

On the Chépáng and Kúsúnda tribes of Népal, by B. H. HODGSON, Esq.

Amid the dense forests of the central region of Népal, to the westward of the great valley, dwell, in scanty numbers and nearly in a state of nature, two broken tribes having no apparent affinity with the civilized races of that country, and seeming like the fragments of an earlier population.

"They toil not, neither do they spin;" they pay no taxes, acknowledge no allegiance, but, living entirely upon wild fruits and the produce of the chase, are wont to say that the Rajah is Lord of the cultivated country as they are of the unredeemed waste. They have bows and arrows, of which the iron arrow-heads are procured from their neighbours, but almost no other implement of civilization, and it is in the very skilful snaring of the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air that all their little intelligence is manifested.

Boughs torn from trees and laid dexterously together constitute their only houses, the sites of which they are perpetually shifting according to the exigencies or fancies of the hour. In short, they are altogether as near to what is usually called the state of nature as any thing in human shape can well be, especially the Kúsúndas, for the Chépángs are a few degrees above their confreres, and are beginning to hold some slight intercourse with civilized beings and to adopt the most simple of their arts and habits. It is due, however, to these rude foresters to say that, though they stand wholly aloof from society, they are not actively offensive against it, and that neither the Government nor individuals tax them with any aggressions against the wealth they despise or the comforts and conveniences they have no conception of the value of.

They are, in fact, not noxious but helpless, not vicious but aimless, but morally and intellectually, so that no one could without distress behold their careless unconscious inaptitude. It is interesting to have opportunity to observe a tribe so circumstanced and characterised as the Chépángs, and I am decidedly of opinion that their wretched condition, physical and moral, is the result, *not* of inherent defect, but of that savage ferocity of stronger races which broke to pieces and outlawed both the Chépáng and the Kúsúnda tribes during the ferocious ethnic struggles of days long gone by, when tribe met tribe in internecine strife contending for the possession of that soil they knew not how to fructify! Nor



A man of the Chepang Tribe.

is there any lack of reasonable presumptions in favour of this idea, in reference to the Chépángs at least; for the still traceable affiliation of this people (as we shall soon see), not less than the extant state of their language, demonstrates their once having known a condition far superior to their present one or to any that has been their's for ages.

That the primitive man was a savage has always appeared to me an unfounded assumption; whereas that broken tribes deteriorate lamentably we have several well founded instances in Africa.* Quitting however these speculations I proceed with my narrative. During a long residence in Nepal, I never could gain the least access to the Kúsúndas, though aided by all the authority of the Durbar: but, so aided, I once in the course of an ostensible shooting excursion persuaded some Chépángs to let me see and converse with them for 3 or 4 days through the medium of some Gúrúngs of their acquaintance. On that occasion I obtained the accompanying ample specimen of their language; and, whilst they were doling forth the words to my interpreters, I was enabled to study and to sketch the characteristic traits of their forms and faces.† Compared with the mountaineers among whom they are found the Chépángs are a slight but not actually deformed race, though their large bellies and their legs indicate strongly the precarious amount and innutritious quality of their food. In height they are scarcely below the standard of the tribes around them‡—who however are notoriously short of stature—but in colour they are very decidedly darker or of a nigrescent brown. They have elongated (fore and aft) heads, protuberant large mouths, low narrow foreheads, large cheek-bones, flat faces, and small eyes. But the protuberance of the mouth does not amount to prognathous deformity, nor has the small suspicious eye much, if any thing, of the Mongolian obliqueness of direction or set in the head. Having frequently questioned the Durbar whilst resident at Káthmándú as to the relations and origin of the Chépángs and Kúsúndas, I was invariably answered that no one could give the least account of them, but that they were generally supposed to be autochthones, or primitive inhabitants of the country. For a long time such also was my own opinion, based chiefly upon their physical characteristics as above noted

* Prich. Phys. Hist. Vol. II. *passim*. Scott's exquisite Novels throw much light on this subject.

† See the accompanying outline, which is remarkably faithful and significant.

‡ Magar, Múrmi, Khás, Gúrúng, Névár.

and upon the absence of all traceable lingual or other affinity with the tribes around them. So that I took the Chépáings, the Kúsúndas and the Haiyus, a third tribe, remarkably resembling the two former in position and appearance—to be fragments of an original hill population prior to the present Tibetan original inhabitants of these mountains; and to be of Tamulian extraction, from their great resemblance of form and colour to the Aborigines of the plains, particularly the Kóls. It did not for several years occur to me to look for lingual affinities beyond the proximate tribes, nor was I, save by dint of observation made, fully aware that the Mongolian type of mankind belongs not only to the races of known northern pedigree, such as the mass of the sub-Himálayan population,* but equally so to all the Aborigines of the plains, at least to all those of central India. Having of late however become domiciled much to the eastward of Káthmándú, and having had more leisure for systematic and extended researches, those attributes of the general subject which had previously perplexed me were no longer hindrances to me in the investigation of any particular race or people. I now saw in the Mongolian features of the Chépáings a mark equally reconcilable with Tamulian or Tibetan affinities; in their dark colour and slender frame, characteristics at first sight indeed rather Tamulian than Tibetan, but such as might, even in a Tibetan race, be accounted for by the extreme privations to which the Chépáings had for ages been subject; and in their physical attributes taken altogether I perceived that I had to deal with a test of affinity too nice and dubious to afford a solution of the question of origin. I therefore turned to the other or lingual test; and, pursuing this branch of the inquiry, I found that with the southern Aborigines there was not a vestige of connexion, whilst to my surprise I confess, I discovered in the lusty† Lhópás of Bhútán the unquestionable origin and stock of the far removed, and physically very differently characterised, Chépáings! This lingual demonstration of identity of origin, I have for the reader's convenience selected and set apart as an Appendix to the vocabulary of the Chépáng language; and I apprehend that all persons conversant with ethnological enquiries will see in the not mere resemblance but identity of thirty words of prime use and necessity extracted from so limited a field of comparison

* See Journal for December last. I date their transit of the Himálaya from Tibet fully 1200 years back.

† See the subjoined note at the end.

as was available for me to glean from, a sufficient proof of the asserted connexion and derivation of the Chépángs, notwithstanding all objections derivable from distance, dissolution of intercourse and physical nonconformity. But observe, the last item of difference is, as already intimated, not essential but contingent, for both Lhópá and Chépáng are marked with the same essential Mongolian stamp, whilst the deteriorations of vigour and of colour in the Chépángs, though striking, are no more than natural, nay inevitable, consequences of the miserable condition of dispersion and out-lawry to which the Chépángs have been subject for ages anterior to all record or tradition. And again, with regard to local disseveration, it should be well noted, in the first place, that by how much the Chépángs are and have long been removed from Bhútán, by so much exactly do conformities of language demonstrate identity of origin, because those conformities cannot be explained by that necessary contact with neighbours to which the Chépáng language owes of course, such Hindi, Parbatia and Newár terms as the vocabulary exhibits; and, in the second place we must recollect that though it be true that 300 miles of very inaccessible country divide the seat of the Chépángs from Bhútán, and moreover that no intercourse therewith has been held by the Chépángs for time out of mind, still in those days when tribes and nations were, so to speak, in their transitional state, it is well known that the tides of mankind flowed and ebbed with a force and intensity comparable to nothing in recent times, and capable of explaining far more extraordinary phænomena than the disruption of the Chépángs, and their being hurried away, like one of the erratic boulders of geologists, far from the seat of the bulk of their race and people. Indeed, the geological agents of dislocation in the days of pristine physical commotion may throw some light, in the way of analogy, upon the ethnological ones during the formative eras of society; and, though we have no record or tradition of a Lhópá conquest or incursion extending westward so far as, or even towards, the great valley of Nepal, we may reasonably presume that some special clan or sept of the Bhútánese was ejected by an ethnic cataclysm from the bosom of that nation and driven westward under the ban of its own community alike, and of those with which it came in contact in its miserable migration, for misfortune wins not fellowship.

The lapse of a few generations will probably see the total extinction of the Chépángs and Kúsúndas, and therefore I apprehend that the

traces now saved from oblivion of these singularly circumstanced and characterised tribes, now for the first time named to Europeans, will be deemed very precious by all real students of ethnology. Their origin, condition and character are, in truth, ethnic facts of high value, as proving how tribes may be dislocated and deteriorated during the great transitional eras of society.

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Addendum on Bhútán.

Lhó is the native name for Bhútán, and Lhópá and Dúkpá (written Brúkpa) are native names for an inhabitant of Bhútán—whereof the former is the territorial, the latter, the religious, designation. In other words, a Lhópá is one belonging to the country of Bhútán, and a Dúkpá (rectè Brúkpa), a follower of that form of Lamaism which prevails in Bhútán, and which has become equally distinctive with the local designation for an inhabitant of the country, since the people of Bhót or Tibet were converted to the new or Gélúkpá form of that faith. Bhútán is a Sanscrit word, and is correctly Bhútánt, or 'the end of Bhó' (inclusively), the brahmans like the natives, deeming the Cisnavian region an integral part of Tibet, which it is ethnographically, though by no means geographically. Had Klaproth and Ritter been aware that Lhó is Bhútán, and Lhópá an inhabitant of Bhútán, we should not have had their maps disfigured by a variety of imaginary regions placed East of Bhútán and termed Lokabadja, &c. a sheer variorum series of lingual error resting on the single local name Lhó and its derivatives of a personal kind, as correctly and incorrectly gathered by them. Originally some Bengáli rendered Lhó by the, to him, familiar word Lók (regio); and then, being unaware that the Tibetan affix bá vel pá means belonging to, inhabitant of, he subjoined to the bá his own equivalent of já (born of) and thus was deduced Klaproth's furthest error (I omit others short of this one) of Lokabadja. To trace an error to its source is the best way to prevent its repetition, an aphorism I add, lest any person should suppose me wanting in respect for the eminent persons whose mistake I have pointed out. Klaproth was possibly misled by Hastings' letters to and from Téchúlóngba.* But he and Ritter are fairly chargeable with constant creation of new regions out of mere synonyma! I could give a dozen of instances from their splendid maps.

* See Turner's Embassy and native account of Bhutan, in the Society's Transactions.

Vocabulary of the language of the Chépang.

English.	Chépang.	English.	Chépang.
The world	Caret,	Winter	Namjúng
God	*Nyam Ding	The rains	Nyamwá
Man	Púrsi	Grain	Yam
Woman	Mírú	Rice, unhusked	Yáng
Quadruped	Syá	Rice, husked	Chúí
Bird	Móá	Wheat	Kan
Insect	Pling	Barley†	Caret
Fish	Gna T	Plantain	Maisé
Fire	Mí T	Pear	Pásai
Air	Máro	Tobacco	Mingo
Earth	Sá T	Pepper	Marich H
Clay, plastic	Sá lena	Red pepper	Raksai
Water	Tí	Garlick	Bin
Light, lux	Angha	Oil	Sáté
The Sun	Nyam T	A tree	Sing-tak T
The Moon	Lámé T	A leaf	Ló T
The Stars	Kar T	A flower	Ró
A mountain	Rías T	A fruit	Chai
A plain	Dáni	Wood	Sying T
A river	Ghoro	Fuel	Jháro sying
A ferry	Titachaparna? (fold)	Grass	Caret
A boat	Caret	Straw	Won
A bridge	Tá	Bran	Rók
Husband	Palam	A horse	Séráng
Wife	Malam	An ox	Shyá
Father	Pá	A bull	You shyá
Mother	Má	A cow	Mó shyá
Brother	Hou	A buffalo	Misha T
Sister	Hou dhiáng	A dog	Kúí T
Grand-father	Tó	A cat	Caret
Grand-mother	Aié	A monkey	Yúkh
Uncle	Páng	A jackal	Karja
Aunt	Múm	A tiger	Já
Child	Chó	A leopard	Mayo já
Boy	Chó	A bear	Yóm
Girl	Chó riáng	A goat	Micha
Kinsfolk	Laikwo	A sheep	Caret
Strangefolk	Súing	A hare	Caret
Day	Nyi Gni T	A hog, pig	Piak T
Night	Yá	An elephant	Kísí N
Dawn	Wágo	A deer	Kasya
Noon	Syáwa	A rat	Yú
Evening	Nyam rama	A mouse	Mayo yú
To-day	Tén	A manis	Cháng júng
Yesterday	Yon	A fowl (gallus)	Wá
To-morrow	Syáng	Its egg	Wá-kúm
A week	Caret	A pigeon	Bak-wá
A fortnight	Bákha yatlá	A crow	Káwá
A month	Yatlá	A sparrow	Yúrkúnwá
A year†	Yatang	A lark	Bajú wá
Summer	Lhapa	A partridge	Tithara H

* Nyam is the Sun, which is no doubt worshipped, and hence the identity of terms.

† The separate 12 months and 7 days have no names.

‡ No other grain named but wheat and rice.

<i>English.</i>	<i>Chépang.</i>
A quail	Umbá-wá
A kite or hawk	Mó-wá
A fly	Yang
A bee	Tumbá
The human body	Mhá
The head	Tolong
The hair	Min
The face	Khén
The forehead	Jyé
The eye	Mik T
The nose	Gné Nyé
The mouth	Móthong
The chin	Kám-tyó
The ear	Nó T
The arm	Krút
The hand	Kátpá
The leg	Dom
The foot	Caret
The belly	Túkh
Bone	Rhús T
Blood	Wi
Blood-vessel	Só
A house	Kyim T
A door	Kharók
A stone	Báng
A brick	Caret
A temple	Ding tháni
An idol	Simtá
Dinner	Amjia
A dish	Ló
A plate	Mila
Flesh	Mai
Bread	Lang
Vegetables	Kyáng
Honey	Túp
Wax	Main P
Milk	Gnúti
Gheu	Gheu H
Cloth	Nai
Clothes, apparel	Nai
Bed clothes	Lou
Upper vest	Doura
Lower vest	Súmbá
Shoe	Panai P
Stocking	Dócha P
Wool, raw	Min
Cotton, ditto	Kapás H
Hemp, ditto	Kyou
Bow	Lúi
Arrow	Láh T
Ax	Wárhé
Spade, hoe	Taik
Plough	You sing
Loom	Caret
Knife	Phiá ghúl
Brush, broom	Phék
Basket	Tokorong
Rope, thick	Rá

<i>English.</i>	<i>Chépang.</i>
Cord, thin	Rhim
Thread	Mayo rhim
Needle	Gyap
Pen	Ré syáng
Ink	Hildaog
Sovereign	Rájah H
Subject	Parja H
Citizen	Bérang moy
Countryman, rustic	Bó moy
Soldier	Gal moy
Villager	Désing moy
Priest	Jhákri
Physician	Chimé
Druggist	O'sa yilong
Master	Sing chopo
Servant	Mayo ? (small)
Slave	Gráng
Cultivator	Kámin cbara
Cowherd	Góthála H
Carpenter	Sing kami N
Blacksmith	Kami N
Weaver	Naik yousa
Spinner	Rhim rhousa
Taylor	Rúpsa
Basket-maker	Gráng kióni
Currier	Pún rúpo
Tanner	Pún lai
Cotton-dresser	Rhim rhowan
Iron	Phalám P
Copper	Támba H
Lead	Sísa H
Gold	Liáng
Silver	Rúpá H
Rain	Nyóng wá
Frost	Chépu
Snow	Rápáng
Ice	Chépu
Fog	Khású
Lightning	Marang
Thunder	Murang múra
A storm	Marhú
A road	Liam T
A path	Mayo liam
A spring (water)	Tishakwó
Trade	Yinláng
Capital	Rás
Interest	Chó
Coin	Tanka H
Robbery	Latiláng
Theft	Ditto
Murder	Jénsatáng
Rape	Kútyáláng
Cultivated field	Blú
City or town	Bérang
Village	Dési N
Horn	Róng T
Ivory	Laik
A still	Káti póng

<i>English.</i>	<i>Chépáng.</i>	<i>English.</i>	<i>Chépáng.</i>
Beer	Han	Stupid	Wai ra ehúl
Spirits	Rakshi P	Honest	Waba pina
The senses	Caret	Dishonest	Waba pilo
Touching	Dina ?	Great	Bronto
Smelling	Gnama ?	Small	Maito, Mayo
Seeing	Yorsa ?	Heavy	Lito
Hearing	Saisa ?	Light, levis	Caret
Tasting	Yangsa ?*	Black	Gálto
Hunger	Rúng	White	Bhámtó
Thirst	Kióp	Green	Phelto
Disease	Róg H	Blue	Gálto
Medicine	O'sá N	Red	Dúto
Fever	Aimang	Yellow	Yérpo
Dysentery	Boárláng	Sweet	Nimto
Small-pox	Bróm	Sour	Nimlo
Fear	Rai	Straight	Dhimto
Hope	Aphró	Crooked	Dóngto
Love	Mharláng	Hot	Dhátó
Hate	Ghrim náng	Cold	Yéatho
Grief, sorrow	Manbharáng	Dark	Caret
Joy	Yang náng	Light, luminous	Takto
One	Yá-zho	Great	Bronto
Two	Nhi-zho T	Greater	Mhák talto
Three	Súm-zho T	Greatest	Mhak táltó
Four	Plói-zho	Small	Maito
Five	Púma-zho	Smaller	Cholam
Six	Krúk-zho	Smallest	Cholam
Seven	Chana-zho	To stand	Chimsa
Eight	Práp-zho	To fall	Chónsa
Nine	Takú-zho	To walk	Whása
Ten	Gyib-zho	To run	Kísa
Half	Bákhá	To climb	Jyáksa†
The whole	Yágúr	To question	Hótsa
Some, any	Caret	To answer	Dyengnúksa
Many	Jhó	To request	Bajhináng ?*
None	Dómánalo	To refuse	Bainanglo ?
Near	Lóktó	To fight	Kaichináng
Far	Dyángtó	To kiss	Chopchináng
Blind	Mikchángna	To laugh	Nhísa
Lame	Domtonga	To cry	Rhíasa
Dumb	Nósa chúl	To eat	Jhicháng
Deaf	Nósa mal	To drink	Túmcháng
Clean	Bhangto	To talk	Nhocháng
Dirty	Gálto	To be silent	Ashimanga ?
Strong	Jokto	To shit	Yésháng
Weak	Joklo	To piss	Chúcháng
Good	Pito	To ascend	Jyákcháng*
Bad	Pilo	To descend	Súsyáng
Ugly	Pilo	To cut	Palchináng
Handsome	Dyángto	To break	Tlésháng
Young	Dyáng mai	To join, unite	Chócháng
Old	Bur̄ha H	To jump	Jyésháng
Clever	Chimo	To sit down	Múcháng

* Sá I think is the infinitive sign, and áng the participial. And one or other should appear uniformly here.

† If as I suppose, Sá be the infinitival sign there must be error and the rather that all the verbs should have one form. Ang I think is the participial sign.

<i>English.</i>	<i>Chépang.</i>	<i>English.</i>	<i>Chépang.</i>
To stand up	Chingsa	To write	Résa
To sleep	Yémsa	To read	Brósa
To wake	Tyoksa	To sing	Mansa
To give	Búisa T	To dance	Syáksa
To take	Lísa T	To lie down	Kontimúsa
To lend	Búisa	To get up	Caret
To borrow	Lísa	To tell a falsehood	Hekaktáng
To buy	Yingsa	To see	Chéwáng ?
To sell	Yinlángalsa	To hear	Saiyáng ?*
To exchange	Gyésa	To taste	Lyémsa
To live	Caret	To smell	Namsa
To die	Caret	To touch	Dimsa
To reap	Ráasa	To count	Théngsa
To sow	Wársa	To measure	Krúsa
To thresh	Rhápasa	To remember	Mhardangsa
To winnow	Krápsa	To forget	Mhoiyangsa

N. B.—T postfixed indicates a Tibetan etymon for the word, H a Hindi origin, P a Parbatia or Khas, and N a Népár, ditto. It was not in my power to do more than collect vocables. I could not ascertain structure: but comparing all the words I conceive the anomalies of the verbs may be set right by assuming Sá to be the infinitival sign, and áng, varied to chang, yang and nang, the participial one.—B. H. H.

List of Chépang words derived from the Tibetan language and especially the Bhutanese dialect of it.

<i>English.</i>	<i>Tibetan.</i>	<i>Lhopa.</i>	<i>Chépang.</i>
Eye	Mig	"	Mik
Sun	Nyimá	Nyim	Nyam
Sky	Namkháh	Nam	Nam
Ear	"	Nó	Navó
Mountain	Rí	Rong	Rias
Star	Karma	Kam	Kar
Free	Jon-shing	Sbing	Sing-tak
Wood	"	Shing	Sing
Leaf	Ló-ma	"	Ló
Salt	Tsá	Chhá	Chhé
Road	Lam	Lam	Liam
House	Khyim	Khim	Kyim
Moon	Lávo	"	Lámé
Bone	Rúspa	"	Rhús
Fire	Mé	Mí	Mí
Arrow	Dáh	Dáh	Láh
Dog	Khyi	Khi	Kúí
Buffalo	Mahi S	Méshi	Misha
Day	"	Nyim	Nyi
Earth	"	Sá	Sá
Fish	Nyá	Gná	Gná
Hog	Phag	Phag	Piak
Horn	Rá	Róng	Róng
Two	Nyis	Nyi	Nhí-zho†
Three	Súm	Súm	Súm-zho
Give	Búh	Bín	Búí
Take	Lan	Ling	Lí

* These should be Chésa and Saisa I apprehend.

† Zho is an emunerative servile affix like Thampa in the decimal series of Tibetan.