

"Continuity and Change in the Jamatiya Society" forms the fourth chapter . It deals with the marked social changes in the field of education, economic condition, religion, language, dialects, cooperative society, marriage, dress, ornaments of the tribal society of Jamatiyas. In the end , the pattern of changes in the Jamatiya community has been drawn in the form of the concluding part of this Project.

Dr. Satyadeo Poddar, Lecturer, Department of History, Tripura University, Agartal deserves special thanks for the completion of this work. Without his guidance, this work would remained a distant dream. He has not merely been my supervisor of this work but a moving spirit behind this work.

I will be failing in my duty if I donot extend my thanks to all teachers of the Department of History, Tripura University especially Prof. Mahadev Chakraborti, head, Deptt; of History; Dr. Deepak Kumar Choudhuri, Reader; Dr. H.K. Sur, Reader; Dr. Binapani Chaki, Reader, Women's College, Agartala for their valuable advices and comments.

Besides teachers, friends and relatives

too have helped me a lot to complete this work. I would like to thank all of them. Among them Mr. Pabitra Baidya, Mr. Ranjan Deb, Mr. Prasanta Sen remains unparalled. Their willingness to go out of their at all hours leaves me in their debt forever.

The ready help and cooperation rendered by the Librarians of Tripura University, Agartala; Bir Chandra Public Library, Government of Tripura; Library of Tribal Welfare Department, Government of Tripura; have made it possible for me to present this work and I extend my gratefulness to them.

Before I conclude, I must express my sincere and heartfelt gratitude to my father, Shri Jogesh Chandra Datta whose love and care has always inspired me persistently, in the completion of this research project.

I must thank Sri Promotosh Roy, Reader, Women's College, Agartala who has been my Gurudev throughout my career and whose support and cooperation have brought me to this level of life. His encouragement is a great means for my academic development.

I also extend my thanks to Mr. Sunil Banik who took great pain in typing the project with great care and patience.

Of course, I am alone responsible for the views expressed and errors and omissions, if any.

Milan Chandra Datta

(MILAN CHANDRA DATTA)

CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	i - iii
CHAPTER - I	
INTRODUCTION	1 - 21
CHAPTER - II	
THE LAND AND JAMATIYAS	22 - 39
CHAPTER - III	
SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF JAMATIYAS	40 - 62
CHAPTER - IV	
CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN JAMATIYA SOCIETY	63 - 77
APPENDICES -	
Photographs of Jamatiyas Life	78 - 81

OKDISCD

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this work is to examine the actual changes in the social behaviour of the Jamatiya community in comparison to their earlier life. The issues to be examined are the changes in their occupational pattern, status of women, food, habits, dresses, educational level, marriage, habitates, handicrafts, customs,belief, social organisation and their attitude towards other communities.

It is well-known that tribal communities are closely knit and self-contained social units and their comparative identity and isolation from the mainstream of society would enable them to resist the forces of change much more effectively than open societies, and thus to maintain social relationships and social behaviour patterns which are quite different from and, in many cases, out of conformity with those of the modernized segments of society. It is also well known that tribal societies are characterized by traditional values, use of primitive knowledge and non-rational behaviour patterns which are incongruent with the values , technology and behaviour patterns of the modern world. Hence governments everywhere are striving to modernize them in an attempt at integrating them with the mainstream of life. In India also, which has the largest concentration of tribal population next to Africa, the government, both at the national and state level besides non-governmental agencies, are engaged in the stupendous task of uplifting the tribal population through specially designed programmes which are expected to achieve the objective of tribal integration within the shortest period of time.None the less these programmes have not made significant impact on the tribal population of the country. To be sure, they have gone a long way in breaking the tribal isolation and removing some of the practices which are out of tune with the well known values of the modern society. Government's welfare programmes have also benefited some of the tribal communities much more than others. In other words, the success achieved in this respect has been limited and lopsided. The reason for this phenomenon are well-known , viz, the degree of isolation, the differential value system and social development already achieved, which created

in them differential capacities that enable them to absorb the government's programmes in different degrees. But apart from these general points which are themselves related and interdependent, our knowledge does not comprehend the details of their social structure and socialm processes that contribute to this isolation, differential values system and state of development of the tribal communities. None the less, knowledge of these facors is very important in the understanding of social change among the tribals and in the designing and implementation of programmes of modernisation of tribal communities. In India this aspect of the problem assumes great significance . Over 70 % of the country's population belongs to the tribal communities and sizeable amounts of the country's resources are earmarked for their development.

Hence, the present study, therefore aims at analysing the various changes in their social processes which have contributed to their modernization to some extent. Besides, this project will also envisage the social structure and consquent changes which have brought them in some way, to-day, in the state of utter cofusion and misconception: the result of which are observed in the form of secessionist tendencies, terrorizing activities and kidnapping events. The landmarking demographic changes, present linguistic pattern, the question of land alienation and identity are some of which aspects where they feel the pulse of unjust treatment. These changed attitude of the tribals require historical and sociological study because nothing happened in a day. The factors continuity and change can be well understood and delineated only if the elements of the tribal culture were examined in their pure and original form. Here the Jamatiyas of 'Kunjamura', a village under Khowai sub-division of West Tripura District and Silghat, a developed village under Udaipur sub-division of South Tripura District have been chosen for study. Though the Jamatiyas , one of the nineteen tribes of Tripura live largely in Udaipur and Amarpur Sub-divisions of South Tripura District and Khowai of West Tripura District. A few numbers of them are also found in the Sadar Sub-division of West Tripura District. They hold the third posion in respect of numerical strength among

the 19 tribes of Tripura. The Jamatiyas chosen under two settings of settlements will enable the study to justify the process of social change in a comparative manner and it will be easy to evaluate the degree of changes and factors behind the change and obstacles which debar them to come into the mainstream of national life.

Since the forces of the study is on social structure and change, it is necessary to examine the usage of these terms in sociological and anthropological literature. Perhaps the concept of social structure has been made use of extensively in anthropology both in terms of elaboration into its constituent elements and application to the study of particular societies. Briefly defined, social structure is the web of interacting social forces from which have arisen the various models of observing and thinking. According to Ginsberg, "the study of social structure is concerned with the pricipal forms of social organization, i.e. ,types of groups, associations and institutions and complex of these which constitute societies... A full account of social structure would involve a review of the whole field of comparative institutions." According to Mc Iver and Page, the analysis of social structure reveals the role of the diverse attitudes and interests of social beings, 'Group structures' represent the kind of reality into which we are born and within which we find work and recreation, rewards and penalities, struggle and mutual aid ..... All the various modes of grouping together comprises the complex pattern of social structure.

Studies of social change in the non-literate societies have been confinded to the modification in the social life. Anthropologists had introduced such terms as "culture-cotact" and "acculturation" to express the ways in which new patterns of behaviour of types of relationship were acquired and incorporated into a primitive social system. Sociologists generally use the word "social change" to attract alterations in the non-material culture, i.e., values, mores and social institutions which lead to

technological and other innovations.These alterations are found in the economic , social and political fields of activities of the people.

For a better understanding of the process of social change some definitions of 'social Change' may be considered. According to Moore,"Social Change is the significant alterations of social structures(that is, of patterns of action, social and interaction) including consequences and manifestations of such structures embodied in norms(rules of conduct),values, cultural products and symbols."[1]

The inevitability of social change is emphasized by many. Dewy remarks: "Change is the primary social fact as motion is the primary physical fact."[2] Very often the concept is used as a synonym , or in relationship with the concepts of social progress and evolution. Someone has included both material and non-material changes under social chamge. By social changes Morris Ginsberg "a change in social structure, e.g. , the size of a society , the composition or balance of its parts or the type of its organization ....The term social change must also include changes in attitudes or beliefs, insofar as they sustain institutions and change with them.[3] By structural change he means changes in the parts of a structure due to changes in other parts or to a change in the balance of forces.[4]

Leach's contention is that change is not deplorable but is inherent in the nature of society. In support he offers the case of the Kachins of Burma where groups of villages have to choose either the the hegemony of a chief or claim to be independent each under its own headman. Leach concludes by saying that, it is nonsense to say that any society is in equilibrium, all are in process of constant change.

According to Luci Mair, " the study of social change is a historical one, it is a matter of tracing a progress over time. The anthropologist must ask how the change is brought about ... what is it that is changing. Ideas on the society of social change have developed along with ideas on the subject matter of anthropology in general".

There have been many theories which have tried to explain social change. Miller lists the following : theory of Economic Materialism (Marx), economic theory of socialization (Veblen), division of labour theory(Durkheim), social differentiation theory (Mac Iver and Page), socio-cultural theory of social change (Taylor, Sunner and Ogburn).[5] In spite of this Miller concludes that a general theory of the process of change of social systems is not possible in the present state of knowledge.[6]

Many sociologists have attempted to know the nature, cause, rate and direction of social change which have resulted into various theories. Some of these theories are evolutionary theories(Comte, Spencer, Darwin, Marx),cyclical theories (Spengler), collective reincarnation (Sorokin), particularistic theories, i.e. , diffusionism (Smith), geographic determinism (Huntington), biological determinism (Hooton), technological determinism (Weber), etc.,sociological theories, i.e. assimilation (Thomas), social ecology (Park and Burgess), social lag (Ogburn), cultural acceleration (Tarde Hart), multiple causation theory (Ginsberg), multiple factor theory (Reeder) and so on . Each of these theories throws light on the different aspects of social change.

According to Firth, theoretical framework for the analysis of social change must be concerned withwhat happens to social structure. That is, any addition or modification in the elements of social structure may result into either a change in the organisational life of the people or a change in the structure itself. Often changes may arise due to the entry

of new factors into the social environment offering new opportunities or new ways of protection. Thus these new factors demand a new adjustment by the individual in his daily activity. But he has also to preserve the old values which have hitherto been a powerful controlling and guiding factor in the social life. The outcome is certain change in the social organization.

In contrast, the structural change implies a large scale shift in the pattern of their activities or an alteration in the basic relations between the members of the society. This also implies a new common orientation.

Structural change is a product of social interaction. When a new pattern of behaviour is adopted , the values guiding the old pattern must change or modify. These changes imply two kinds of processes which Firth calls social conviction social conduction. In the former case, when some members of a society change their behaviourfrom the established pattern, other members tend to react to the situation, i.e. , by initiation or by resentment they tend to modify their own conduct. In the latter case, a change in established patterns disrupts the functional inter-relation of activities which being unforseen results in every activity. So, people who have adopted an innovation may find themselves facing a situation to which they must conform, and are faced by organizational problems which demand further change.

It was Firth who madeuse of the distiction between structural change and organizational change in his analysis of socail change. By structural change he means the change in

the character of the social system, that is, in the quality of the institutionalized types of social relationship which constitute it. Organizational change is change in ways of doing things, and change in the extent or range of particular complexes of social relationships.

Nordskog describes certain social processes which are accountable for social change. First of all, there is a process by which an organism becomes adopted to a new climate which he refers to as acclimatization. Then there is the accommodation process, which involves a functional change in the habits and customs of persons and groups and, by this, old habits are given up and new habits formed. Social change also involves a process of organization , i.e. , the gradual development of an integrated scheme of structures and functions suited to a rather definite mode of life under specific conditions. This is called adaptation. People of diverse racial origins and different cultural heritages occupying a common territory tend " to be similar or alike ". By this process people acquire the language of the immigrated people and gradually participate in the economic, political and social activities thus becoming assimilated. Thus they become culturally similar to their neighbours and form part of a cultural solidarity. This process is known as assimilation.

Competition is an essential social process in every social system by which the individual and institutions are adapted to new conditions. Competition functions as a process of selection, promotes organization, and thereby functions as an agent of social change. Closely related to competition is - another process - conflict. While competition

is concerned with location, position and ecological interdependence and determines the position of the individual in the community, conflict is concerned with status and control and determines the individual's position in the society.

Finally , there is another process, which covers all the various ways , whereby individuals or groups take to new culture traits, called acculturation or 'culture contact.' Wilbert E. Moore points out the chief modes of acculturation as imperialism, wars, conqests, missionary religions, mass migration, individual migration, trade, tourism, transported labour, transfer of knowledge , formal communication, etc.[7]

In Nordscog's point of view, these social processes do not function singly, but in multiple relationships, and furthermore they do not operate by, and of, themselves ; they depend upon what human beings do in response to social stimuli and in efforts to solve their problems. That is the way in which human beings utilize social processes will determine the pace of social change.

According to the functionalistic theory of change, social change is brought about by two types of factors- exogenous and endogenous. An exogenous factor arises outside the social system, whereas the endogenous factor is internal to the social system.[8] From this point of view the society undergoes a social change due to the impact of political , economic, judicial, cultural and social systems.

The multiple factor theory of social action of Reeder om which was based Dr. Barnabas' study of 'Social Change' in a

North Indian Village, states there are several factors responsible for social change and that they produce a cumulative effect on any particular situation.[9] These several factors give a more adequate explanation than one or two of why people behave the way they do. The factors included are : opportunity , ability, expectation, goals and values, living comfortably with odds in the face of conflict, support, self commitment force, unusual shared experience and habit, custom institutionized behaviour.[10]

In every society we can find two kinds of processes at work : processes that maintain the structure of the system and processes that tend to change it, and it can be said that social change refers to the " intelligible process in which use can discover significant alterations in the structure and functioning of determinate sustems.[11]

In dealing with social change , certain sociologists have applied the structural-functional analysis of change. Johnson elucidates this method as follows : " We cannot deal simultaneously with all the changes that are going on in a social system. We are obliged to consider the impact of some impetus to change- 'a disturbance' of the system, a strain or conflict, or a cultural or environmental impetus to of some kindupon some part of the total system as fixed or constant. Then we must progressively consider further repurcussions of the initial change throughout system, including those repurcussions that modify the original impetus to change and its initial effects on the system ... The concept of structure enables us to define the system that is subject to change. The concept of functional problems and concept of

functional interdependence indicate for us the significance of particular interaction process. Finally, the concept of structure enables us also to define the changes that have occured or that are to be explained."[12] To him social change means change in the social structure, and the social change is qualitative when something structurally new is added to the system.[13] Therefore enquiry into social change should study change which is social, structural and qualitative.

From Radcliffe Brown's point of view, changes may take place in the non-literate people not only by a process which he termed as culture-contact, but also by another process of a different kind. In his words, "There will be a region that was formerly inhabited by a particular community with their own social structure. Then the literate people by peaceful or forceful means establish control over the region. A new social structure comes into existence, and then undergoes development. There grows up a new political and social , economic structure in which the literate exercise dominating influence. Societies of this kind would be called "composite societies" or "plural societies".[14]

The theoretical approach to social change generally used in social anthropology today is that of the structural functionalism developed by Radcliffe Brown. This particular approach to social change involves "comprehension of a social system as a whole ... a people or a tribe are studied as if their social relationships constituted a closed and integrated system. However, problems arise when factors and forces extreneous to the people or tribe are active on the scene

making it impossible to describe the indigenous society. In this case the proponenets of structural-functionalism deal with the situation artificially by noting what changes have taken place in the tribe's indigenous institutions. Such descriptions are then spoken of as studies of culture-contact or social change.[15]

The structural-functional method has been used by many eminent sociologists."They have now become a key tool in the study of social change"(Becker and Boskoff), with the help of a device of "constructed type(Bento Graciano D8Souza). Based on this criterion, sociologists have developed analysis in terms of sacred and secular types(Park, Hughes, Becker), folk and urban types(Redfield, Linton, Minner, Kroeber) ; folk society and state civilization(Giddings, Odum); repetitive and changing types(Ogburn, Gluckman) ; ideationa, sensate and idealistic types(Sorokin), and chance-discovery, invention and planning types(Mannhiem).

Modern social anthropologists and sociologists have been much concerned with the process of social and cultural change. In this they are not only concerned with the problems of the diffusion of cultural traits or some kind of social evolution independent of external influence. This stand is clearly expressed by Ginsberg when he states that, "It is now a little plainer that modifications in a people's social institutions and values through time are not to be understood in terms of any simple, blanket principle, but rather that a multiplicity of processes is involved, often contemporaneously."Social change is not just one social field, considered in their in their temporal, dynamic aspect. It is not more possible tomstudy 'Social

change' in general than it is to study 'society' in general. What is given us for analysis are specific social institutions, and what we have to study is to study the modifications of these through time in the context of their relationships with other co-existing institutions." [16]

Social anthropologists concerned with the problem of social change have restricted their study in three ways. First, they are concerned with the situations of radical or structural change, the changes in the social institutions themselves and the relations between them, i.e.,the constitution of the society itself.[17] Secondly, they were concerned with those institutional changes brought about by the contact of different social systems which they qualified as acculturation or culture contact. Thirdly, they were concerned with the structural changes involving social conflict and strain, and have made some attempt to determine the nature of these conflicts.[18]

32

M.N.Sreenivas put forward two concepts, "Westernization and Sanskritization" to explain some features of religious, cultural and social change in India"[19] Sanskritization is "the process by which a 'low' Hindu caste, or tribal or other group changes its customs, ritual, ideology, and way of life in the direction of a high, frequently 'twice-born' caste."[20] Sanskritization results in positional changes in the system, and does not lead to any structural change. Westernization means the radical changes in Indian society and culture brought about by the British rule. Westernization results not only in the introduction of new institutions, for example, newspaper, elections, Christian missions, but also in fundamental changes in the old institutions.

M.S.A.Rao dealing with the social system

xx change in Malabar, has defined society and culture very broadly as the sum total of all the activities. In his study,all such activities were grouped under six heads:(i) occupational activities,(ii) family life,(iii) religious activities,(iv) educational activities, and (v) leisure-time activities(vi) community activities. Changes in these spheres have been analysed in an interrelated way.[21]

Barnabas tries to establish a relationship between the multiple factor and social change as follows:"... social action is any behaviour of an individual influenced by or directed towards other individuals, groups, or objects. Social change is concerned of the cumulative actions of the individuals and groups. Some of the factors induce change, others restrict change. Some of the factors can act either as inducers of change or retarders of change. Opportunity and ability tend to induce change. The factors that restricts change is habit(custom or institutionalized behaviour). The remaining factors ... can act either as agents of change or may be forced to continue in set ways. In analysing social change it is necessary not only to explain change,but also to explain why change does not occur.[22]

Not in all societies social change is equally welcomed or controlled. In some cultures it comes about when people are hardly prepared for it or even conscious of its significance. Since it brings in its train new ways of life threatening the old ones, it poses serious problems to the mass of people who were following a certain way of life.That is why, "Societies reverses the old and fear the new or the unknown." This is most true of the primitives.

Among the factors that resist social change, there are certain prominent factors such as inertia,

fear of the new, ignorance, tradition, ethnocentrism, vested interests, and so on. Psychologically, it is the individual's sense of danger to his identity and security which resists social change. The whole set of attitudes and values will be changed by a new mode of culture whether by intervention or innovation, and so its acceptance or rejection would primarily depend on the attitudes of the people. Therefore "... endeavour will have to be madeto inculcate a set of attitudes and values that are conducive to economic development and modernization."23

It is evident that so long as people's attitudes remain rigid, social change hardly occurs or even if it occurs, it is not adeqately assimilated by the mass of people. In this situation, while economists emphasize the "providing of the necessary inputs to improve the productivity, sociologists and psychologists tell that , in addition to providing the necessary inputs, a social and psychological change should also come about ... to accept the new methods and tools given to them..."24

Certain forces have been recognized as accelerating social change , a new felt-need and awareness, effective means of communication, transportation, science and technology, education, confrontation with other cultures, cultural exchange of men and material, the appearance of dynamic anf effective leadership on the scene, etc. In the final analysis social change is a kind of dialectic process where two opposing forces struggle against each other. And what issues out of this process of conflict depends on the total strength of each set of forces.

Ittaman has tried to undersrand the changes that had been brought about as a result of the influence of various factors in the community within a certain period of time. It implies that "without the concept of time no study of

change can be undertaken. All elements of a society are not susceptible to change with the same time, with the result that over a period of time changes taking place in certain aspects become more perceptible than others. For instance, it has been found that political organization is capable of undergoing quick and radical changes whereas family structure and religious beliefs and practices are supposed to have come to stay in the basic patterns of society or in particular institutions, or in the relationships between institutions... It is with the help of a study of social processes and actual operation of structural priciples that a change can be discussed and analysed."

The meaning of the tribe according to the Shorter Oxford Dictionary is "any primitive or barbarous people under a chief." The official use of the term tribe in India has been more or less in agreement with the meaning above. The definition of tribe given in Notes and Queries in Anthropology (5th edition p.54) , lays emphasis on "a common language and a sense of solidarity". In the Encyclopaedia Britannica (11th edition) the families or small communities that constitute a tribe are said to trace their descent from a common ancestor.

Anthropologists who have worked among the tribes are of the opinion that, "they(the tribes) ... differ from others in their social systems. They have retained their own marriage regulations: nearly all marry within their restricted local group, and are sometimes guided by their own elders or political chiefs in internal and external affairs. In other words they form socially didtinct communities who have been designated as tribes, and listed in a schedule for special treatment, so that, within a relatively short time they can come within the mainstream of the political and economic life of India.

The word 'tribe' is nowhere defined in the constitution of India, which has been content to declare , in its

Article 342, that the Scheduled Tribes are "the tribes or the tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities" which the President of India may specify by public notification. As these communities are presumed to form the oldest ethnological sector of the population, the term Adivasi ('Adi original, and 'vasi' inhabitant) has become common. The International Labour Organization has classified these groups as 'indigenous'.

S.C. Dube writes about the Indian Tribes, "In the Indian context the term tribe has never been defined precisely and satisfactorily. It was used at one time to denote a bewildering variety of social categories, that were neither analpgous nor comparable ... In later usage it tended to be restricted only to the autoechthonous, the aboriginal and the primitive groups. At no stage, however , did as have a set of clear indicators of tribalness. Most popular definitions of the term tended to see in these tribes, some, if not all, of the following characteristics:

a) Their roots in the soil data back to a very early period : if they are not the original inhabitants, they are atleast some of the oldest inhabitants of the land.

b) They live in the relative isolation of the hills and theforests.

c) Their use of history is shallow for, among them, the remembered history of five or six generations tend to get merged in mythology.

d) They have a low level of techno-economic development.

e) In terms of their cultural ethos, language, institutions, beliefs, and customs- they stand out from the other section of the society.

f) if they are not egalitarian , they are atleast nonhierarchic and undifferentiated".[26]

From the foregoing , pages it is clear that social structure and social change have been a highly researched and considerably illuminated area in sociology. However , due to the bewildering heterogeneity in the cultural configuration of tribal and proliterate communities, no amount of research can claim to be exhaustive or complete. Each tribal community functions in a special environment , has its own values, norms, and kinship ties and , accordingly, reacts to pressures and pulls from the environment in its own way. Hence it is necessary to study , if possible , each tribe in its natural setting, and to extract knowledge and insight they can enrich the prevailing theories of tribal social structure and change. In this activity the existing theories and frames of analysis will be able to serve as guidelines to the researcher.

Research Design and Methodology:

Both secondary and survey research technique have been used in this research project. Collection of data through this method has been taken in the form of interviews and questionnaires. Though the language of the Jamatiyas is Kak-Barak and for this the help of Jamatiyas students were taken in the clarification of facts. To some extent it was felt that they understand Bengalee. To broaden theme of this work is on the social changes in the Jamatiya community, within the theme the specific problems have been provided with a number of dimensions.These constitute geographical area (rural and urban) and time to begin with. In stead of taking the whole of the Tripura, a cross-section of the same has been taken and accordingly samples of representatives nature have been pulled. The family is the basic units of study. For this purpose of attaining a minimum amount of uniformity, 2000 200 200 families of rural and urban setting have been taken. These datas have been taken of two generations and through simple random sampling the whole information has been taken account.

Interviews form the real sources of information of this project and for this two types of interviews have been taken i.e. structured and unstructured interviews. The datas of structured interviews have been supplemented with the data collected through the informal interviews. An effort has been made to reach to the oldmen who depicted lots of their memories regarding their settlements, customs, changing role of tribal chief and attitude of Raja towards them before independence.

Sources of informations:-

The pictures of traditional institutions , social customs of the Jamatiya community are not to be found in their entirety in the pamphlets or monographs published so far. As there is scanty references of Jamatiyas in the files of the Record Room of Agartala , here an attempt has been made to prepare an oral history of the tribe through field survey. The private documents and diaries, contemporary literary works, Tripura Administrative Reports of the concerned period, Census Reports, Assembly Proceedings and some secondary books related to the tribal history helped a lot in furnishing the information of the present research work.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Moore, Wilbert, E. : Social Change, Prentice-Hall of India(P) Ltd., New Delhi, 1965, P.366.

2. Dewey, J. : "Progress: Journal of ethics 1916" in Promila Vasudev, Social Change: An Analysis of Attitudes and Personality, Sterling Publishers(P)Ltd., New Delhi, P.(?).

3. Ginsberg, Morris : "Social Change", in British Journal of Sociology, Vol. IX, 1958, P.205.

4. Ibid. P. 213.

5. Miller, D. : Technology & Social Change, Francis Allen et al. , 1957, P.77.

6. Ibid. , P.102.

7. Moore, Wilbert, E., opcit. P. 86.

8. Martindale, Don : Social Life and Cultural Change, 1962, P.27.

9. Barnabas, A.P. : Social Change in a North Indian Village, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi, 1969, P.10.

10. Ibid., P.137.

11. Becker, H. and Boskoff, A. : Modern Sociological Theories, New York, Dryden Press, 1957, P.263.

12. Johnson, Harry M, : Sociology, A Systematic Introduction, Allied Publishers, Madras, 1963, PP. 647-648.

13. Ibid. , P.626.

14. Brown, Radcliffe, A.R. : Andaman Islanders, A Social Study, London, P.201.

15. Little, Kenneth, : "Applied Anthropology and Social Change in the Teaching of Anthropology," British Journal of Sociology, Vol. XI, PP. 332-342.

16. Beattie, J.H.M. : "Culture Contact and Social Change", The British Journal of Sociology, 1961, P.165.

17. Wilson, G. & M. : The Analysis of Social Change, Cambridge, 1945, P. Chapter V.

18. Beattie, J.H.M. ; Oppit, P. 166.

19. Sreenivas, M.N. : Social Change in Modern India, Orient Longman, Bombay, 1966, P.1.

20. Ibid., P.6.

21. Rao, M.S.A. : Social Change in Malabar, The People Book Depot, Bombay, 1957, P.V.

22. Barnabas, A.P., Opcit. PP.137-138.

23. Dube, S.C. : "Formulating the goals of Change" in Some Aspects of Social Change, eds. Kuppuswamy and Mehta, B.Sterling Publishers, Delhi, 1968, PP.45-46.

24. Jacob, G. : 'Forward' in Indian Villages in Transition, by D.Sinha, New Delhi, Associated Publishing House, 1969.

25. Bose, Nirmal Kumar : Tribal Life in India, National Book Trust India, New Delhi, 1971, P.4.

26. Dube, S.C.(ed.) : Tribal Heritage of India, Vikas Publishing House(P)Ltd., New Delhi, 1977, P.2.

CHAPTER II

THE LAND AND JAMATIYAS

THE LAND AND PHYSICAL BACKGROUNDS

Tripura , a tiny and hilly State of 10,486 sq km in the North-east region of India comprises of picturesque hills, green valleys and dense forests. It is bounded by Bangladesh in the North, West, South, and Assam and Mizoram in the East. The maximum length of the State from North to South is 183.54 km and maximum breadth from East to West is 122.70 km. Tripura has an international boundary of 832.20 km with Bangladesh. The Bangalees, and the greater Tripuri tribal community comprising of as many as 18 tribes constitute the major bulk of population in Tripura.

The origin of the name of Tripura is uncertain. According to Rajmala, it was king Tripur who gave the territory the name it still bears. According to some writers, the name Tripura is derived from the Goddess Tripura Sundari. Hunter remarks, "the name Tripura was probably given to the country in honour of the temple at Udaipur, of which remains still exist. This temple now ranks as the second Tirtha, or sacred shrine, in this part of Bengal.; it was dedicated either to Tripurdana, 'the sungod', or to Tripureswari, the mistress of the three worlds. Mr. Browne, thinks that there can be no doubt that the district , which at one time was limited to the country situated in the neighbourhood of the Udaipur Temple, took its name from the Goddess. "Another view is that , Tripura is the land of God Siva who is also known as Tripurari or Tripuresha. The people who settled in the land of Tripuresha Siva came to be known as Tripuri and the land as Tripura. Shri kailas Chandra Sinha gave another interpretation of the name of Tripura. In Tripurai dialects 'Tui' means water. By adding 'Pra' the word Tuipra was formed and from Tuipra the people were known as Tipra tribe and the land came to be known as Tripura.[2]

Modern scholars hold the opinion that the name Tripura was sanskritised form of Tipra, a tribe to which the ruling family belonged.[3]

If a man cannot adjust to his physical surroundings, he must move elsewhere or face extinction. In keeping with natural surroundings a culture , therefore, develops elaborate system of housing, agriculture, food production, clothing and protection from weather hazards.[4] The physical environment affects the way of life of the major cross-section of the earliest inhabitants of Tripura inasmuch as they get ample scope for gathering wild vegetables, gossiping, drinking, feasting. Crimes, murders and strifes were not rare among these primitive groups.

A little elaborate political institution and complicated religious rites, rituals, beliefs, magics and sacrifices are some of the peculiarities of the interier tribal people of the State. The early people of the State had a self-subsistence economy based on gathering, fishing, hunting, shifting cultivation, basketry, weaving and domestication of few species of birds and animals. Everything from technical means of acquiring food to the codes of social living- the kinship system, religious ceremonies, beliefs, sentiments, emotions which seem to be necessary for survival under the condition imposed by nature are all manifestation of physical environment of Tripura.

Tripura enjoys tropical monsoon climate. It is characterised by moderate temperature with higher humidity. Topography of the State is characterised by seven principal hill ranges, numerous hillocks, plains, valleys, lungas, rivers, rivulets etc. The hill ranges which run from North to South almost parallel to each other beginning from East are Jampai, Sakhantang, Longtharai, Atharamura, Baramura, Deotamura.

TRIBAL SITUATION IN TRIPURA: AN APPRAISAL

The population of Tripura comprises mostly of the original inhabitants of the regions.— the Tribals and the Bengali people who came from the neighbouring areas and districts of Bengal. The prominent tribal communities are the Tripuri, Reang, Jamatia, Noatia, Halam, Kuki, Lushai, Mog,and Chakma. From anthropological, and linguistic points of view they are Tibeto-Burmese in origin. Most of these tribes besides having similar ethnological characteristics possess almost identical cultural and social traits. Besides these tribes, there are Uchai, Garo, Santal, Chaimol, Orang, Munda, Bhutia, Lepcha, Bhil and Khasia. Excepting the Garos, Uchai, and the Khasias, the rest non-indigenous tribes came into Tripura as tea-garden labourers from Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and ultimetly settled here later on.

There are a large number of Bengali people who immigrated from the neighbouring areas and districts of Bengal. The rulers of Tripura encouraged this influx of people mainly out of two motives. The first and foremost was to increase the revenue of the state by giving land rights to persons settling in Tripura. Secondly, the rulers of Tripura highly valued cultural contact with the Bengalies. Moreover the rulers of Tripura wanted to utilise the services of the Bengalis for reorganisation of the state's archic administrative machinery modelled on the system shaped bythe Muslims in Bengal. It is generally believed that it was Ratna Manikya in the middle of the 15th Century who first had settled a large number of Bengalis belonging to various professions in the kingdom.

Although the rulers and officers of Tripura adopted Bengali as their official Language, the Tribals had their own dialects. Among these dialects, the Tripuri or Kak-Borak is the mother language of the majority of the Tribals.

This dialects belonged to Bodogroup of the Assamese Burmese of Tibeto- Burman family of languages.[5] It had no written alphabet.

Social Organization:

Tripura had a feudalistic pattern of society where the burden of feudal privileges weighed heavily on the shoulders of the people. Although the Royal Family and his privileged officials lived in towns and plains, most of the tribes lived in interior villages of the hills under their respective Chiefs.

The tribal society in Tripura was patriarchal. Father dominated the family and Lineage was always traced through him. The family was the basic unit of the tribes. The families belonging to the same tribes lived in village which was called 'Para' or 'Bari' and were named after the chief of the village. The tribes were strongly united through their village organisation, co-operation and fellow-feeling among the co-villagers, collective worship of gods and goddesses and ownership of forest lands for Jhuming(Shift cultivation) had made the village the most social organisation.

The tribal society was dominated by the Chiefs. Each tribe had its own Chief under whom there were others with status in descending order down to the choudhuri foreach village. In the village, the authority of the Chief was absolute. For any decisiion of social, economic and political nature they had to depend upon the advice and decision of their Chiefs. Village disputes which were rare were settlrd in community trials where the chief of the village presided. The general punishment was the imposition of fine and the money realised from it were spent in community feasts and functions. The chiefs by dint of

their specially privileged position made various esactions from the oridinary tribals. As the ordinary tribals had to approach the Government officials through their chiefs, so the chiefs realised some payment from them. The Government officials collected tax through the chiefs and so the chiefs were exempted from paying any tax. In short, the chiefs enjoyed socially, politically and economically a specially privileged position.[6]

Marriage Custom:

The marriage custom of the tribes were primitive in nature. When a youngman wished to marry a girl, he had to serve for some years in the prospective bride's house. This pracice was known as 'Jamaikhata'. During this period of 'jamaikhata' the youngman had to perform all sorts of work. He had to obey all orders of his father-in-law during this period. If he was found suitable, the girl was given to him. But if he was found unsuitable, he was paid some compensation and was allowed to go back to his own house. Infant marriage was rare and love marriage was in practice. Widow marriage was allowed and the step was known as Hatam Bap. Divorce could be obtained on the adjucation of a jury of village elders.

Custom regarding deadbody:

It appears that the tribals disposed their dead bodies by the method of cremation. Captain Lewin in "The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers therein" gave a full account of the custom among the Tripuris.When a Tippera dies, his body is immediately removed from within the house to the open air. A fowl is killed, and placed with some rice at the deadman's feet. The body is burned at the waterside. At the spot where the body was first laid out , the relatives kill a cock every morning for seven days, and leave it there with some rice as an

offering to the means of the dead. A month after death, a like offering is made at the place of cremation, and this is occasionally repeated for a year. The ashes are depodited on a hill in a small hut built for the purpose, in which are also placed the deadman's weapons, a spare, daos of two sorts (one his fighting dao, the other is everyday bread winner), arrow heads, his metal stemmed pipe earring and ornaments. The place is held sacred.[7] Burial system was prevailed among the Kukis. The Kukis had a curious system of burying their deadbodies, particularly when a chief was to be buried. Some heads were buried along with the dead chief.

JHUM CULTIVATION:

Most of the tribal people were agriculturists. They followed a peculiar system of cultivation known as Jhum or shifting cultivation. The method of jhum cultivation was as follows: Each family selected a land for cultivation. Jungles were cut down and cleared in the month of December and set fire in the month of March. After the first fall of rain, they began to drop seeds of cotton , paddy and chilly into holes. The paddy was reaped generally in September. After that cotton was picked in November and December and finally the chillies were gathered. After two years of cultivation they begam to move in search of new land for Jhum cultivation. The crops grown by the people in the hills on their Jhum land , were rice, cotton, chillies and vegetables. Jhum cultivation which is now regarded as a wasteful and uneconomic method, did not create problems in the past. The population was then very small. Tripura was purely a tribal area and there was abundance of virgin land. But with the growth of population and for other reasons Jhum cultivation affected the economic condition of the people. The political agent reported in 1874 A.D. that 'I passed through Riang, Jamaitya and Rajbansi villages, the hills round which

had been Jhumed over and again. Jhuming is a most exhaustible method of agriculture; three or four crops are grown at the same time on the same soil, consequently second crop will not to be a full one. If possible, the land is allowed to lie fallow for tem years, when the jungle which has grown up in the meantime is burnt, the ashes serving as manure. But the fear of Lushais prevents the Jhumias from moving eastwards, the only direction where fresh virgin land is available. The hills near the villages have, therfore, to be jhumed every three years or, so the consequences to the Mahajans or money Landers.[8]

Within the strip of land bordering on the Hills, distinguished as the plains of Tripura, the inhabitants led a settled life, and were on a social level, in the social scale, with the people of the plains in the neighbouring districts. They followed plough cultivation. The people who practised this form of cultivation were, with few exceptions, Bengalis and Manipuris. Rice was the only crop grown in any considerable quantity. Sugarcane, Indian corn, tobacco, pulses Ganja, and vegetables were grown in small quantities only , on homestead land. The people in the hills, observed Hunter in 1876, as a rule were very poor and improvident. A good season meant with them merely of pigs to eat, and plenty of spirits to drink; a bad season was next door to starvation.[9] The economic condition of the people cultivating by the plough in the plains were better than those of the people in the hills. They were not generally in debt, although they did not hesitate to borrow money especially for any domestic ceremony, such as a marriage.[10]

Tang Ghar:

Although the king of Tripura lived in a house built with bricks and some nobles lived in houses built with bricks and woods, most of the people in the hills lived in bamboo huts known

as 'Tong-Ghar'. This bamboo huts situated on a raised platform five to six feet above the ground was supported by bamboo pillars poles. The houses seldom continued more than one room. Some tribes especially the kukis constructed their Tong-Ghar at the edge of 20 to 30 feet at a slope of the hills, while its entrance that was the other end stood nearly at the level ground of the hill.

Artistic sense of the Tribes:

The tribes used to spend their life in dancing, music and drinking. Most of them distilled their own liqor. The tribals mentained a high standard of workmanship in weaving and wood-carving and possessed a fine artistic sense which found elequent expression in a beautiful design of 'Riha'. means a small piece of cloth . This garment was remarkable for its colourful variety and texture. One such Riha was presented by the Queen of Tripura, Maharani Jahnabi Devi to Mr. Ralph Leake, British Resident in Tripura in 1783. Mr. Leake appreciated the art of it and presented the same to the Arts collection section of the British Museum.[11] Among all the tribes of Tripura, the Reangs stand first in respect of use and possession of ornaments. Usually these are made of silver, beads and seeds of special variety of plaintain known as Ramkala.[12]

Trade and Commerce:

Regarding trade and commerce it was reported that "The only manufacture is cotton , cloth of the coarse quality made by the Manipuri and Tippera women. The pricipal exports are cotton, timber, sesamum, bamboo, canes, thatching grass and firewoods; and export duty is levied on all these articles. The imports are salt, kerosene oil, tobacco, and European piece goods. The chief centres are Agartala, Khowai,

Kailashahar, Udaipur, Bisalgarh, and Mohanpur ; business is chiefly in the hands of Indian Sahas. At some of these centres annual fairs are held , at which merchants from the neighbouring British Districts assemble and the hill people make their annual purchases.[13] Hunter recorded in the year 1876 that 'there are no important seats of commerce in the state: but there are twenty one markets, five of which are held at places in the hills, while all are frequented by the hill tribes. The chief fairs are the Baruni, held at Agartala on the 2nd day of the month of Baishakh (April-May) ; a fair is held at Kamala Sagar, also in Baisakh; and one at Brahmakunda in Chaitra (March and April).[14]

The Changing Demography:

Expansion in population with passage of time contributes to so many problems around us today. The genetic, ecological,geographical economical, social and political aspects of a society are affected with change of population. In Tripura, the growth of population has been so phenomenal that over the past one hundred years the territory registered more than twenty times increase in its population. This abnormally high growth of population is not due to the demographic factors like fertility, mortality etc. It largly accounts for a great influx of refugees, the State had to recieve in the early years of independence.This also resulted in wide variations of the percentage of tribal population to the total population particularly in the post-Independence period.The more the expansion in population the more is the pressure on land. Undoubtedly the settlements of immigrants has aggravated the pressure on land in absence of any growth of industries. The pressure on land combined with the effects of transfer of land both legally and illegally, partition and forced sale to money-lenders, has resulted in the fragmentation of land. These have changed the demographic profile of the State,

bringing in its wake some important social, cultural, political and economic changes. Such pressure has also disturbed the ecological equilibrium in the State, mainly due to merciless deforestation and its consequential effects. As a consequence nature has been damaged progressively, restorative capacity of nature has been weakened and above all human environment has effected the quality of life. The demographic changes has also affected the Jamatiya community which has been analysed in the form of its changes in social structure.The Sex Ratio of Tribal Population has been shown in the following table.

SEX RATIO OF TRIBAL POPULATION

Year	Tribal Population	Male	Female	Sex ratio (tribal)	Sex ratio total population
1951	1,92,293	96,828	95,465	985	904
961	3,60,070	1,84,174	1,75,896	955	932
971	4,50,544	2,30,544	2,20,000	954	943
1981	5,83,920	2,97,612	2,86,308	962	946
1991	8,53,345	4,34,225	4,19,120	963	946

Source : Different Consus Reports

The Table shows that sex ratio in greater degree in case of tribal women in comparison withtotal population. In the year 1951 the ratio is the highest, the problems of food and land were less than the subsequent decades. So, child mortality or the mortality of the mother at the time of child birth due to lack of food intake might not be a cause. Moreover even then they were not much inflenced in every sphere of life by the Bengali culture. So the question of neglect of girl child was less prominent. On the contrary, they preferred girl child, because

women folk rendered a lot of economic and non-economic duties in the family. But during the period from 1961-1971 there has been enormous population growth due to refugee rehabilitation. So easy going life for tribal people was disrupted, food shortage hit hard the tribal women. This might affect their health and mortality.

Tripura was one of those native States which almost readily agreed to merge in the Indian Union in the wake of independence on August 15,1949. But Tripura began to feel the adverse impact of communal tension and political turmoil in British India culminating in the partition of India from a much earlier date. Partition of India disrupted the socio-economic relationship that Tripura built up with the British Bengal, especially the eastern part of the province which formed East Pakistan since 1947 and Bangladesh since 1971.

Tripura's integration with India brought about far reaching changes: political, administrative, social and economic. Politically, it marked the end of the princely rule and beginning of the process of gradual establishment of popular rule in the State. Starting as a Part C State in 1949, Tripura became a Union Territory in November 1956. Through experiments with various levels of popular representation in administration, Tripura attained Statehood in 1972. During 1949-72, Tripura experienced quick expansion in the administrative set up as a result of transition from a princely State under the British paramount power to a modern constituent State of Independent India. Post integration years also witnessed great socio-cultural changes both in the tribal and non-tribal societies. This has been a tremendous impact upon the community of Jamatiya which will be observed afterwards.

<u>The Jamatiyas of Tripura</u>:

The Jamatiyas , one of the nineteen tribes of Tripura live largely in Udaipur and Amarpur Sub-Division of

South Tripura District, and Khowai of West Tripura District. A few numbers of them are found in the Sadar Sub-division of West Tripura district. They hold the third position in respect of numerical strength among the 19 tribes of Tripura. According to the Census Report of 1971, the total population of the Jamatiyas in Tripura is 34,192 which is 7.59 % of the total tribal population of the state. The Survey Report of Hill Tipperah of 1874-75 by W.W.Hunter also shows that the Jamatiya tribe was holding the third position in respect of numerical strength. According to the Census Report of Tripura of 1931 the total population of the Jamatiyas was 11.090. The following table of 1931 shows the settlement of the Jamatiyas in various sub-Division of Tripura.

Centre	Total Population	Male	Female
	1	1	
Agartala	0.01%	100 %	
Sadar	613 5.53 %	323 52.69 %	290 47.31 %
Sonamura	877 7.91 %	438 49.94 %	439 50.06 %
Udaipur	5,028 45.34 %	2,514 50 %	2,514 50 %
Amarpur	3,091 27.87 %	1,587 51.34 %	1,508 48.79 %
Khowai	1,452 13.09 %	756 52.07 %	696 47.93 %
Kailashahar	2 0.02 %	1 50 %	1 50 %
Dharmanagar	26 0.23 %	14 53.85 %	12 46.15 %
Sabroom			
Belonia			
Total	11,090 (100 ·1·)	5,634 (50·80·1·)	5,456 (49·20·1·)

Source : P.N. Bhattacharjee: The Jamatiyas of Tripura, Directorate of Research, Department of Welfare for SC. & ST, Government of Tripura, 1938, P. 2.

The above table shows that Udaipur Sub-Division tops the list and next to Udaipur come Amarpur, Khowai, , Sonamura and Sadar Sub-Division in that order.

In the Census Report of 1971, it is found that South Tripura District has the largest jamatiya population, with 27,337 and next to it comes, West Tripura District with 6,644 while North Tripura District has only 171.

There are controversies regarding the origin of the term Jamatiya. It is mentioned in the book 'Tribes of Tripura' that from the etymolgy 'Jamat'- which in Bengali/Urdu means assemblage, the tribe name Jamatiyas are supposed to have been derived. Some believe that the Jamatiyas were recruited in the army which was called jamat and subsequently came to be known as Jamatiyas. In this connection the views of Somendra Chandra Deb Barma and Omesh Saigal are worth mentioning here. In the book entitled 'Tripura Rajyaer Census Bibarani' 1931, Somendra Deb Barma states that " The Jamatiyas in the past served in the army of Tripura. The word Jamat means a group or a congregation of people. The army which was formed by them was called jamat. Since then they have been known as Jamatiyas." Omesh Saigal holds the view that 'Jamat in Urdu means an assemblage of persons. The former rulers of Tripura used to recruit his army from a class of Tribals who were not only warriers but also has proved their loyalty to him. A fair proportion of his (sic) armed forces were drawn from amongst the Jamatiyas who formed a group in his(sic) army, and it was from this fact that they derived their clan name. In the opinion of others, the term jamatiya is derived from the word 'Jama' which means tax and twiya meaning not to bear the burden of. They hold the opinion that as

the Jamatiyas were serving in the army, they were allowed to enjoy these privileges.

The abovementioned view is also supported by the statement of W.W. Hunter. He asserts that "the Jamatiyas are the fighting caste of Tipperhas and are well fitted for jungle warfare. They are exempted from all forced coole labour, a privilege of which they are tenacious and the infringement of which was the cause of sanguinary rebellion some years ago." Yet another group of elder persons of the Jamatiya community are of the opinion that when Pub Narayan(a legendary hero of the Jamatiya community) brought the image of Biyagwang Goriya (one of the popular deities of the Jamatiyas) from the land of Kukis by exhibiting great valour and presented it to the king, the king ordered him to worship the deity in a jamayet i.e. in an assemblage and since then those persons who are worshiping the image of Goria in a group came to be known as Jamatiyas. One is apt to find contradiction in these seemingly opposite views. But the words Jama, Jamat and Jamayet came from the same language , that is Arabic and related to military service rendered by the Jamatiyas. So the three opinions as mentioned above form a paradox which itself is a pointer to the fact that the term Jamatiya is not an ancient one and so also the Tribe. The influence of Arabic became prominent in this region during the rule of the Nawab of Bengal only. The continuous fighting between the kings of Tripura and the Muslims rulers of Bengal paved gradually the way for this Arabic language to penetrate to Tripura thus casting its influence to a great extent.

According to Suhash Chottopadhya, a noted linguist, the following eight tribes namely, the Tipra, Reang, Jamatiya, Noatiya, Koloi, Ulchoi, and Murasing belong to a one and undivided group. Their spoken language is Kagbarak. Kagbarak belongs to the Bodo branch of the Tibeto-Burman language group. Regarding the ethnic origin of the Jamatiyas, the earlier authors have described them as a branch of the Tripuri tribe in their classif ication of the tripuris. R.H. Snyed Hutchinsom is of the

opinion that " The Tippera in the Chittagong Hill Tracts number 23,341 and are scattered through-out the district/ This tribe is also called Tripura and is divided into two classes, the Purna or Tippera proper and the Jamatiyas. In the Census Report of 1901 E.A. Gait states that the Tipperas are divided into Purna or Tipra proper and the Jamatiyas. In the classification of the Tipperahs, Edward Dalton states that the tribes of Tipperahs are four in number- Rajbangsi, Nowatyahs, Jomatias(sic)and Reangs.

In describing the origin of the Jamatiyas, Kailsh Chandra Singha holds the view that they are a pure brahch of the Tripuris. They were the main army of Tripura during the ancient period. In this connection E.A.Gait is of the opinion that from them the Tipra kings formally recruited their fighting men. Omesh Saighal holds the view that they were given a special position amongst the tribals and were exempted from Ghar Chuktis (House tax) and given settlement mainly in the Udaipur division. As a result of this, the Jamatiyas , though they once belonged to the Tripuri Tribe, managed to evolve a political system of their own and developed economically and socially. Regarding the origin of the Jamatiyas, Kailash Chandra Singha also holds the view that the Jamatiya tribe is a branch of the Tripuri tribe. In his Rajmala he has mentioned that the tripras or twipras are chiefly divided into four branches e,g.(i) Tipra(ii)Jamatiya (iii) Noatiya and (IV) Riang. These branches are further sub-divided into various branches. The view of Thakur Nagendra Chandra Deb Barma is worthmentioning here. He points it out that it is known from the investigation of the history that when Udaipur was the capital of Tripura, tribal people were given permanent residence round the capital of Tripura, tribal people were given for doing various duties of the State. The system of paying monthly salaries to the soldiers/ did not exist at that time. In stead,they were given land settlement around the capital. This assemblage of the community gradually established matrimonial alliance and blood relationship among themselves and ultimately developed in to a separate endogamous community.

In this context it should be noted here that the Jamatiyas are concentrated mainly in the Amarpur and Udaipur Sub-Division which were erstwhile capitals of Tripura. Amarpur was the capital of Tripura for a short period during the reign of Amar Manikya and and Rangamati which was later named as Udaipur during the reign of Udai Manikya was the capital of Tripura for a long time.

In this context, the view of Somendra Chandra Deb Barma in the Census Repott of 1931 is worth mentioning. He holds the view that the Tripuri Khatriyas are divided into five groups(i) Puran Tripura (ii) Deshi Tripura (iii) Jamatiya (iv) Riang (v) and Noatiya. These five groups belong to the Khatriya Varna. Ethnologically also , the Jamatiyas are akin to the Tripuris and their physical characteristics also resemble those of the Tripuris. Their language is also the same. They speak Tripuri in a drawl tone.

The above mentioned views indicate that the Jamatiyas are supposed to have originated from the defence personnels of Tripura. As the armed forces of the previous rulers of Tripura consisted of different tribes e.g. Tripuris, Noatiyas and the Riangs. There is every chance of the admixture of various tribes in the formation of the Jamatiya tribe. There is also a little trace of the Kukis in this tribe as Kherpang lineage of the Biyagwnang Goriya came from Kuki land along with the image of Biyagwang Boriya. Besides this, to speak more precisely, as the Tripuris held a predominant position on the armed forces of Tripura, they played vital part in the formation of the Jamatiya tribe. The matrimonial relationship among the families of the defence personnels played an important role as a melting pot in the first stage of its development. Later on the neighbouring tribals who were attracted by their settled cultivation, disciplined life, administrative pattern and unity entered this community by matrimonial relationship.

Notes and References

1. Bhattacharjee, S.R. : Tribal insurgency in Tripura, A Study in Exploration of Causes, Inter-India Publications, New Delhi, 1988, P.24.
2. Sinha, K.C. : Rajmala, 1896,P.2.
3. Majumdar, R.C. : Bangla Desher Itihas, Vol.II, 1973, P.480.
4. Sutherland Robert L, Woodward Julian L & Maxwell Milton A : Introductory Sociology, Sixth edition, Oxford and IBH Publishing Co.,New Delhi, P.29.
5. Chatterji, Sunit Kumar : Kirat- Jana-Kriti, 1974, P.25.
6. Ganguli, J. B. : Economic Probles of the Jhumias of Tripura, 1968, P.51.
7. Captain Lewin : The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers there in , 1869, P.85.
8. Hunter, W.W. : A Statistical Account of Bengal, 1873, Vol. VI., P.503.
9. Hunter, W.W. : Opcit, P.499.
10. Ibid.
11. Sen Kali Prasann : Sri Rajmala,1926, Vol.I, P.118.
12. Demographic and Socio-Economic Profiles of the Hill Areas of North East India, Census Of India, 1961, 1970, P.106.
13. Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1908, Volume XIII, P.121.
14. Hunter, W.W., opcit, P.509.

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF JAMATIYAS

Social Life of the Jamatiya Community

The family as the standard social unit has been found in one form or another at almost all levels of cultural development. The form and basis of familial groupings have varied from time to time andfrom place to place. Different types of families have been observed in different societies and at different points of time and space. But as a basic social group family existed an all societies and at all times.

According to Lowie, the family may be considered as an association that corresponds to the institution of marriage. Radcliffe Brown includes in the family husband and wife and their children or child. In a tribal family relationship between members is to be understood in a sociological as much a psychological sense. Thus, the family will include not only the husband and wife and their minor children but also parents, in-laws and wife/husband of sons/daughters. The ideal household in most tribes would include two or more married couples and their children.

The society of the Jamatiyas is patriarchal. The superior position of the male over the female is acknowledged in the society in all matters. Socially, the Jamatiyas are endogamous. In this respect E.A. Gait is of the opinion that unlike all other tribes of Tripura, which have different daphas or sub-divisions among them, the Jamatiyas is a single endogamous tribe without having any sub-class in it.

The basic unit of the Jamatiya society is the family. It appears from the survey of a Jamatiya village that nuclear, simple or independent type i.e. family consists of a married couple with its unmarried children or married couple having no children has the highest frequency. Next in order comes the type of family consisting of married couple and their unmarried children together with the parents of the man.

Next comes the extended or joint type of family consisting of several married brothers with their spouses and children as well as parents and unmarried siblings, also married son with their wives and children. It should be noted that monogamy , i,e. a man with marxthx one wife is the general rule of the society. A polygamy type of family i.e. a man with more than one wife may be found in some cases. But they are exceptions. The rule of polyandry i.e. a woman with more than one husband is strictly prohibited in their society. Generally disparity in income, immortality , lack of obedience to the elders, unwillingness are considered as main causes resposible for the break up of the Jamatiya family. The adoption of a child boy or girl is quite mmmmg frequent among tje Jamatiyas. The adopted son is called Pushimanibwsa or Lirmachwia. Generally only childless, well to do couples indulge in such practices. Some times this is done through religious functions.

Position of Women:

Generally the position of the Jamatiya woman is the same as that of husband's. She is hard worker and she works harder than a man in many respects. But still, her status is recognised by the position of her husband. Usually the male dominates over the woman. The father as the head of the household occupies the central position inthe family. Lineage and descent are traced through the father's line, and so the society is patrilineal. The woman never challenges the superiority of the man. The women are restricted to take part in village council elections. The women spend their whole life in performing household chores only. She prepares food and cleans the house, fetches water and fuel and clean domestic utensils and clothes. All these give her little time for recreation.

The role of the Jamatiya women in the economic sphere of the family is very important. The women help the male members in different agricultural activities such as weeding , transplanting , harvesting etc. They also weave their clothes of daily use on their indigenous looms. In the matter of religious rites the status of a women is much lower than that of a man. The woman are prohibited from becoming an Ochay(traditional priest) of their community.

Kinship System:

The members of the Jamatiya society of Tripura are tied together in groups by various types of bonds of which the lineal descent and marriage ties are important. The unilateral extended lineage group is known as Santay. All members of the same santay arebelieved to be originated from the same parents. In case of death of any member of a Santay all the members belonging to the same santay has the right to perfoim the saaddha (funeral ceremony) for a member of the same santay. Generally marriage relationship does not take place between the members of the same santay. Generally a santay is known by the name of a prominent member of that lineage. Some of the Santays are as follows:

1. Kumariya Langta Santay : It is named after the name Kumariya langta, a famous saint who did not wear clothes.
2. Parikshit Santay: It is named after Parikshit, a famous Jamatiya Sardar under whose leadership Jamatiya revolt of 1863 took place.
3. Biyagwnang Kherfang Santay: It is named after the Kherfang og the Biyagwnang Gariya.

There are two types of kinship

terminologies of the Jamatiyas- Classified and Denotative. The traditional norm of the Jamatiya society is regarded as classificatory system. The denotative terms are adopted from the neighbouring castes and communities. A chart of Jamatiya kinship terminologies has been given below:

Terms in English	Terms used by the Jamatiyas
Father's father	Chuchu
Father's mother	Nany
Mother's father	Chuchu
Mother's mother	Nany
Father	Baaba
Mother	Anma
Father's elder brother	Yong Chwla
Father's young brother's wife	Kaki
Father's elder brother's wife	Yongbwrwy
Father's younger brother	Kaka
Father's elder sister	Yong bwrwy
Father's younger sister	Pi
Father's elder sister's husband	Yong Chwla
Father's young sister's husband	Piyay
Mother's elder brother	Yong Chwla
Mother's elder brother's wife	Yong bwrwy
Mother's younger brother's wife	Mami
Mother's younger brother	Mama
Mother's elder sister	Yongbwrwy
Mother's elder sister's husband	Yong Chwla
Mother's young sister	Totoy
Mother's younger sister's husband	Mama
Husband's father	Baaba, Baabsong, Kwraa

Husband's mother ..... Anams/ Kwra jwk/ anmasong

Wife's father ——— Baaba/ Kwraa/ Baabasong

Wife's mother ——— anma/ Anmasong/ Kwra jwk

Husband's mother's elder brother ——— Yongchla

Husband's mother's younger brother ——— Mama

Elder brother ——— Dada

Wife's elder brother ——— Dasong

Husband's elder brother ——— Dasong/ Dada

Elder sister ——— Bay

Wife's elder sister ..... Bay/ Baysong

Husband's elder sister ..... Bay/ Baysong

Wife's elder sister's husband ..... Kwmwy

Husband's elder sister's husband ..... Kwmwy

Son's wife's father .... Chamay

Son's wifw's mother ..... Chamay jwk

Daughter ..... Sa jwk/ Sa jwkman

Daughter's husband .... Chamwrwysa

Younger brother .... Fayon/ Fayong

Wife's younger brother ..... Prang/ Angprang/Brprang

Son .... Sa/ Ansa jwla/ Busa jwla

Son's son .... Suk/Angsuk/ Achu

Brother's son ..... Batija/ Dadani bwsa

Elder sister's son ..... Baaygina/ Baaynibwsa

Younger sister's son ..... Yongchwla/ Anghannok-jwnibusala

Wife's youner sister's son ..... Yongchwla/ Ayong/ Ayong-chwla

Son's daughter ..... Suk/ Angsuk/ Busuk/

Husband ..... Say/ Anghwwy/ Bihik

Son's wife ..... Han jwk/ Han jwksa/Hansa

Wife .... Hwwy/ Anghwwy/Bihik

Younger brother's wife ..... Oay jwk/ Buway jwksong/ Buway jwrog

Elder's brother's wife ..... Buchuwy

Widow ..... Randi

Widower ..... Randa

Adopted son ..... Rimanchwla

The Jamatiyas use certain words which show the position of the kin whether he is junior or senior to particular relative with whom the reference is made. The followings are a few examples of the indication of such differentiation of age:

a) Father's elder brother is yongchwla, father's brother is Kaka.

b) Father's elder brother's wife is yongbwrwy, father's younger brother's wife is Kaki.

c) Elder brother is Dada; younger brother is fayung.

Again the differentiation of age is marked by the application of certain suffix or prefix terms such as:

Kotor means eldest,

Kwchar means middle or second eldest,

Kusu means next to Kwchar

It should be mentioned here that unlike the Bengalee kinship terminologies, in the Jamatiyas kinship terminologies, the adjectives are always added at the end of a term. Thus where as bay indicates sister, bay kotor means eldest sister.

Life Cycle : From birth to death the life of the Jamatiyas is surrounded by various taboos requiring a number of rituals, sacrifices and fesivals performed at different stages of life. An attempt has been made here to describe the different customs they observe at birth of a child , at marriage and death.

Pregnancy and birth:- The state of pregnancy of the woman is considered as one of the critical stages in her life. Though she becomes physically weak household duties do not give her any rest. Some times as result of excessive hard work miscarriage takes place. When miscarriage takes place within the first three months of pregnancy it is called Kwchak Kulumanni. If it takes place after

that period it is called talsokoa. There is a belief current among them that a pregnant woman should be given what she desires to eat, of course according to the means of the family. Otherwise the newly born baby would be too greedy to have the food items his mother could not have. Pregnant women are prohibited from eating mirga (a variety of fish) and fishes which have no scales. At the fifth month of pregnancy, areligious function name Katheuw is performed to ensure easy and safe birth. The puja is to be performed in the morning and evening . The morning performance is called Aychuk Katheuw, and the evening performance is called Sariykatheuw. Generally duck is scrificed in the puja.

There is belief that if the pregnant woman feels that the right side of her abdomen is heavy or if that part bulges she would give birth to a male child. The similar feeling on the left side indicated the coming of a female child. The pregnant woman should not cross the court of pain(shulogoti) drawn on the earth otherwise , she may be in danger at the time of child birth. She would should not work while there is eclipse going on. She may give birth to a deformed child if she works during eclipse. If a pregnant woman kills a fish by throwing it down on the ground violently her child would have some sort ofdefect. Twin babies will be born if a pregnant woman takes fruits joined together. During pregnancy of the wife the husband should not go for hunting , act as assistant to the Ochay (Priest) and sacrifice an animal or participate in the cremation of any body.

The general notion of the Jamatiyas towards barren men and women is that they are deprived of the grace of god. They should not take active part in many of the socio-religious functions. It is considered inauspicious to see the face of a barren man or woman early in the morning, at the time of getting up from the bed and at the time of departure for an important work. The Jamatiyas perform certain pujas in order to cure one of barrenness. This puja is performed in a twysa(canal) and the puja is officiated by the Ochay(Priest).

This puja is known as Twysa-baauw(barrenness removing puja). The number of persons present in the puja should be seven. After the completion of the puja all personds except the Ochay take the prasad.

The women is forbidden to take or use the water of that twysa(small canal). Only when the son of that woman grows up and feeds his mother with the fish caught from that twysa the restriction put on her will be lifted.

Marriage:

The Jamatiyas some degree of religious values in the performance of marriage ceremony on the part of a man or woman. So some special privileges and importance are given to the married persons in their society.The Jamatiya society is patriarchal and patrilineal. It is an endogamous tribe. Monogamy is the ideal and general rule. In case of barrenness,death, divorce etc. a person may marry a second wife. The average age for marriage of the Jamatiyas living in the interiorand backward villages differ from that of those living in the advanced and urbanized villages. In the backward area child marriage is still prevailing in a large scale and the bride is senior to the bridegroom in respect of age. The average age of marriage varies from 12 to 16 in case of males and 15 to 18 in case of females. Regarding the age range of the girls their view is that the girls should be physically fit for agricultural and domestic work before their marriage. Among the educated Jamatiyas adult marriage is the general rule. In this kind the average age varies from 20 to 25 years in case of females. Here the bride is generally junior to the groom in respect of age. Except the months of Chaitra(March-April),, Vadra(August-September), and Pous(December-January) marriage may be performed an all the nine monthsfor. The month of Magh(January-February) is considered as the best month for marriage ceremony. Most of the marriages

are performed in the second half of the morning. It should be noted here that the Jamatiyas put emphasis on an auspicious date according to the Panjika. For the purpose of marriage ceremony, the Jamatiyas prapare two pandals with bamboo. One pandal is for worshipping of the fourteen gods, and theother is for the functioning of the marriage cereminy. A hadya(altar) is constructed atthe centre of the marriage pandal.

There are two types of marriage current among the Jamatiyas. The first type is marriage by service, a system in which the groom lives at his father in law's house. It is known as Chawmrwy nahomwng/nahomani. According to their custom, after marriage the bridegroom has to stay for a minimum period of two years in his father in law's house. Generally, the father in law gives him a separate house and land for this purpose. Such type of marriage is known by the following three names which have certain special characteristics. These names are: Chamwrwy Tisamani or Chamwrwy tisamwng; Chamwrwy nahomani or Chamwrwy nahomwng ; Chamwrwy Kamani. The second type of marriage is known as hanjwk nahomwng and hanjwk rohomani or hanjwk rohomwng. Under this system , the marriage prpposal is initiated by the groom's side. The bride's side calls this marriage as hanjwk rohomwng (sending of the bride). On the other hand the groom's side calls this system of marriage as hanjwk nahomani/ hanjwk nahomwng (accepting of the bride).

Cross cousin marriage as well as parallel cousin marriage is forbidden. Marriage within the blood relationship up to three generations from the maternal side but from the father's side up to santay's side is also restricted. A Jamatiya is restricted to marry his younger or elder brother's widow and the elder sister of his wife. On the other hand there is no bar inmarrying one's wifes younger sister. A widow is required to marry a widow and a widow is also required to marry a widower.

In the Jamatiya community the system of bride -price has been in existence since time immemorial in the form of marriage by service. The practice of dowry is seldom found. The system of exchange of garlands and scattering of flowers at weeding is not in existence among them.

The rate of divorce is quite high among the Jamatiyas. Divorce can be sought on the ground of madness, impotance, barrenness, adultery and being quarrelsome to the moyol panchay(Head of the regional council) of that region. According to custom the party which divorces has to pay the fees of divorce(which is six score rupees i.e. Rs.120/- six adhulies(six fifty paise), six sikies (six twenty five paisa), six duanies(six twelve paise) and six anies. Thus the total amount stands as Rs. 125.68 to the moyol panchay. In case of divorce of a couple with children, the husband rarely demands the children to be with him. It is a common picture in the Jamatiya community that after the divorce the minor children stay with their mother. It is also a custom that if a person marries a divorced woman or a widow with children, them though these children may address him as father, they do not get the share of property of their foster father.

Rites connected with the disposal of the dead body:

The rites connected with the disposal of the body varies from place to place to an extent. The cropse is washed with warm water and rubbed with oil andthen wrapped with a piece of new cloth. The clan members and relatives carry the corpse to the cremation ground and the funeral pyre is made and arranged by them. Before lighting the funeral pyre cooked rice is offered to the dead body with the curry of fish,egg or meat of pigeon. The sons then go round the dead and the eldest

son does the lighting of the mouth of the corpse with his left hand first of all and then other sons and relatives offer fire one by one in the same manner. It should be noted that the eldest son is to start the lighting first. After the completion of cremation all after taking bath return tothe house of the dead. A chopper, turmeric, tulshi leaf(holy basil), a small water pot containing water and fire prepared with fire wood are kept ready. All of them touch all these articles and return home. On the next day some of the clan members go the cremation ground and collect the residual bone of the cremated body and put it into a bamboo tube. The tube is wrapped with a white piece of cloth and placed in the courtyard surronded by a covered fencing. The enclosed space is called bari. Since that day the sons of the dead wear dhorna(a piece of cloth from which a piece of iron hangs. This cloth is worn round the neck.)Then one of the sons, usually the eldest one, or the youngest one or with the the permission of the eldest one, any other son offers puja in the bari daily till the sradho ceremony is held. The other sons simply observe fast.

The relatives of the dead who are not his kinsman perform the sradha ceremony after three nights. But the santays(belonging to the same lineage) perform the sradha on the thirteenth day. The sons of the dead shave their heads one day previous to the day of sradha issunited from the neck. Religious songs are sung on the night of the sradha ceremony.

After the completion of the sradho ceremony, the period of taking vegetarian food is ended by taking bodas prepared with the leaves of bitter tasting vegetable i.e. young leaves of korola (balsam apple), dimy(a kind of pot herb) etc. amount a fried dehydrated fish and rice powder. In this way the ceremony of sradho is ended. Children below eighteen month of age are not cremated, they are buried.In case of

the death of a pregnant woman the foetus is taken out from the womb of the mother . Then the mother is cremated and the foetus is buried.

Traditional dress, ornaments and handicrafts:

The traditional dress and ornaments and the pattern of wearing the same by the Jamatiyas women is similar to those of those of the Tripuris and many other tribal communities of Tripura. Most of the Jamatiya women still weave their own clothes. Their handloom clothes are beatifully designed and longlasting. Among their garments the riinanyborok(a piece of cloth for covering the lower part of the body-waist downwards), the riisa (a piece of cloth to cover the breasts of the girls) are worth mentioning. But dresses of the men is similar to those of the neighbouring Bengalees. Men wear dhuti, shirt, vests,etc. The use of Kanchwlwy borok(a kind of traditional jacket worn at the time of agricultural work) is very common among them.

In the past, the Jamatiya women were fond of various kinds of ornaments. The ornaments used by them were rangbwtang (a chain or thread studded with coins for wearing round their necks.), brindabonful (a kind of brass or silver ear rings), boliya(a kind of thick bangle made of different metals), sang-geyng (a kind of metal made hair clip in their bun)etc. But the above mentioned traditional ornaments have been abondoned by them for a long time.

Bamboo holds an important role in the Jamatiya community. IN fact, bamboo is so indispensible in their lifethat their daily life cannot be thought of without bamboo. They make different articles of daily use with bamboo which distinctly bears the high standard of Jamatiya craftmanship. The various bamboo made articles of the Jamatiyas are as follows:

a) Langa:- a kind of bamboo made basket used for carrying

articles from one place to another.

b) Chenpay:- smaller than langa in size mostly used for carrying different articles to the jhum.

c) Khuturuk:- a kind of bamboo made basket used for storing valuable articles.

d) Tisiyng:- A kind of langa with gaps in the waves used for carrying firewood, green vegetables, pitcher etc.

e) Dul :- A kind of large hollow shaped bamboo basket used for storing paddy.

f) Bayliyng:- A kind of bamboo made winnowing -fan used for winnowing grain.

g) Wasung:- A kind of bamboo made tube used as a container of different kinds of cooking articles.

Besides the use of above mentioned articles they are skilled in making various kinds of articl es to catch fish. The tools are as follows: Jurukha(a funnel shaped fish trap); Socheying(a round shaped bamboo made box to trap fish); Sudan(akind of fishing net made bamboo strips)

Wine:

Wine plays a very important role in the life of the Jamatiyas. It is closely associated with their socio-religous life. The arrangement for the preparation of wine is found in almost every Jamatiya house. Generally the women are skilled in it. In their traditional religious rites and functions the Ochay offers wine to the angry evil spirits in order to propitiate them. Some times , if one has to make a complaint to the Chokdiriri (head of the village council) against some body and seeks justice he must offer wine as fee. Above all it is used an important item of hospitality. Guests are enttertained with it.

Wine is also taken as medicine for a lot of aliment. A mother after child birth is given chuwan(an essential

ingredient to prepare medicinal wine) mixed with warm water. In case of swelling in any part of the body chuwa is made into a paste by mixing water , the paste is then warmed and applied on the affected place. Besides this, bwewyrog, burasa who are considered responsible for various diseases are worshipped with wine by their Ochay.

There are various categories of wine and they are known by different names. The two main categories of wine are known as Chok or arak(refined wine which is preserved in bottles) and panchwa(unrefined wine which is prepared in an earthen jar and taken with a bamboo pipe). Panhwa is known by different names mostly according to the name of the container.

For example when panchwa is taken from a small earthen vessel it is known as bwtwk; when the same panchwa from a bigger container i.e. from an earthen jar(darwkay) it is known as darwkay; when the panchwa is taken from a still bigger container i.e. thila (a bigger jar with a bulging belly) it is called thila. Of course when the quality of panchwa is half or less than of a thila it is called gora.

At the time of community drinking the importance is given to equality. Every body should have equal share irresponsible personal demand or capacity to consume the drink. In case of chok drinking if it is found that after the distribution of one cup of chok to each person if some quantity of the wine is left over some more quantity of wine is added to it and then it is distributed again. In case the host is unable to supply extra quantity of the wine, the left over is not utilised.

Political Life:-

The traditional administrative system of the Lamatiyas is democratic in nature. The whole Jamatiya community is socially controlled by their Honda(the Supreme Council). For the decentralisation of the power of thehonda, it is divided into three separate inits. These are:

a) Luku(Village level council)
b) Moyol(Regional,council)
c) Hoda (Community level Supreme Council)

Besides these three tier system of administration there is an Advisory Committee of eight executive members drawn from all over Jamatiya community. The Village Council mainly consists of one headman(Chokdiri) and two more assistants (Khandols). Usually chokdiri is directly elected by the senior male members of the luku.The essential qualifications for the post of the Chokdiri is that he should be married person with wife and children and should be economically sound. The village council deals only with the minor socio-economic disputes of the village. Justice is done according to the traditional rule. The chokdiri maintains good relation with the moyol panchay and the hoda okra. He participates or sends two representatives (adongs) in the annual supreme council meeting. He supervised all sorts of social functions like marriage, death or any other rituals and also looks after the welfare of the village.

The moyol is the next level administrative organisation to the luku. A regional council consists of 30 to 50 village councils of a compact geographical area. There are two headmen(moyol panchay) in each regional council. They are elected by the adong of all the lukus under that particular moyo. The moyol panchay should also be a married persons with wife and children. He maintains law and order and the welfare of the region. They are empowered to decide all kinds of inter village disputes of the r2gion with the help of the

chokdiris. But his judgement is not final . He may send a case to hoda okra for final judgement.

Supreme Council :

Hoda is the supreme council of the Jamatiya community. The head of the Hoda is called hoda-okra. Later on the system of two okras was introduced which was one earlier. The two okras are elected by the adongs of each village council in the annual, coference which is held in the month of Agrahanya. The okras are generally elected for a period of five years. Regarding qualifications, they must be religious minded well known personality with adeqate experience of the functions of their traditional administrative organisations and customery laws. The hoda-okra is the formal spokesman of the entire Jamatiya community. His verdict is final. All cases like divorce, adultery kidnapping, anti-social activities and complicated cases which could not be solved by the village council and regional council are dealt with by the okra. The hoda is the highest court of appeal vested with the highest degree of legislative , administrative and judicial powers.

Besides the three tier system of administration of the Jamatiyas, there is an advisory council consistimg of eight executive members. The aim regarding the creation of this advisory committee is to give an opportunity to the young and educated Jamatiyas to enter this committee and to reflect their modern and scientific out look in their community. This council also acts as a check on the traditional dictatorial tendencies of the okras.

Religion:

During the Census of 1911, 1961 and 1901 the

entire Jamatiya population retutned themselves as Hindus. The present day Jamatiya religion may be characterised as a mixed type of Vaishnavism and animism. The Jamatiyas accepted vaishnavism during the regn of Maharaja Birchandra Manikya(1861-1896). The Census report mentions how they came to embrace vaishnavism. During the reign of Maharaja Birchandra Manikya there was an official named Oakiaray Hazari who was very cruel and tyranical. The Jamatiyas rose in revolt against his oppression in 1862 under the leadership of Parikshit Jamatiya. The Maharaja succeeded in crushing the rebellion with the help of the Darlongs(one of the tribes of Tripura). Birchandra, however, did not punish the leader and spared his life. Touched by this gesture of generosity the Sardar accepted Vaishnavism and promised to follow the customs of Vaishnavism. After that, the whole community came to accept Vaishnavism. So this armed rebellion of the Jamatiyas was turned into a cultural revolution by Birchandra.

Besides the worshipping of many deities of Hindu belief such as Kali, Durga, Saraswati etc. and observe of many rituals connected with birth and death , they also perform their traditional pujas like the Goriya Puja, Lampra Puja, Maylwngma Puja, Khulwngma puja etc. It should be mentionrd here that their traditional pujas are officiated by their traditional priest(Ochay) and non-traditional puja may be performed by a brahmin priest. In their religious affairs there is synthesis of vaishnavism , saktism and their traditional system of worship. Their religous belief may be turned as polytheist. Animism or rather spiritism is an imprtant factor for the Jamatiya religion. One of the objects of their puja is to obtained immunity from any unwaranted form of danger. They perform these pujas on for obtaining immediate result.

The deities, spirits and other supernatural agencies which are worshipped by the Jamatiyas may be divided into the following categories.

a) The worship of the deities which have come from their traditional puja, are the Lanprapúja the Maylwmgma puja, the Khulwngma puja, the Noksu puja, the Burasa puja, the Bwrwyrag puja, the Mahadeb and Madev puja , chouddo devata, Mwy tammwng or twymanmwng, Kuwaychanayma etc.

b) The worship of the deities which have been borrowed from the neighbouring castes and communities as a result of acculturation are the Durga puja, the Sani puja, the Trinath puja, the Laxmi puja, the Saraswati puja, the Rakshakali puja, the Rathajatra Festival, the Janmastami fesyival etc.

The Jamatiya Revolt of 1863:

The most important event during the early years of the reign of Birchandra Manikya was the revolt of the Jamatiya under their leadership Parikshit. Birchandra Manikya succeeded his brother Ishan Chamdra Manikya in 1862 A.D. His succession to the thrine was subsequently challenged by half brothers Nilkrishna and Kalathakur who brought a suit in the court against Bir Chandra Manikya. Nilkrishna and his party claimed that Birchandra was never appointed jubraj or heir apparent to the throne by his brother Ishan Chandra Manikya In the midst of this internal quarrel among the members of the Royal family, the king arrested and deposed Guru Bipin Behari Goswami from power who previously exercised full control in the political affairs of Tripura and possessed a strong and dominating personality. The result was that , the Thakurs became all powerful and the king was helpless and fully depended on them. They were engaged in selfish interest. "It appears from enquiries which I have hold," remarked the Magistrate of Tripura District, "that since the removal of the Gooroo from power , no method or arrangement of any kind exists inthe

administration at Agartala,and that the Rajah, leaving all matters in the hands of a number of irresponsible and repacious dependants, exercises no supervision whatever his own affairs.[2] So long as the dispute about the succession to the throne remained unsettled, the people were affraid that they would have the sympathy of their friends and dependants, It was for this reason many of king's subjects refused to pay their rents.[3]

In this situation, the king sent Oakhirai Hazari an officer, to collect rents from his subjects. It was stated that while he was engaged in tax collection at some jamatiya villages, he tried to exercise from them some undue privileges specially forced coolie labour. The Jamatiyas protested because previously they were exempted from the forced coolie/ labour, a privilege of which they were very tenacious. Oakirai Hazari insisted on it. The Jamatiyas became so much angry about this matter that they even refused to co-operate in the collection of rents. Being insulted, Oakhirai Hazari reported to the king , that the Jamatiyas stopped to give rents and were preparing for the revolt. The king did not any inquiry about this matter, and sent an army to collect rents from the Jamatiyas by force. " As a natural consequences of sending out a number of armed ruffians under no command or discipline whatever, an affray very soon occured, in which three of the Rajah's men were wounded by spears,and two of the Jamatiyas shot; the heads of those were cut off and are now hanging up in terrorem at Agartala.[4] After the incident, revolt started at full length. This revolt is known as Jamatiya Revolt of 1863.

The king being unable to suppress the revolt sought the help of the Kukis at Kailasahar, Six hundred

Kukis were sent against the Jamatiyas by two Kuki chiefs Murchuilala and Happuilala under two generals Changkula and Chanda respectively. The Jamatiyas fought their best and were defeated finally. " About 200 Tipperahs(jamatiyas) have been killed, many villages burnt down , the inhabitants of of which are wondering about the plains of Tipperah.[5] It was repotted that 200 heads of the Jamatiyas who were brought to Agartala by the Kukis, as a token of their victory.[6] Parikshit the leader of the Jamatiyas who was captured ,was brought to the king along with some Jamatiyas by the Kukis. It was stated in the Census Report of 1931 that the King released them on after converting them to Vaishnavism.[7]

Regarding the cause of this revolt, Birchandra Manikya informed the British authority that' tthe disturbances in the hills have been connived at, and are being fostered by his brothers, Neelkrishen and Kala Thakoor etc." But the then District Magistrate of Tripura had opinion that it originated between his own tax-collectors and ryots. In his words, " I am convinced that neither Neelkrishen or Kala Thakur have had any hand in this risings. The Rajah's coduct in sending out a number of armed ruffians to collect rent andafterwards cutting off and hanging up the heads of the murdered men, instead of holding a strict dispassionate enquiry into the merits of the affray, were quite sufficient to account for the disturbances in the first instance, and after show of hostility and combination against him, without any assistance on the part of his brothers, however hostile their own feeling might be.[8] The District Magistrate complained that the disturbances in the hills had now occured in one form or another for several years past, and no paper remedy

had as yet been applied to this constantly recurring evil. In his opinion, the matter should be brought to the serious notice of the Government, inorder that efficient measures should be taken tom prevent like occurances for the future.

The king informed the British Governmmnt that he had already taken steps to carry out the wishes of the Government in this matter. The Government of Tripura had been entered into amicable arrangements with Jamatiyas, and he had adopted means , by the establishment of police stations and courts for the trial of all disputes, to render his subjects secure and contended.[9]

Notes and References

1. Lowie, Robert, H : Social Organization, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1950, P.215.

2. Mackeniji Alexander : Memorandum on the North East Frontier of Bengal, 1869, P.67.

3. Bengal Judicial Progs Oct. 1864 O'donel's Report toGordon.

4. Mackenji Alexander , Opcit. , P.67.

5. Bengal Judicial Progs October 1864, no. 47.

6. Sinha Kailas Chandra , : Rajmala, P.187.

7. Deb Barma Soumendra Chandra : Tripura Census Bibaran, 1931 A.D., Tripura State Press, 1933,P. 71.

8. Meckenji Alexander, Opcit., P.67.

9. Bengal Judicial Progs. , December 1864, Mangle's Report to the Commissioner of Chittagong.

CHAPTER IV

****

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE JAMATIYA SOCIETY

****

Social change, whether on a grand systematic scale or within a recurrent local cycle, flows from the choices, decisions, and dilemmas faced by individual men and women. Here an effort has been made to include the individual's perspective, his understandings and motivations. To attempt to do this, the field survey of two Jamatiya villages i.e. Shilghati and Kunjamura and under the theoretical framework of social change as stated earlier, the whole structure of Jamatiya Society has been examined . Examination of available theoretical models of social structure and social change and findings of available field-studies while providing useful insights are not of much use in explaining the phenomenon under reference. Picking up the insights gathered from the different studies, the model of continuity and change in the Jamatiya society has been constructed which could satisfactorily explain the changes taking place in small community. The model is as follows:

In a harmonic social system, change, to be effective, has to come from outside. The momentum for this change has to be continuous. For exerting continous pull on another system , the change-agent has to have linkages with the system where change is to be introduced. Linkages can be sustained only if there is a reciprocal dependency relationship between the system wanting to introduce change and the system subjected to change.

When this model was applied to the Jamatiya community, it was found that the Jamatiyas have a harmonic system, and there have been not so much contacts with the rest of the world. Hence it has been a great difficulties on the part of the government agencies to penetrate into their system as a matter of routine(i.e. through the ordinary tribal welfare programmes). Since there has been no reciprocal dependency relationship, the Jamatiyas did not feel the indis-

indispensability of aid from the government. Here the main findings of the Project has been analysed in the conext of the above model.

Education:

The development of education in Shilghati has been observed more in comparison to the development of education in Kunjamura village. The easy system of the means of transportation may be the one factors and Shilghati in this respect is directly situated near by the frequent road mobility. Both villages are dominated by the population of the Jamatiyas. Shilghati is located on the northern side of the river Gomoti and is about 3 K.M. from Kakraban which is a sub- urban area. There is one High School, one Teacher Training College, one Sub-Post Office and one market at kakraban. There are one hundred and seventy eight families in this village with a total population of about 2000.

There is a Senior Basic School and this was established during the regn of a King. At present there are about eight teachers in this school, out of which five teachers belong to the Jamatiya community. There are some female Jamatiya teachers in this school. The students strength of this school is about 200 out of which the Jamatiya consist of 90 % populations of Jamatiyas of Shilghati are literate and at present , there are five post-graduate degree holders, 3 engineers, one doctor and so many ITI's , Under Social Education Scheme, four Balwadis are functioning in Shilghati.

It was observed through survey that the female population could not continue the primary education. Much and more dropouts was found . I feel that acute poverty

and lack of permanent occupation play a leading role in the dropouts of the Jamatiya girls. It has been also found that many children are interested in education but their parents are unwilling and disinterested to send their children to school. They prefer to send their children for agricultural work.It was also observed that their participation in the higher education is very meager because they lack incentive for further study and secondly they easly get the jobs in the early years of their career . Hence they consider higher education of no use to a great extent.

After comparing the pre and post independent period datas of literacy developments among the Jamatiyas, we find a revolutionary changes. Before independence the literacy rate among the Jamatiyas was almost nil and after independence the literacy rate has increased among them in a swift way. In the way of interview it has been observed that 90 % ofthe population of Shilghat is literate and d ue to it they are discarding so many supertitous activity. Literacy develoment has also changed their way of life. Day labourers were the mark features of Jamatiya women and now they can be seen in the offices and teaching the students in the Balwadi and primary schools. These are the marked manifestation of the social changes in the Jamatiya community of Tripura. At present, the young generation are feeling the necessity of education. This is due to the development of political consciousness and outlook. With the development of communication the young generation have come into close contact with towns and plain area.

Economic condition:

In order to give clear cut picture of the economic condition of the Jamatiyas of Shilghati in relation to their agricultural activities , the analysis of the data of 142 Jamatiya families of this village is given below:-

Sl.No.	Name of the items	Total no. of families		Percentage (%)	
1.	No. of land holding families	120		84.51 %	
2.	No. of landless families	22		15.39 %	
3.	No. of families holding 5 or more than 5 kanis of lands	67		47.18 %	
4.	No. of families partly dependent on Jhum(Shifting cultivation) and partly on settled cultivation	114		80.28 %	
5.	No. of families wholly dependent on shifting cultivation	16		11.27 %	
6.	Land taken on share croping basis	55		38.73 %	
7.	Traditional skill in the family(weaving)	141		99.30 %	
8.	No. of families indebted to money landers,traders etc.	94		66.20 %	
9.	No. of members of the local co-operative society	73		51.41 %	
10.	Assistance from the Govt. since 1970 :				
a)	Agricultural activity	51	96	35.92 %	67.61 %
b)	Village and small scale industries	1		00.70 %	
c)	Irrigation	2		01.41 %	
d)	Others	42		29.58 %	

(This is excluding educational help)

From the above Table it will be clear that only 15.49 % of the Jamatiyas of this village are landless

which is lower than average level of landless of all other tribes of Tripura, which is 20 % . It is pleasing to note that 47.18 % of the Jamatiyas families are holding five or more than five kannis of agricultural land which clearly indicates the soundness of their economic condition In order to supplement their income , most of the Jamatiyas practice M Jhum (shifting) cultivation besides the plough cultivation.

Religion:

Shilghati is predominantly a Hindu village. There is no common worshipping place like temple in this village or Kunjamura. But the people of Paschim para(Wanalwng) perform Rakshakali puja every year at a particular place collectively. This puja is performed on any Saturday or Tuesday in the month of Agrahayana(November-December). Similarly, the people of the Purba Para(Kasambi) also perform Bolong Kate Romani Puja(worship of the God of forest) collectively, under an old banyan tree in this village. This puja is also performed on any Saturday or Tuesday in the month of Agrahayana.

Like other tribes of Tripura, the Jamatiyas of Shilghati also mark a conical symbol on the earthen pot of the Goddess maylwngma. When a family is to be separated from a joint family they have to establish a new earthen pot of maylwngma and it signifies the final separation of the part from the joint family. On the day of this puja they keep their daborok(chopper), axe and all other useful instruments of daily work before the earthen pot of maylwngma for her blessing.

The Annaprashan ceremony(giving rice to the child for the first time) is also performed among the Jamatiyas of the village. On the day of this ceremony, the father of the

child invites relatives and friends according to his capability and it is a custom of their society that all the invitees should come with a presentation.

The Jamatiyas of Shilghati do not invite anyone for taking meal on the day of the sraddha ceremony. Theyonly inform the relatives to observe the period of impurity and to take vegetarian food . The worship of Noksu is also observed in this village by some families. Those who worship Noksu generationwise are according to them, decendant of the Tripuri origin.

A significant change is also found in respect of religious faith of the villagers of Shilghati. The people of this village worship all the major deities of all India Hiduism and at the same time they observe most of the rituals connected withthe human life cycle characterised by some of their distinctive traditional peculiarities. Many of the villagers also have a clear conception about the holy books of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The traditional festivals like Goria, Ker puja, Gang puja , Burasa puja etc are observed in this village along with the Laxmi puja, Sani puja, Trinath puja etc.

It should be noted here that as a result of embracing Vaishnavism they gave up earing of pig, began to wear sacred thread(Paitha) and started to appoint Brhamin priests for the performance of their religious functions.

Language:

All the Jamatiyas of Shilghati irrespective of male and female are bi-lingual(more or less) i.e. Kak-barak and Bengali. The people of Shilghati time and again read various English and

Bengali newspapers such as the Dainik Sambad, The Anand Bazar, The Jugantar ahd the Chini Kak (A kak-barak weekly newspaper) and magazines like the Suday, the Illustrated Weekly, Desh, etc. So in respect of education and modern outlook, shilghat is far ahead of Kunjamura village.

The Jamatiya dialect is one of the eight dialects of the kagbarak language. According to the Census Report of 1971 the total number of the Kagbarak speaking persons in Tripura is 3,60,654., which is 79.97 % of the total population of Tripura. The Jamatiya dialect of the Kagbarak language belongs to the Bodo language group. The languages belonging tomthis group originated from the Sino-Tibetan language in which the second largest number of people of the world speaking.

The following list of a few Jamatiya words with their Boro(a language belonging to the Bodo/Boro group, spoken in Assam by the Bodos) equivalents show the close connection of the vocabulary of the two languages.

Jamatiya dialect (Kal-Barak)	Boro	English
Mwtay	Moday	God/ Spirit
Twy	dui	water
Sal	San	Sun
Bukur	biger	skin
Twyma	duima	river
Tao	dau	Bird
Fickung	bikhung	back
Ha	ha	earth
Thaili	Thaili	Plantain

A good amount of borrowed word from the neighbouring tribal and non-tribal languages specially ~~x~~ various local Bengali words are found in the Jamatiya dialect. An amount of Parsi, Arabic and recently some English words can also be traced in the Jamatiya speech. But these borrowed words have been completely assimilated by them. They pronounce them according to their own phonetic structure (characteristic) and as a result these words have lost their original phonetic charatteristic in their Jamatiya use.

Some of the borrowed words are as follows:-

Jamatiya	English	Bengai
Osubida	Difficulty	Oshubidha
Obab	Want	Obhab
Baaba	Father	Baba
Chati	lamp	Chati
Lota	Jar	Luta
Dukh	Sorrow	Dukhkho
Upay	Way	Upay
Kisa	Little	Kisu
Goiam	Guava	Goyam
Pukiri	Pond	Pukur
Ajaira	Unnecessary, Useless	Ajaira
Nay	Grand mother	Nani

Thus the following points of the Jamatiya dialects may be noticed.

a) Inspite of its morphological and syntactical affinity with the Kag-barak language, it differs from it phonetically to some extent.

b) Partial or full nasàization is a feature of this dialect.

c) The using of short forms of pronunciation is also a feature

of it.

d) The Jamatiya dialect belongs to Sino-Tibetan family of the Tibet-Burman Sub family of the Assam Burmese branch of the Bodo/Boro group of the Kag-barak language.

e) Another feature is the presence of many borrowed words from non-tribal languages, mainly the local Bengali. The brief survey gives only the barest outline of the Jamatiya dialect. The Jamatiya dialect is still at the oral stage. Not much has been done to study this language properly so far. The need for a new and comprehensive survey of the language in the light of modern methods of linguistic investigation is an urgent need not only for academic purposes but also for working out of a corredt solution of the language problem. The poor numerical strength of the Jamatiya speaking persons can not be the only yard stick of the standard of this language. The richness of oral literature should also be taken into consideration in this context.

The Jamatiya dialect possess a rich oral literature, songs, legands, tales, proverbs, riddles etc. The lyrics give glimpse of their life. Linguists will be able to discover the vast treasure of their dialect if they study it as one of the sources to the origin and to development of the Tibeto-Burman sub-family of languages.

Previously there was a Cooperative Society among the Jamatiyas of Shilghat. This cooperative society was formed by the villagers and its membership was limited only to the villagers and it was compulsory for them. This system was known as mustichaul(handful of rice). The aim of this society was to perfoim various religious festivals of the village. In this system two assistamts of the Chokdiri of the village collected a certain amount of rice once in a week

from each house and deposited the whole amount of rice to the chokdiri of the village(village headman) The Collected rice was spent only for the performance of the village puja and nobody was allowed to takeany loan from the cooperative society for personal affairs. The customary rule of this society was that after meeting the annual expenditure of the Puja the surplus amount of money from the sale proceeds of the collected rice had to be deposited to the fund of hoda-okra. The Chokdiri of this village used to spent the whole amount of money that was collected as per their annual budget of expenditure.

It should be mentioned here that the poor and incapable persons of this village were generally exempted from donating to this collection but they were allowed to enjoy all the privileges of this village equally. But this system of musti chaul was stopped about 5/6 years ego. At present, for the performance of any village festival they collect subscriptions from individual houses of the village.

At present, in the place of Must Chaul the villagers of Shilghati have started a cooperative society named dharma gola. But unlike the Musti Chaul system the aim of this dharma gola is not to pay for the expenses of any village puja. It is not related to any religious functions. Its aim is to provide monetary help to the villagers in time of their need. It is compulsory for all the villagers of Shilghati to become members of this dharma gola. But no outsider is allowed to become its member. Each individual family of this village has to deposit 10 kg. of paddy in the first instance to become a member of the dharma gola. In this system if a family is incapable to deposit the required amount of paddy, the other villagers would help him to become a member by contributing from their stock. Any villager can take loan from this dharma gola in times of his need at a certain rate of interest which is

generally lower than the village mahajans(money lenders). This dharma gola was started in this village about 15 years ago. Generally, all the villagers select two collectors and one manager for its management in the house of the chakdiri of the village. But the chakdiri has no right to interfere in its administration. This dharma gola is also at work in some neighbouring Jamatiya villages like Hadra, Totabari etc. It should be noted here that this type of dharma gola is not found among the Jamatiyas village of Kunjamura, in Khowai sub-division.

Child marriage is not practised in Shilghat village and the bride is generally junior to the bride-groom in respect of age. The average age for marriage for the boys is between 20 to 25 years and for the girls it is between 15 to 20 which is an exceptional case for the Ja matiya community. This village is related with a large number of Jamatiya villages by marriage relationship. Inter-tribal marriage is also found in this village to some extent. Many boys of this village are in marriage relationship with the Noatia, Trpuri and Reang communities and this has resulted in the synthesis of their culture with those of other tribes.

Generally, the Jamatiya girls donot marry outside their community.In Shilghati village some Jamatiya girls are married to the boys outside their tribe like the Tripuris, But for the performance of such marriage , the approval of the Jamatiya hoda-okra is required. In Shilghati boys of non-Jamatiya Jamatiya community who have married Jamatiya girl and residing in that village have accepted Jamatiya title and have been accepted in the Jamatiya society. These newly admitted Jamatiyas have been enjoying all the privileges of an original member of the Jamatiya community.

Besides these, marriage in the bride's house like that of the Bengalees is also in practice on a limited scale. In this village it was observed that the widows have married only though they could have married a divorced woman or even a virgin.

According to the view of some elder persons of the village, during their childhood they used to play Kadeng (stilt walking). At present due to their non-availability of sukuy(Ghila in Bengali), another popular game named as sukuy throwing has become extinct among them. Badol Khum and Ray Badul were other favourite games of them.

Through the field survey it was found that most of the Jamatiya families have a loin looms in the Shilghat village. Both the boys and girls know the technique of weaving. They prepare there Ritrak(Bedsheets), Rignay(woman's garment), Rituku(napkin)wrappers etc. from their own loinloom. Their prepared articles are well designed and famous for longivity. Formerly, the villagers of Shilghati used to wear Rangbwtang(necklace of coins), Boati(bangles) etc. as their favourite ornaments. The women of Shilghati were also very fond of black colored mill made ganjees. The male members of Shilghati like all other Jamatiya villages also wear Kachlui-borok(one peculiar type of hahdmade shirt for working in the field) during their work in the Jhum or in the field. But at present these dress and ornaments have become obsolete as the Shilghati village for a long time and even many young boys of the village do not know the names of the above mentioned ornaments and dress.

At present most of the male members of the village use dhuti and shirts and the young boys generally wear modern tailored shirts and paints. At their houses the

boys also are fond of wearing their home made napkins.

The girls and the women of this village normally use blouse as their upper garment and Rignay as their lower garment.The married girls also use shanka (Conch shell bangle), and vermillan on their forehead. The girls of this village also prepare one kind of coloured bedsheets by joining two pieces of clothes which is called Rinay-merek in their dialect.(rinay= lower garment,merek= coloured). Formerly they prepared it by the thread spun from cotton collected from their jhum. The colour of these clothes were also prepared in their indigenous process and the colour is also permanent. For making black colour they use fruits of nela tree, for red colour they use the fruits of asung tree and for yellow colour they use defal fruits collected from the near by forest. For making permanent colours they first boil the fruits in water and later soak the threads into the decoction of the fruits. But at present they do not make the threads from the cotton and instead of it they purchase coloured yarns from the market and prepare their garments.

Pattern of Change in Jamatiya Community:

In the past, the Indian villages were regarded as conservative , stoic, unchanging and isolated from one another. So also was the idea about tribal communities. But the rapid changing of social, economic, and leadership pattern of the tribal communities have disproved this theory. As culture is dynamic, the tribal communities have faced and are constantly facing changes. Of course, in spite of the changing pattern of their lives, they have still retained certain traditional characteristics with modifications here and there to a greater or lesser extent.



Jamatiya boys playing Volley-ball

Interviewing with young generation





Cutting Crops in the field



Lady going for water

OKDISD



Girl passing through cane field

←

Performing traditional puja

→





Using traditonal hooka in rest perio

←



girl going school

↑

OKDISD





Finishing rice from husk



Playing Bolley-ball



A lady using machine for tant sari



Burning animal for food ←



Cultural enthusiasm ↑

ONEO KUMAR DAS INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT
LIBRARY
ACC. NO. 32
DATE 8/11/04



Using hooka ↑



Girl reading book ↑