ETHNOGRAPHIC NOTES ON THE TRIBES OF THE SUBANSIRI REGION

BY

CHRISTOPH VON FURER-HAIMENDORF, Ph. D.,

Adviser to His Exalted Highness the Nizam's Government
for Tribes and Backward Classes.
Professor of Anthropology, Osmania University.

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INTRODUCTION

The following notes on the tribes of the eastern part of the Balipara Frontier Tract, commonly known as the Subansiri Region, were written at various dates during my appointment as Special Officer, Subansiri, in 1944 and 1945. I had then the opportunity of establishing close and friendly contact with tribes practically unknown to the outside world, and of entering tribal country never before visited by European or Indian. Information on certain social and economic aspects of tribal culture was then of importance to Government, and the notes collected in these pages were written as factual reports rather than as anthropological essays.

The very nature of my work and the necessity of moving on occasion rapidly through unexplored country precluded intensive and detailed investigations into tribal institutions and psychological reactions. It was therefore essential to concentrate on subjects connected with administrative problems and at the same time I tried to place them as large as possible on the ethnographic map. Certain generalizations which may later require revision are an unavoidable feature of such an extensive survey, but it is to be hoped that the information collected in these notes will enable future investigators to shorten the period of haphazard collection of data, and to enable them to penetrate more quickly to the dynamics of a culture-change which the virtual extermination of tribesmen's age old isolation has now made inevitable.

Some of the notes written in 1944 have been revised in the light of the additional knowledge my tours of 1915, and the notes are now arranged according to subjects and not chronologically. They fall short of a complete outline of the complex culture-pattern of the Subansiri Region, but in the not too distant future I may be able to embody the rest of the material culled during two years among Ao, Tanis, Daliks and Miris in a more comprehensive anthropological study. Until then, short field notes may serve as an introduction into the ethnography of one of the least known on the borders of India.

Hyderabad-Deccan,
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G. von Furer-Haimendorf
NOTES ON TRIBAL GROUPS IN THE SUBANSIRI REGION

Accompanied by a Population Map

The Subansiri Region is one of the least known parts of the North-East Frontier. The first determined effort to explore the area south-west of the Subansiri, and particularly the valleys of the Kamla and Khrü was the Miri Mission in 1911-12, and the greater part of the existing maps are based on the survey operations then undertaken. The Miri Mission concentrated mainly on topographical exploration, and the two published reports contain but scanty information on the ethnological, sociological and economic conditions in the area visited. From 1912 to 1944 no exploratory expedition entered the Subansiri Region; the tours of Political Officers were short and mainly confined to areas previously visited.

When in March 1944 I started work among the tribes of the Subansiri Region, no records more recent or fuller than the two Miri Mission Reports were available, and information on the distribution of populations, main population of several other villages. Similarly the village of Tapo on the south bank of the Kamla which is inhabited by people of Kabak clan is not marked as "Mingo" but as "Kabak". This is apt to cause confusion, as the Kabak clan is not confined to Mingo, but forms the main population of several other villages. Similarly the village of Tapo on the south bank of the Kamla which contains the core of the Chimr phraternity is marked as Chemir. On this population-map the clan-names entered on the Survey of India maps have been retained as village-names wherever they are still more commonly used than the locality-names.

In most parts of the Subansiri Region the village-names given on the Survey of India maps are inaccurate or out of date. For the Surveyors of the Miri Mission entered in many cases not the locality name, but the name of the clan-group predominant at the time of the survey*. For instance, the village of Ming in the north-east bank of the Kamla which is inhabited by people of Kabak clan is not marked as "Mingō" but as "Kabak". The village of Tapo on the south bank of the Kamla which contains the core of the Chimr phraternity is marked as Chemir.

For administrative purposes the Dafas have been divided into Western Dafas and Eastern Dafas, and this division seems to be based on a difference in dialect in so far as the Dafas of the foothills and outer ranges are concerned. In their own language the Eastern Dafas describe themselves as Nisu or as Nif, and refer to the Western Dafas as Yan. But the Western Dafas still themselves Malu and refer to the Eastern Dafas as Tagen. The dividing line between the two groups seems to coincide roughly with the watershed between Kameng and Par, but in the foothills the two groups dovetail. It is unlikely however that the distinction between Western and Eastern Dafas as the two main groups of the tribes can stand closer scrutiny. For it seems to cut across the groups based on the traditional genealogy of the Dafas.

According to tribal tradition all Dafas are divided into Dopum clans, Dodum clans and Dol clans, known as such after their legendary ancestors, the sons of Tahr. Tahr was a descendant of At Nia, whose father was Teni, believed to be the forefather not only of all Dafas, but also of the other hill-races sharing the Dafas' habitat. Whether the Dopum, Dodum and Dol groups were ever strictly localized we do not yet know; today there are areas where clans of all three groups live side by side, but others where only one group is represented.

The Dopum group is believed to be descended from the eldest of the three brothers, but in the area so far explored it is represented only by a very few clans and even these persist only as isolated households living in such foothill villages as Joying and Boguli. It is said that more populous clans of this group exist somewhere on the Upper Khrü, but for this we have as yet no confirmation and it is by no means impossible that the splinters of the Dopum group now found in the foothills are all that remains of a group which was first split up and then almost obliterated by later waves of Dol and Dodum clans.

* Dafas and Miris often refer to settlements by the name of a prominent clan and give the name of the locality only when directly questioned. It is therefore not surprising that the Miri Mission mistook in some cases clan-names for locality-names.
† Ni means 'human being' and is the root of such words as niga man, niw 'woman', niagelo 'boy'.

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DAFAS OR NISU

The Assamese term Dafas, like the term Abor, seems to have originally meant 'wild man' or 'barbarian', but it has for a long time been applied to the tribes inhabiting the hills between the Miri country to the east and the Aka country to the west. Thus it would seem that the tribesmen known to their Assamese neighbours as Dafas do not extend as far east as the Subansiri River, but we will see presently that the distinction between "Dafas" and "'Hill Miris" is largely arbitrary.

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The Dol clans, considered the descendants of the middle brother, are concentrated mainly in the area of the Khru and Upper Kamla, where, as it seems, they form the only population of large areas. The Dol clans that are found today in the Panior and Kiyi valleys have the clear tradition that they immigrated from an area near the Khru River, and in many cases the stages of this migration are still remembered.

The Dodum class prevail largely now to the south in the Par and Panior area, but they too believe their ancestors immigrated from the north via the Palin and Kiyi valleys.

The Dol group is subdivided into several exogamous phratries, two of which can already be discerned with a certain degree of clarity.

The Durum Dui phratry comprises the clans of Lihka, Gemin, Chhuhu, Pil, Biobu, Tassr, and several semi-extinct clans such as Nikh, Yua, Tade, Tajin and Dohe. These clans are strongest in the Panior and Kiyi valleys, but the Chhuhu and Pil clans, which were concentrated in a number of villages in both sides of the Panior, in the area where it is joined by the Pepin, the Norchi and the combined Keli-Panging, were dispersed four generations ago by the raids of the Tecuh and Napum clans, and today there exist no villages where Chhuhu and Pil men form the predominant population, though individual families live in villages of the Kiyi valley, the Jorum-Talo area, and the Panior and Par valleys.

The Dukum Duri phratry consists of two subdivisions, a southern and a northern. The southern or Dukum sub-phratry includes the clans of Hora, Tai, Buri, Tukum, Toshi, Hori, Bindu, Kiyuma, Boki, Khoita, Lido Lina, Tapi, Toko, Jorum and Tod. Its main concentration is in the Khru region and the hills between Khru and Kamla, but some four or five generation ago, the Toko, Jorum and Tod clans migrated southwards and occupied the area south-west of the Apa Tani country.

The northern or Duri sub-phratry comprises such clans as Toksi Tagro, Tumr, Tungam, Tayam, and Noyi, known collectively as Tedi-Temr and the clans Sartam, Mei, Rugi, Tali and Haki, which are referred to under the term Haki-Hanya. This sub-phratry is said to include all the clans in the Seiul valley as well as the clans migrating from the Kamla valley.

In the Kamla valley below Tali and Goba there is a group of clans known as Tai-Tamin, and there is good reason to believe that these clans which form today an enclave between villages of the Gungu group are also part of the Duri sub-phratry. They include the Kabak clan (now divided into several sub-clans and spread over the villages of Mingo, Gute, Laphchi, Bidak and Hova), Lomra, Balu and Higlo. The group is no exogamous and Kabak and Balu, for instance, intermarry freely. Both the Gungu and the Kabak people have the tradition that the clans of the Tai-Tanim group immigrated into their present area from the higher country on the upper Kamla, and in doing so they split the Gungu group in two. The expansion of the Kabak clan, which radiated from Mingo has not yet come to an end and within the last two generations the village of Hova* changed from a Gungu village to a settlement of the Kabak clan.

It will be noticed that the last clans of the Duri sub-phratry and indeed most Dukum clans inhabit an area which is commonly known as the "Mirri Hills," and these clans form part of a population which has been described in official records as Mirri ever since the time of the Mirri Mission. Yet, there can be no doubt that in the minds of the tribemen and according to all traditional genealogies (genealogies largely legendary but yet reflecting actual tribal divisions) they form part of the DOL group. We are thus led to the conclusion that the arbitrary divisions created by the official terminology and the divisions recognized by the tribemen themselves, overlap and intersect.

Whereas the Durum-Dui and Dukum-Duri phratries are discernable at least in outline, little is as yet known of the other phratries of the DOL group, the areas of their distribution having so far only been touched on the fringes.

The Bindu-Bene phratry which includes the clans of Gollo, Chera Tefed, Tai, Tara and Thebe, seems to be concentrated mainly in the Paniy valley, and those families of Gollo clan, who live today in Mingo and other villages of the Panior valley have the clear tradition of having immigrated from villages on the Panior River. The Gollo clan is represented also in villages on the upper course of the Palia, a tributary of the Panior. There is no doubt that the Panior valley, as far as we do not know as yet whether there is also a direct connection between the Palia and the Panior valleys.

The Yan, known officially as Western Daflas, belong also to the DOL group. The Dukum Daflas though referring to the individual western Dukum as Yan, describe the whole group as Jiti-Tekha. This may be the name of one phratry, best known to the tribemen of the Par and Panior, or it may be a collective term comparable to Dukum-Duri, for several phratries of Yan Daflas. The fact that the language of the Yan si considered the Leli dialect spoken in the Par valley, but has close affinities with the 'Aya’ dialects as spoken by the Dol clans of the higher hills, seems to affirm the tradition that they too form part of the Dol group.

The third major tribal division is the DODUM group and this is subdivided into four exogamous phratries.

The Bhut or Tebu phratry, consisting of the clans of Tabia, Tai, Bat, Debia, Teri, Tebu, Tang, Tesi, Golu, Tako, Kara and Tade is today found mainly in the lower Panior valley and in the Par region. Until three generations ago members of this phratry were settled in the Upper Panior valley and in the Kiyi valley, and there can be no doubt that several if not all clans of this phratry have moved into their present territory only in fairly recent times.

The Leli or Pakhe phratry includes today the clans of Licha, Nielom, Tar, Lisi and Lod which are concentrated in the Kiyi valley, and the clans of Sodu, Sombum, Raha, Tana, Techu, Tao, To b and Nieri found mainly in the Panior and Par valley. There is a tradition that the ancestor of the Licha, Nielom, Tar and Lisi clans belonged originally to the Dol group but became the "brothers" of the Leli group when during a raid they had to beg the help of some Leli men. Like the Bhat-Tebu clans, the Dallas of the Leli group have not always lived in the foothills, but are believed to have entered the Kiyi valley from the north via the Yapubog pass, and to have then filtered southwards.

The Kemad phratry, consisting of the clans of Pochu, Pei, Ma, Ralo, Naran, Kop, Tok, Taro, Niri and Telu, and are now strongly represented only in the villages of Mai, Pochu and Pei with an offshoot in distant Hua; they share with the Leli group the tradition of an immigration via the Yapubog from the Panin and Khru valley.

* This village is marked on the Survey of India (No. 03 I, A) as Tago after the Tago clan which was predominant in 1911 but is today nearly extinct.
The Choli or Dumchi phratry which is said to include the clans of Nabum, Nurnum-Benga, Gomir-Takum, Tara, Tade, Chipu, Lokam, Sanya, Bamui, Tamchhi, Kami, Kamu, Kabhi, Rikam, Riki, Ramug, Ride, Decha and Dara is the latest of the Dodum phratry lines to expand southwards and the ancestors of the important Nabum clan migrated only five or six generations ago from the Khuru valley to Mengo in the Upper Parionier valley. There the clan grew rapidly and soon spread into the Peling and Par valleys. But while we cannot say just when or by what route, the migration of the Dodum into the Upper Khuru valley, and it would thus seem that not only in the lowerhills of the Par and Parionier Region but in the Khuru valley also, the population consists largely of recent immigrants, but also on the Upper Khuru clans of the Dopum, Dol and the Dodum groups live side by side, sharing if not the same villages the same valleys.

In the Khuru valley this is unthinkable. There is the tradition that the Guchi people, when the younger brother went the land and the elder brother followed later. The same is regarded as an ethnic entity, and cultural evidence of its phratry which is said to include the clans of Nabum, Nurnum-Benga, Gomir-Takum, Tara, Tade, Chipu, Lokam, Sanya, Bamui, Tamchhi, Kami, Kamu, Kabhi, Rikam, Riki, Ramug, Ride, Decha and Dara is the latest of the Dodum phratry lines to expand southwards and the ancestors of the important Nabum clan migrated only five or six generations ago from the Khuru valley to Mengo in the Upper Parionier valley. There the clan grew rapidly and soon spread into the Peling and Par valleys. But while we cannot say just when or by what route, the migration of the Dodum into the Upper Khuru valley, and it would thus seem that not only in the lowerhills of the Par and Parionier Region but in the Khuru valley also, the population consists largely of recent immigrants, but also on the Upper Khuru clans of the Dopum, Dol and the Dodum groups live side by side, sharing if not the same villages the same valleys.

Language.—At first sight it would appear that the major tribal divisions among the Daias coincide with linguistic groupings. Daias of the foothills, for instance, to their own dialect as Leli language, to the rest of Licha and Durum language, and to the dialects spoken by the people on the Upper Par and Upper Parionier and in the Upper Khuru as Aya or Nabum language, 'Aya' meaning literally only 'of the highlands'. But these associations do not bear closer scrutiny. While originally the main tribal divisions may have been localized, each with its own distinct mode of speech, with the dispersal and merging of populations, the connection between tribal groups and phratries became obscured, and today the dialect spoken by people from the same village group is in the Khuru valley where he grew up, but not of his ancestors. The far-reaching linguistic characteristics of the tribals indicates a single origin, and are are late comers. Another interpretation would seem to support this theory of a common origin, but the physical make-up of the tribe is clear evidence of its composite character. Racially the Daias are far less homogeneous than many other hill tribes of the borders of Assam, and though the majority bear some of the features commonly associated with the Palaeo-Mongolid races, there are also individuals with a less outstanding and greatly divergent types. The more frequent is a round face, a broad nose, prominent cheek-bones, eyes lying in flat sockets, and a small weak chin. Comparatively small stocky stature and a sallow yellow skin colour seem to go with this type.

There is a striking difference between the Daias of the foothills, which represent a fair picture of the Palaeo-Mongolid type of the text-books, and the Daias with an oblong face, a prominent often hooked nose with a narrow bridge, deep-set eyes, a well pronounced chin, rudimentary high stature and athletic build.

It goes without saying that the Daias race of today does not consist only of individuals conforming to either of these two types, and what we have described above are the extremes at the two ends of the range of physical characteristics, extremes which cannot have sprung from a single origin, and are therefore indicative of at least two distinct elements in the racial make-up of the tribe.

In this context we are interested only in the fact that the Daias are not a homogeneous tribe, and it may be that some more featured type is even today found among the leading families, whereas individuals displaying the purest characteristics of Palaeo-Mongolid type seem to be more frequent in families of lower social status. Until the Daias and their neighbours have been studied in greater detail, it would be unsound to draw from this situation any far-reaching conclusions, but there seems to be a prima facie case for the hypothesis that the Daia tribe in its present form is the product of the blending of these two distinct types.

Social Divisions.—A division of the Daias clans into two classes known as Gute and Guchi, blurred and largely forgotten in such areas as the foothills, but still recognized in the Khuru and Kamla regions is perhaps a reflection of this two-fold origin of the Daias tribes.

In the Kamla area the Daias (and as we will shortly see the Gungus) describe certain clans and even whole phratries as Gutes and others as Guchis. There is the tradition that the Guchi people were the first in the country, and the Gutes a later comers. Another interpretation is that when the two ancestors of the Daias first overlapped, the younger brother went ahead to spy out the land, and the elder brother followed later. The Guchi clans are the descendants of the younger brother, who went first and the Gute the off-spring of the elder brother. This story too seeks to explain the fact that the Guchi were the earlier settlers. There is a vague idea that the Guchi clans are of higher social status than the Gute clans and it is said that originally the two classes did not intermarry. Today this restriction is no longer in force and people of Gute class enjoy no privileges.

The division into Gute and Guchi is clearest on the Khuru and Upper Kamla, the region least disturbed by recent migrations. Among the Duri group, for instance, Sartam, Ragi, Mai and Talii are Guchi clans, whereas the clans of Niktor, Tamur and Haki are Gute. Within the Tai-Tamin phratry Kabak and Balu are Gute whereas Lomma is Guchi.

In the Panionier and Par regions the distinction between Gute and Guchi has been obscured, the latter term being used more for the descendants of slaves and no longer for whole clans.

It is obvious that if two or more ethnic elements have played their parts in the formation of the Daias tribe, their amalgamation is very far progressed. Differences such as those between the outstanding racial types and the division into Gute and Guchi are suggestive of the composite character of the tribe, but our knowledge of the Daias themselves and of their neighbours is still too slight to justify any speculation as to the nature or origin of these composite tribes.

For practical purposes the Daias may today be regarded as an ethnic entity, and cultural differences between the various tribal groups seem to be largely due to local conditions and varying contacts.

Cultural Characteristics.—A detailed description of Daia culture is outside the scope of this note, but an outline of the main features of the economy and social organization of the tribe will round off our picture.
Dafla economy is based on agriculture and animal husbandry, and trade and barter play only a secondary role. Nearly all Daflas, except for those in the villages of Talo, Jorum and Mai, which adjoin the Apa Tani country, are mainly *jhum* cultivators. In the Mengo area and in the Kiyi valley some villages have besides *jhum*-fields also a few irrigated rice-terraces, but neither in the Kamla valley nor in the Lower Panior and Par region is there any cultivation of wet rice. *Eleusine coracana* and *Setaria italicah* and maize are the main crops. The breeding of live-stock is everywhere important: mithan, pigs, goats, and chickens are kept by all Daflas, but oxen are found only in areas that have connections with Assam.

The size of villages ranges from the three or four houses in small settlements to about thirty houses in the large villages. But as most houses are joint-family dwellings with as many as twelve hearths and rooms for as many families, a Dafla village of ten houses may well have a population of about thirty. The houses stand on the hill above the level of the field. In the house or group of two or three houses standing on a different level, the village is no closely knit social and political unit. Families may join or leave at will, and in some areas there is a continuous movement of people from one village to the other.

Wars are usually not between village and village, but between joint-family and joint-family. It is no unusual occurrence that one or two houses in a village are raided and burnt; and the inhabitants killed or carried away as captives, while the other households are neither scathed nor give any effective help to the victims.

There are no traditional village sites and settlements are easily shifted. Few of the present villages in the Kiyi valley, for instance, stood on the same site fifty years ago and most of the village communities than have existed have split up or have moved to other sites.

The primary social unit is the household comprising usually several families and in some cases as much as sixty or seventy members. The household is for practical purposes autonomous and self-contained: there is no system of village headman whose office gives them authority over the other householders. The clans are exogamous and within the village there is sometimes a fair amount of co-operation between families of the same clan. But many clans extend over several villages, and in such cases they no longer present a continuous barrier. Contact between clans is frequent, and the contacts are exogenous to the social or political cohesion of the clans of one phratry, but the phratries of the Dodum group and some of the Dol phratry observe exogamy. Although certain villages form territorial groups within which contacts are closer and marriage alliances more frequent than between villages belonging to different territorial groups there is no organization which lends territorial groups any measure of political unity. While the distinction between Gut and Gushi clans is of no practical importance, there is the other and vital distinction between Gut and Gushi clans. The latter are mainly people who have been in war and either kept by their captors or sold. Their children become members of their owner's clan, but their status is that of dependents rather than slaves, and in time they may acquire wealth and become freemen of good social status. Thus there exists among the Daflas no slave class, whose members are barred from rising in the social scale.

Migrations.—The clans of the Dol and Dodum groups have for generations been in a state of unrest, which is manifested by frequent migrations and a continuous change in the population pattern of large areas.

The causes for these migrations are still obscure but we can clearly discern a north to south movement from the Khrú region into the Panior-Kiyi region and from there to the Par valley down into the foothills. These migrations are partly legendary, and partly of so recent occurrence that the circumstances and leading personalities among the immigrants are still well remembered. Indeed in the area of the Lower Panior valley, few men live in the villages where they were born, and the grandfathers of many men now settled in the foothills are known to have lived in villages on the upper course of the Panior.

Tradition has it that the first groups to enter the Panior and Par regions were the Teblí-Bhat and the Kemdr phratries. They claim that when they arrived the country was uninhabited but for a few scattered settlements of Sulús; it was covered with virgin forest which they were the first to clear. The route of their migration can still be traced to a place called Supu Rab, where coming from the upper Khrú valley they are believed to have crossed the Khrú near the confluence of the Khrú and the Panyi River. It is only six or seven generations ago that the first Nábum men moved from Lebla across the Yelibog pass to Mengo in the Upper Panior area. There they multiplied rapidly and spread into the valleys of Periirl and Par. The present members of the Nábum clan in these areas can still name all their ancestors as far back as the time of the first migration. When the Nábum moved down the Yelibog pass they followed the Khrú upstream as far as the Palin and then moved along the Palin valley to the Yapubog pass, which separates the Palin and the Kiyi valley. From there the Tébu people went to Mengo on the upper Panior, whereas the Kemdr people moved across the range between Nièlom and Talo into the Jorum-Mai area, where they are still to be found.

The Tébu people stayed for many generations in the Mengo area, and then moved to Nirjúr Bari, near the present Pégbábari near the confluence of Panior and Periirl, and from there to the villages on the lower Panior.

The Leli group is said to have come later, following the route opened up by the Tébu and Kemdr people. From the Kiyi valley they moved southwards across the Panior into the Par valley where they spread over many villages.

The Chilí group is said to have crossed the Khrú at the same place as the other phratries, but in the face of unfavourable omens, the people of this group followed the Khrú eastwards far beyond the Palin. For a long time they remained in the valley of the Upper Khrú and in the Lebla area on the Panyi River. It is only six or seven generations ago that the first Nábum men moved from Lebla across the Yelibog pass to Mengo in the Upper Panior area. There they multiplied rapidly and spread into the valleys of Periirl and Par. The present members of the Nábum clan in these areas can still name all their ancestors as far back as the time of the first migration. When the Nábum moved down the Yelibog pass they followed the Khrú upstream as far as the Palin and then moved along the Palin valley to the Yapubog pass, which separates the Palin and the Kiyi valley. From there the Tébu people went to Mengo on the upper Panior, whereas the Kemdr people moved across the range between Nièlom and Talo into the Jorum-Mai area, where they are still to be found.

The movement of the Dol phratry cannot yet be traced with the same degree of accuracy. Those clans of the Durum-Duí phratry that are now found in the Panior area, have the tradition of having crossed the Khrú on the same road as the other phratry, but in the face of unfavourable omens, the people of this group followed the Khrú eastwards far beyond the Palin. For a long time they remained in the valley of the Upper Khrú and in the Lebla area on the Panyi River. It is only six or seven generations that the first Nábum men moved from Lebla across the Yelibog pass to Mengo in the Upper Panior area. There they multiplied rapidly and spread into the valleys of Periirl and Par. The present members of the Nábum clan in these areas can still name all their ancestors as far back as the time of the first migration. When the Nábum moved down the Yelibog pass they followed the Khrú upstream as far as the Palin and then moved along the Palin valley to the Yapubog pass, which separates the Palin and the Kiyi valley. From there the Tébu people went to Mengo on the upper Panior, whereas the Kemdr people moved across the range between Nièlom and Talo into the Jorum-Mai area, where they are still to be found. But the settlements of the Yúa clan, that existed even thirty years ago were abandoned owing to raids by Líkha lineages of...
Chauhur the Yua clan is now almost extinct, but the Chuhu and Pit clans though still fairly numerous, have not formed new settlements of their own; they now live scattered in the villages of other clans in the Lower Panior and Par valleys.

The Durum Dui clan which is at present in the ascendency is Liaka; within three or four generations Liaka people have founded several settlements in the Kiya valley have even pushed southwards across the Panior to settle at Pegabari. They too have the tradition of having come through the Panior valleys and the Yahungh; on their arrival in the valley they found strong settlements of the Kendir and Leli phratry, but quickly dispersed the inhabitants.

The Dukum clans on the Khru have been in possession of the land for a very long time, but those now settled in Talo and Jorum assert that their forefathers immigrated from Hidjat Lupukher an area on the Khru near its confluence with the Panior. The tract now in possession of the Toko and Jorum clans was then held by the two Leli clans of Torr and Tago. Four generations ago these extremely warlike warrior-like clans were wiped out by the long series of villages, including the Toko Liaka, Licha, Nabum, Tabia and Tana clans. Some two or three years after this war, the Toko and Jorum clans, then still settled at Hidjat Lupukher, moved southwards into the land previously held by the Torr and Tago people.

We know as yet too little of the Dol clans on the Upper Kamla to be able to trace definitely their recent migration routes, but there can be little doubt that the powerful Kabak clan, pushed south-eastwards along the Kamla and displaced, in occupying their present land, people of Gungü stock, who had inhabited it previously.

Of the migrations of the Bindu-Ben clan we know so far only that some four or five generations ago several families of the Gollo clan left the village of Delba in the Panji area and moved to M'engo on the Upper Panior. They claim to have settled in M'engo before the Nabum people, but judging from the number of generations mentioned in genealogies it would be safer to assume that both clans arrived approximately at the same time. Another branch of the Gollo clan is found in some villages on the Paha River, a tributary of the Kameng.

The migration from the Panji to the Panior is still continuing and some six years ago a family of Terd clan, which belongs also to the Bindu-Ben group moved from Lililot to M'engo.

A general movement of Dals from the north and north west to the south and south-east is thus clearly discernable and has been going on for a considerable time. Its causes are obscure and must remain so until the area on the Upper Khru and Kamla has been explored. There may be a pressure of other populations, perhaps of Tibetans or Tibetanized tribes on the Dals of the higher regions, or exhaustion of the cultivable land and an increase in population may have forced them to seek new land in the lower valleys where the present settled dwellers have less pressure of pressure. If Dala tradition is to be believed the Par Region and lower Panior valley were uninhabited but for the scattered Sabus until the arrival of the Toba people, who were the first to cross fields from the virgin forest. There is certainly a great difference between the densely wooded outer ranges and the hills denuded of forest by successive immigrants in the Talo-Jorum area or the lower Kiya valley. The movement towards the outer ranges has not yet come to an end, and a serious situation may arise if in the Par and lower Panior valley too over-population leads to over-cultivation and exhaustion of the available land.

HILL MIRIS OR GUNGÜ

The population of the upper Kamla valley, reckoned in the reports of the Miri Mission, among the 'Hill Miris', is, as we have seen, part of the Dol group, which embraces also many of the Dala clans located today in the Panior, Kiya and Khru valleys. To describe this population as a separate 'tribe' would be unjustified and any line drawn in that area between 'Dals' and 'Miris', would have to be entirely arbitrary. Personally I am of the opinion that the sooner the distinctive terms 'Dals' and 'Miris' are dropped, the better; only those hillmen familiar with Assamese know these names and there would still be time to replace them by a term taken from a tribal language and thus do away with a division which must ultimately only create confusion.

Both the Dals of the Panior region and the tribesmen of the Kamla region refer to themselves as Nisi. In Asamese these names as Nisi a word whose meaning is 'men', but which has gradually developed into a term applied only to the inhabitants of the hills.

The plains people are called Nipak by the Kamla tribes and Holi by the Panior Dals, and hillmen settled in the plains Nipak Nisi and Holi Nisa respectively. Thus the name Nisi could be used for all the tribes now known as Dala and Hill Miris, and individual tribal groups could be referred to by their phratrie names such as Leli, Kendir or Durum-Dui. Another possibility would be to use the term Dalam-Dol as a tribal name for all the clans claiming to belong to either of these two groups.

As long, however, as the term Hill Miris is retained in official usage, it should at least be confined to the one tribal group which includes all the *pasa*-holding 'Hill Miris' and is considered distinct from the Dol clans on the upper Kamla. This group is commonly referred to as Gungü, and extends over the hills to both sides of the Kamla west of its confluence with the Khru. In addition there is a group of Gungü villages on the upper Kamla, split off from the main tribe by the south-east movement of the Kabak clans.

The Dodum Dals claim that the Gungü have also sprung from their mythical ancestor Dodum, and maintain that they are indeed only another Dodum phratrie just like Leli or Kendir. But this theory is refuted by the Gungü themselves, who have the tradition that their original ancestor was a brother, and not a descendant, of At Nia, the forefather of the Dol and Dodum clans.

Be that as it may, the Gungü intermarry freely with both Dol and Dodum clans, and though their original may have been different, they have certainly absorbed a great deal of Dol and Dodum blood.

The term Nisi, if chosen as the common name for all the tribes of the Par, Panior, Khru and Kamla regions could include the Gungü who use this term to describe themselves and their neighbours of the Kamla valley, but it is doubtful whether the term Dodum-Dol could be stretched so far as to include the Gungü. Many of them would certainly protest against such a name, implying a relationship which they do not recognize.

The GUNGÜ group is divided into phratries which are still largely localized.

The *Pit* phratrie includes the clan of Gocham, Golom, Niedo, Godak, Gobak, Gemdin, Tago, Kekho, Maga and Kegam, and the villages known commonly by these clan names are situated to both sides of the Kamla near the confluence with the Subansiri. The members of this phratrie, frequently visit the plains and are there known as Sarak Miris.
The Perú phratry includes the clans of Rotom, Bini, Biku and Tata, and these are concentrated in villages on the Perën River and on the south bank of the Kamla. The Perú phratry is commonly known in the plains as Panibhutia Miris.

The Chimr phratry with its subdivisions Yuchi-Yuli includes the clans of La, Hipu, Pui, Goduk, Puri, Ripu, Rishar, Goyuk, Guchi, Lumi, Teji, Hao, Nakr, Dumr, Niemar and Chilli. Originally the Chimr clans lived in villages on the north bank of the Kamla, but today they are concentrated in the villages of Tago and La on the south bank, the last Chimr settlements left on the north bank having broken up about one generation ago.

Although the Chimr people are today one of the smaller Gungú phratries, the name Chimr is used by Apa Tanis and Dafas of the Panior region as a generic term for all Gungú clans on the lower Kamla.

The Komdu-Kange phratry includes the clans of Dochak, Duge, Muke, Hili, Meli, Yukar, Higi, Yuma and Hachi.

Even thirty-five years ago, there were still several villages of this phratry on the north bank of the Kamla but they have all been abandoned, and today there is only one village, Dobom, where Komdu-Kange clans predominate.

The Telü-Tadum phratry includes the clans of Rakhe, Murga, Pemir, Hayo and Yom living in villages of their own between Kamla and Pein, as well as the clans of Boni, Bongom, Purú and Bar in Bua village.

The Tenü-Talam phratry has been separated from the rest of the Gungú group by the comparatively recent intrusion of the Kabak clans. It consists of the clans of Guchi, Sejama and Rei, and the Guchi people of Rute-Hate, now divided into the two sub-clans of Dangme and Dungu, still recognize a connection with the Guchi clan of the Chimr group.

The large number of phratries and clans in the Gungú group may well give the impression that it equals in size the Dodum and Doli groups. Actually, however, the number of Gungú people is small, and many of the clans consist of only two or three families. There seems to have been a drop in population within the last one or two generations; some villages were abandoned and others have shrunk from settlements of twenty and more houses to hamlets of one or two households. The Gungú themselves attribute this drastic decline in numbers rather than to war, and increased contact with plains populations and the consequent dangers of infection, may well have been responsible for the determination of the Gungú of the lower Kamla valley.

Language. — The language of the Gungú group differs both from the so-called Leli dialect of the foothills and the dialects spoken by the tribesmen of the Duri group on the Upper Kamla. But the differences are not sufficiently great to bar understanding and men, say, of the Chimr phratry are able to converse with Dafas of the Leli group as well as from the Selu or Sipi valley. Only the isolated clans of Guchi, Sejama and Rei have so adapted their dialect to those of the neighbouring Kabak and Duri clans that they are no longer easily understood by men of the Panior region, though, on the other hand, they can talk freely to Gungú people of the lower Kamla valley. Linguistic investigations are still outstanding, but observing men of different groups and areas brought together and attempting to converse with each other, one comes to the conclusion that the Gungú dialect must lie somewhere midway between the language of the Panior and the upper Kamla area. For while men of these two regions find it very difficult to make themselves understood, Gungú men seem to be able to converse freely with both.

Racial characteristics. — The same racial types that occur in the Dodum and Dol groups are found also among the Gungú. Judging from purely visual observation (a most inadequate method of assessing the physical characteristics of a large population), I would say that the type with very large prominent features and high stature is comparatively rare, and that here there is evidence of a strain of a small, pointed faced, wavy haired element which recalls vaguely the Veddid type met with in certain Konyak Nagas. Whereas on the upper Kamla, Selu and Sipi you find types which suggest Mongold influences different from the Palgaro-Mongold sub-stratum of the area, the Gungú do not show particularlymongold traits. Their skin colour is on the whole of a reddish-brown and their eyes are often light, but some individuals among the South Kamla Gungú have skins of a deep wheat colour.

Social Distributions. — The Gungú are still conscious of their division into Gute and Guchi clans; practically however this differentiation is of little account. Both the Pei and Perú phratries are today composed only of Gute clans, but one half of the Chimr phratry are Gute and the other Guchi. Among the latter is incidentally the nowadays most prominent Chimr clan Guchi, of which the headman of Tapo is a member. In the Telü-Tadum group there are Gute as well as Guchi clans, and here too the most influential clan, Rakhe, is Guchi, while the small Murga clan is Gute. This fact supports no doubt the Gungú's claim that while the Guchi were the earlier comers and the descendants of a younger brother, they are at least today, socially not inferior to the gute, the descendants of the elder brother.

RAU

The genealogical tree of the Dodum and Dol clans, as unfolded by the tribesmen of the Panior and the Kamla area, does not include the tribes inhabiting the valleys to the north and north-east that drain into the Subansiri. These tribes stand in marriage relations with villages of the Kamla valley, and it would seem that their distinctive appearance is due more to the Tibetan influence, to which they are subject, than to any major tribal division.

The people of the Sipi valley are collectively known as Raü, and include the following clans: Nio, Dade, Mosu, Dei, Tamin, Raj, Hina, Siakam, Lósar, Kange, Karre, Gidu, Sointga, Komchu, Tania, Soki, Dungum. Some of these clans, for instance, Nio, are Gute, others, such as Dei, Tamin and Raj, are Guchi.

The language spoken by the Raü is very similar to that of the Temi-Tedr group, and is understandable even to the Gungú.

The Raü group is said to include also the inhabitants of the Mongó valley to the north, and it is certain that the populations of these two converging valleys stand in very close contact and speak a similar language.

In physical type the Raü people resemble the tribesmen of the upper Kamla valley, but pronounced Mongold features, such as slit eyes and light yellow skin are comparatively frequent.
We do not yet know whether these clans claim descent from Dol, but they do intermarry with such Dol clans as Tumr, Sartam, Tail and Haki, and their language is similar to that spoken in the villages on the upper Kamla near its confluence with the Selu. But many men of the Rishi-Marsi group entertain relations with Tibetans and have learnt to speak the dialect of the traders from Tibet.

I have seen only a few women of this group. They had light skin and Mongolid features of a more delicate and progressive type than generally found among the hillmen of the Kamla valley.

NIÐU-MÔRA

The inhabitants of the Upper Subansiri valley, which is known to the tribesmen of the Kamla region as Agla Marpa, are said to belong to the tribal group of Nidu-Mora. Since this area has never been visited, information on its population is based on the accounts of tribesmen who have been to Agla Marpa for purposes of trade. It seems that the Nidu-Mora speak a language understandable to the Kamla tribesmen, but are conversant also with a Tibetan dialect. Their clothes and weapons are Tibetan, but their economy is basically the same as that of the tribesmen further south. They are reported to resemble the Kamla tribesmen in physical type and to intermarry with the Rishi-Marsi group.

CHIKUM-DUI

Very little is as yet known of the inhabitants of the Sigi valley (marked Slegen on the Survey of India map). The Gungi of the Kamla valley refer to them as Chikum or Chikum-Dui, and say that they are like the "Abors" of the Subansiri, cutting their hair short and wearing round hats but no clothes other than skins and furs.

A reconnaissance party of the Miri Mission passed through the area and reported that their contacts were mainly with the tribesmen east of the Subansiri and it may be that racially and culturally they are allied to the Abor tribes to the east of the Subansiri. There can be no doubt that they lie outside the social orbit of the Dodum-Dol tribes, and do not to any extent intermarry with the populations of the Kamla region. But their language seems to be understandable to men of the Gungi group who go there occasionally to trade.

SULUS

Distinct from all the tribal groups so far mentioned are the Sulus or Sulungs, a small, scattered tribe, found in the high country on the upper reaches of the Par River, in the hills between the Panior and the Pangi river, and in the hills flanking the Selu river. There are probably yet other groups of Sulus, but so far little is known of this elusive people.

The origin of the Sulus is obscure, but they are believed to have already been in the country when the other races immigrated. They speak a language of their own, ununderstandable to the Dodum and Dol tribes, but are usually familiar with the tongue of their neighbours. Judging from the few Sulus I have seen, I would say that they are of comparatively primitive racial type, and are distinguished from all the other tribesmen by a pronounced prognathism.

In the economic field the differences between Sulus and Dafas are very marked. While the basis of the economy of all other hillmen is agriculture and animal husbandry, the Sulus subsist mainly by hunting and trapping and the collection of jungle produce. They are believed to have had no cultivation until they came in contact with other tribes and learnt from them how to till the soil. Even now the areas they till are very small and they live in a semi-nomadic style, leaving their villages for months at a time to range the forests and hills in search of game and wild jungle produce.

They are reputedly good blacksmiths and brass founders, and fashion waste iron, into knives and daggers, make pipes and even imitations of such ceremonially precious bell-metal objects as prayer bells by the cire perdue process. The Dafas of the Panior area have the tradition that they learnt the blacksmith's craft from Sulus.

The Sulus in the area of the Sipi and Selu rivers are known as Kora Sulus, and are divided into clans among which are Kopik, Kui, Koriang, Loubung and Leli. Sulus known as Lukur and Manta are said to live in the vicinity of the upper Khu, and among the Sulu clans of the Panior area are Picha and Dunks.

Sulus do not normally intermarry with any other tribe, but casual unions between captured Sulus and Dafa slaves may have led to a limited amount of miscegenation.

APA TANIS

Whereas most other tribal groups merge imperceptibly one into the other, and even the Sulus, though distinct in language and habit have no compact territory of their own, the Apa Tanis constitute a separate endogamous community with its own territory, language, customs and tradition, and an economy fundamentally different from that of all other tribes of the Subansiri region. In a single valley of about 20 square miles, the Apa Tani live in several villages ranging in size from 160 to over 1,000 houses. These villages fall into three groups, each of which has a distinct tradition regarding the migration that preceded the Apa Tani's settlement in their present habitat. The first group consists of the single village of Hang, the second of Hari and Bela, and the third of Haja, Duta, Mudang Taghe and Michi Banini. Each group constitutes for certain purposes a ritual unit: the greatest annual Apa Tani festival, the Milo, for instance, is celebrated by each of the three groups in turn. There is a slight difference in dialect between the groups, but the Bela dialect resembles in some respects that of the Haja group rather than the dialect of Hari with which Bela is allied. The three groups intermarry freely, and there are no appreciable differences in custom. A system of reciprocal rights and obligations weds the seven villages into a closely integrated community consisting of a communal class and distinct cultural heritage.

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Internal Characteristics.—The fact that a thousand people find a living on one square mile would be unusual anywhere among primitive populations dependent on their own resources, but in an area where no other tribe has any conception of intensive cultivation, the achievement of the Apa Tanis is truly astonishing. Coming from the Dafa country into the Apa Tani valley with its irrigated rice-fields, gardens and groves, is to enter another world. Both Dafas and Apa Tanis are agriculturists, but there can be no greater contrast than the difference in their systems of cultivation. While the Dafa seldom tills a piece of land more than two or three years in succession and recognizes no individual property in land, the Apa Tani tends every square yard of his land with loving care and the greatest ingenuity. Land is to him the source and essence of all wealth and only the possession of land gives a man economic independence. All
cultivated land is jealously guarded private property and good, irrigated fields fetch prices in cattle and valuables that in the plains of Assam would be considered fantastic. Rice, cultivated on irrigated, terraced fields, is the Apa Tanis main crop, but on dry land millet (Echinochloa coracana) and maize are grown. Ploughs are unknown and the field work is done entirely with iron hoes, digging-sticks and wooden batons. Small area under cultivation compared with the population of the valley, the Apa Tanis not only grow enough food for themselves, but sell a good deal of rice to Dafas and Miris, who pay mainly in mithan and pigs.

Whereas the Haja dwell in huge, single homesteads, sometimes with as many as fourteen families under one roof, and these homesteads are loosely grouped over hillsides into settlements, the Apa Tanis live in crowded villages, each family in its own house, and in some villages there are a thousand or more households. The Apa Tanis are grouped over hillsides into small and narrow lanes. Some of the villages are subdivided into four and in each village there are numerous exogamous clans (kulu). The spirit of extreme and almost aggressive individualism and independence so characteristic of the Dafla would be fatal and disruptive in such populous settlements. Men who rub shoulders from morning to night have no other choice but to co-operate and to settle disputes by force through arbitration, or should that fail, by force of arms, and only symbolic display of force. Unrestricted war between Apa Tanis village is unknown and the whole tribe a social and endogamous unit whose cohesion is maintained by numerous traditional and ceremonial ties.

Each of the seven Apa Tanis villages is administered by a council of elders, and though there is no common head of the whole tribe, the village elders consult with each other on questions affecting two or more villages.

Within the villages social life is regulated by an elaborate system of clan-elders, executive clansmen, and messengers, but their administration of public affairs is unobtrusive and their powers are limited. While tradition and custom closely prescribe behaviour in all normal circumstances, there is no policing, although an unusual act might be discussed by the chief. Peaceful activities the Apa Tanis have attained an admirable degree of cooperation and concerted action, but when attacked by their warlike Dafla neighbours they seem to lack organization and leadership. Small bands of well-led Dafas have often captured Apa Tanis out hunting or their mithan grazing in the forests without provoking collective action on the part of this numerous tribe.

Practically all cultivated land is "freed", and divided into choice but to co-operate and

But there are a few cases of Tanoised social distinctions not being adhered to, corresponding distinction in material possessions; and there are Apa who own no land and have to earn their living by day labourers.

Trade is for such poor men a valuable source of income, and though the Apa Tanis are as a people far more settled than any group of Dafas, they are most enterprising traders and undertake expeditions to areas several days' march from their own country. In this way cloth and rice manufactured by Apa Tanis filter to distant villages and occasionally even across the trade-divide between India and Tibet. Racial Characteristics.—The difference in appearance between Apa Tanis and Dafas is striking. This is due not only to the Apa Tanis distinctive dress but even more to their peculiar racial characteristics. Apa Tanis, and particularly those of the upper class undulated by marriages with foreign slaves, stand out from any crowd of hillmen, be they Dafas, Miris or Abors. They are tall, or slender build with delicate long hands; their features are progressive, the faces long, the noses narrow and often elegantly curved, the light eyes are comparatively large, and deepest: indeed some men could pass for Europoids were it not for the rusdy brown of their skin. The hair is often wavy and in children frequently very light. There is a certain resemblance between some Apa Tanis and Dafas of the more progressive type, but in the former the non-Mongoloid features are much more strongly pronounced than in any Dafa.

In spite of the somatic, cultural and to a lesser degree linguistic differences between the Apa Tanis and their neighbours, the fact that the Apa Tanis form a self-contained social and political unit their racial isolation is not complete. Dafas captured or bought as children grow up as Apa Tanis and later marry into Apa clans, and Apa Tanis women visiting such neighbouring Dafa villages as Mai, Jorun and Talo are not averse to casual affairs with Dafa men. There are no formally arranged marriages between Apa Tanis and Dafa girls, but there are a few cases of Apa Tanis women who have entered into permanent unions with Dafas and have gone to live in the husband's village, the children of such unions becoming Dafas. Migrations.—The Apa Tanis have the tradition that their ancestors came from a country to the north or north-east, lying near the two rivers called Supapad-Pudji. These may be two branches of the Subansiri but neither the Apa Tanis nor any one else is likely to identify the area of their origin. They all agree, however, that they crossed the Subansiri and came to a place in the Sipsi valley called Karr which lies beyond the Pij Cholo, a mountain peak visible from the hills above the Apa Tanis valley. They are believed to have split into three groups—the nucleus of the three village groups—each of which skirted the Pij Cholo and took a different way to the Apa Tanis country.

The people of the Haja group crossed into the Kamla valley by the so-called Regang route. Later they crossed the Kuru River at a place called Ombu-Rabuk which lies between Mintlat and Rakhe. They then went eastwards along the combined Kuru and Kamla as far as the mouth of the Pein River and finally reached the Apa Tanis valley via the Gungi village of Bus, entering the valley on the side now belonging to Bela and Hari. The Bela and Hari group followed the Haja people from Pij Cholo as far as Ombu-Rabuk. But after crossing the Kuru they moved upstream along the Kuru westwards, as far as the Palim valley. They then went up the Palim and followed the Pij Cholo as far as the present Dafa village of Lichu, emerging on the side of the Apa Tanis valley now occupied by the villages of the Haja group.

* Apa Tanis use also the terms mite (synonymous with mite) and Gushi (synonymous with mite) the use of these terms is possibly due to contact with Dafas, but Gushi and Gushi have among the Apa Tanis a somewhat different implication than among the Dafas.
The Hang group took an altogether different route, a route known as Tapin Rego, lying east of the Pij Cholo. They crossed the Kamla near Gocham (not far from its confluence with the Subansiri) at a place called Enta Rego and made their way to the Apa Tani country through the hills now inhabited by the Gungu clans.

But the migrations of the Apa Tani belong to legend and while many Daflas clans have been in a state of flux for several generations, the large Apa Tani population is completely settled. From time to time their neighbours have changed and many villages beyond the borders of their small domain have passed from one group of Dafla clans to another, and with this vacillation in Dafla politics friend has given way to foe and foe to friend, but the Apa Tanis have made neither attempts at expansion nor have they even been seriously threatened by foreign invaders. They are, as they have been for centuries, the most stable element in the population pattern of the Subansiri Region.

Large areas of the Subansiri Region still await exploration, but from the existing evidence it would appear that Apa Tani civilization is unique in the Assam Himalayas. No other tribe has developed the resources of its habitat to the same extent as the Apa Tanis, and though the latter have had the advantage of an unusually fertile piece of country, I do not believe that a favourable milieu alone can explain their success in transforming a mountain valley of barely twenty square miles into a garden where twenty thousand people can maintain a standard of living far higher than that of any neighbouring tribe. The genius of Apa Tani culture seems to be fundamentally different from that of Dafla, Miri and Abor culture, and the considerable physical difference between Apa Tanis and Daflas suggests that not only the cultural but also the racial heritage of the two populations is distinct.

Conclusions.—In my recent work in the Subansiri area I could lift the curtain from a country unknown to anthropology, but a good deal of further research will have to be done before we can approach the solution of its many ethnological problems. So far we can discern three major cultural strata among the many tribal groups which are scattered over this part of the hills between the borders of India and Tibet: the ancient stratum of semi-nomadic food gatherers and hunters represented by the Sulus, the broad stratum of jhum-cultivators such as Daflas and Miris, and the most advanced stratum of a highly developed agricultural civilization based on the cultivation of rice on irrigated terrace-fields. In other parts of the Eastern Himalayas there exists also a stratum of shepherds and cattle-breeders, semi-nomadic peoples living in high altitudes above the region of the sub-tropical rain forest. When the exploration of the Subansiri area is continued such a population may still be discovered in the highlands immediately below the Great Himalayan range, and among the Daflas of the Panior valley I heard indeed vague stories of people known as Nga, who are said to breed sheep, wear woollen clothes and build houses of stone. But until the upper courses of Khru, Kamla and Subansiri are explored, our knowledge of these and other high altitude dwellers will have to rely on hearsay reports, and for the present only the three cultural strata represented by Sulus, Daflas and Apa Tanis are open to anthropological investigation.
Notes on Agriculture and Animal Husbandry among the Apa Tantis.

The economy of the Apa Tantis is without parallel in Tribal India. Secluded from the outside world by natural barriers and war-like neighbours, the Apa Tantis have developed the resources of their small country to an extent which would be creditable to any civilized community and is truly miraculous in a tribe of archaic and in many ways primitive culture.

The Apa Tantis' habitat is a single broad valley lying at an altitude of 5,000 feet, roughly speaking midway between the Panjor River and the Kumla, one of the main tributaries of the Subansiri. Steep mountains rising to 8,000 feet ring this valley whose plateau-like formation stands in striking contrast to the neighbouring country where rivers rush through deep gorges and mountains sweep up to rugged crests with hardly as much as a ledge between river-bank and peak seven or eight miles high. This in itself is much suggestive that there was once a lake far above the gorges on either side, and the silt brought down by streams from the surrounding mountains has filled out this lake and built up a plain whose fertile soil has enabled the Apa Tantis to develop their peculiar type of civilization. This plain is drained by the Kele River. Before the advent of the Apa Tantis the Kele may have been a meandering stream in a spacious valley of swamps and bogs, but today it is forced into a more or less straight course between high dams. The wide flat valley has been transformed into an enormous mosaic of carefully tended rice terraces, while on islands of higher ground lie groves of pines, bamboos and fruit trees and great villages, almost towns, with labyrinths of densely crowded streets.

The length of this valley is about 6½ miles and its breadth at the widest point about 2 miles. But the seven villages comprise some 3,650 houses; if we reckon forty to sixty inhabitants for each house we come to a population of about 200 Apa Tantis. The valley comprises 20 square miles of cultivable land and use the surrounding hills only as hunting grounds. There are not many areas in rural India with a population of nearly a thousand per square mile, and I cannot recall any other example of an Asiatic hill tribe surviving and indeed maintaining a comparatively high standard of living in so restricted a territory.

The agriculture of the Apa Tantis as the basis of their economy is thus not onlv of great intrinsic interest but provides an example of an elaborate and most efficient system of soil exploitation developed by a race cut off from the material development of the Indian high civilizations. The achievement of this tribe is all the more remarkable since the neighbouring Dafa and Miri tribes follow quite different and far more primitive agricultural methods. Indeed to come from the land of these cultivators of oft-shifted hill-terraces, as it should seem haphazardly in a many ways the Tani age. Those platforms wherever there is space, there are groves of bamboo, terrace after terrace following each other in uninterrupted succession. There is a living carpet of bright green rice seedlings. These are the nurseries for the young rice plants which although one would take them for pastures, are really kept for the cultivation of leafy plants from which a salty substance, the black "Apa Tani salt" is extracted.

From the broken country on the edge of the valley, paths, broad and in excellent repair as all paths in the Apa Tani country, rise steeply, but it is not yet the end of cultivated land. The hillsides are covered with forest, plantations of pines and other useful trees in carefully nurtured plots, in which all the trees are of the same size and kind. Any thousand feet above the valley is the untended forest, with its rank growth of enormous rhododendrons, the many trees of the sub-tropical rain forest and a multitude of clumps, tree ferns and orchids. From any vantage point on these high ranges you may have a bird's eye view of the lovely tranquil Apa Tani country. The villages, like small towns with winding streets and long rows of gabled thatched roofs, pressing round them the dark pine-groves and light green bamboo gardens that in the spring are broken by the white and pink of flowering fruit trees, and to all sides the brilliant stretches of water-flooded fields, an expanse almost like a lake, laced with the delicate irregular lines of dissecting dabs. From the sea of luminous plant growth emerge islands clothed in groves and gardens and irregular peninsulas of field and pasture, but however far the eye reaches, there is no spot in this valley, which does not show the traces of man's controlling hand.
2. Land Tenure.—Land so intensively and carefully tended, the object of so much ingenuity and labour and transformed, no doubt out of all recognition from its original state, must obviously be highly prized by those who reap the harvests of its manifold products. Among the Apa Tanis as among other peasant folks—and unlike the neighbouring Daflas and Miris—the influence and social status of a man depends largely on his property in land. Land is the source of wealth and all other and less permanent possessions are mainly valued as a means of acquiring more land.

Any study of Apa Tani agriculture must therefore begin with an inquiry into the system of land-tenure, which is intimately linked with the complex social organization.

According to the type of ownership the tribal land of the Apa Tanis can be divided into three categories:

1. Land owned by individuals.
2. Clan-land.

The first category comprises practically all cultivated land, i.e., irrigated rice-fields, fields for dry crops, garden plots for maize, millet, vegetables and fruit trees, groves of bamboo, pines and other useful trees, as well as sites for houses and granaries.

Clan-land consists of wooded land near the village as pasture and burial grounds and tracts of forest, sometimes at a very great distance from the village, where only the men bers of the owner-clan have the right to hunt and trap.

Common village land is confined to one or two usually not extensive stretches of pasture, and to forest tracts on the periphery of the Apa Tani country.

Privately owned land.—The disparity of rich and poor is very great, so not much in the standard of living as in the holdings of cultivable land. Except for slaves and a few very poor men of better class, the average plot of land consists of one-fourth of the clan-quarter, and a man of good family, fallen on bad times, is often tempted to sell his valuable house-rite and move to a back street. Many families have, on the other hand, spare house-sites, which until required are used as vegetable gardens and maize plots and these are much prized because of the ample manure available in the village.

Apart from his house-rite a man requires the site for at least one granary, which lying on the outskirts of the village, is valued at one cow or a mithan. And he requires one or more bamboo groves on the outskirts of the village as a place of retiring in sickness. Large groves are felled to build his house and for which, except in the quarter inhabited by his clan. A good house-rite in one of the main streets, preferably near an assembly platform (lapang), has a very high price and is seldom to be had for less than 10 mithan.

As the population is more or less static most men inherit a house-rite and have not to purchase it, but a man with several sons may have difficulty in securing for each a site in a good position. Poor men and from the outskirts of the village or on a neighbouring hillside. Usually in the villages, which lies with rare exceptions in the quarter inhabited by his clan. A good house-rite in one of the main streets, preferably near an assembly platform (lapang), has a very high price and is seldom to be had for less than 10 mithan.

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In some places it is possible, however, to transform dry land into rice terraces, and a poor man may thus acquire some wet land at comparatively low cost. But such rice terraces on high ground are not as productive and therefore not as valuable as those in the bed of the valley; they cannot be kept moist throughout the year.

Another way of obtaining land suitable for rice cultivation is to lay out new terraces on common clan-land. Many groups possess common pastures in the bracken covered hillocks, and here and there a few narrow terraces could be fitted into a depression or ravine. Only members of the owner clan may build such terraces which become their private property once they have established permanent cultivation; but once under cultivation, these terraces may be sold to non-clan members.

Similarly common pastures sometimes can sometimes be turned into fields for dry cultivation, but the cattle owners among the clan-members often resist such attempts and will even force a poor and landless man to relinquish a plot on which he has begun to cultivate.

The high price of irrigated land, the fact that it can only be bought for cattle and mithan and the restricted area of the Apa Tani country, have given rise to a capitalistic trend in Apa Tani economics. A large part of the land is today held in the hands of rich men, whereas there are numerous poor men with holdings too small to feed them and their families. This is not the place to investigate the reasons for this inequality, but it is obvious that a man without sufficient land to support himself has only a slender chance of ever acquiring the cattle with which he could purchase additional land. The rich man, on the other hand, has usually a surplus of grain and by bartering this to neighbouring Dafas or Miris for mithan he obtains quite easily the means whereby he can add to his holding.

Two examples from the village of Haja may illustrate the manner in which holdings are built up and enlarged.

Nada Tomu, a member of the most prominent clan, was given by his father twenty-five terraces in groups of five at five different points of the village land, as well as two bamboo groves and one garden. He thus began with far more land than necessary to support a family. Every year he sold some rice to Dafas of neighbouring villages, and with the mithan received in payment he bought more land, altogether 62 terraces in ten different places. Nowadays he can buy with his surplus an average of three mithan a year and possesses twelve slaves who all work on his land, though only seven live in his house, the others having set up their own holdings.

Nendin Tagum of the same village acquired his land in a less orthodox fashion. He inherited from his father six rice terraces in two groups of three and bought subsequently three more terraces for a total of twenty mithan. Of these only three were mithan which he had inherited; eight he had bought for rice, and nine he had obtained as ransoms for captured Dafas. But it is a man of some means and an established social position who is likely to profit from the risky game of raiding and man-catching. For the poor landless man without influential kinsmen to effect his release if the tables are turned, it is too dangerous. In recent years, however, an alley has been opened by which he too can attain a minimum of economic independence. Work in the plains of Assam has enabled many a man to purchase calves, either buying them for cash in the plains and driving them up to the hills or purchasing them from fellow tribesmen for goods obtained in Assam.

It is characteristic of Apa Tani economics that land can only be bought for cattle. Pigs, cloth or dsu may go with the price, but the basic price consists always of mithan and cattle. Only very small patches of dry land are occasionally sold for a big pig or some valuable, such as a Tibetan prayer bell, but the proper currency for transactions in real property is and remains cattle.

The principle that all cultivated land is private property of which the individual owner can dispose of as he wishes is so deeply ingrained in Apa Tani mentality that village boundaries are no real consideration in the transfer of land. For convenience everyone likes, of course, to have his fields as close to his village as possible, but nothing prevents a man from purchasing rice-terraces on the land of a neighbouring village. Indeed in the central valley and particularly in the contact zones the political units the ownership of land often transcends the village boundaries and the fields of the inhabitants of two adjacent villages dovetail across the hills. In these regions of similar nature the demand for land is often so great and here the transfer of land is largely an endo-village affair, the intruders on a clan's traditional land being members of the same village, but of different clan or perhaps even different khel.

At first sight it may appear as though there is no check on the capitalistic trend in Apa Tani economics and that rich land must necessarily accumulate in the hands of the rich man. Yet, such a view would be one sided. There are various forces which counteract such a development. The inheritance laws provide that the land of a man is divided more or less equally among his sons, and many men divide up most of their land when their sons marry and set up their own households. Thus large holdings are seldom handed on undivided to the next generation. A wealthy man is moreover expected to provide some land for his dependents. Slaves who have grown up in his house and shown themselves able and hard-working, are usually allowed to set up their own households once they are married and have one or two children. Their master is then under an obligation to give them some land—it may not be very much, certainly not enough to make them self-sufficient—and once given, the land cannot be reclaimed until the freed slave has turned thirty. That this system, which may may rafts without more or less by some of his land. A long drawn out illness with the need for innumerable sacrifices of mithan and cows, may compel him to sell land for cattle, or a number of his household may fall into the hands of raiders and must be ransomed with mithan and valuables which again may be obtainable only by the sale of land. While Apa Tani will give land to their dependents, they never hold out poor living by cultivating a rich man's land and sharing the crop. He must either be content with the irregular income of daily wages, working alternatively for several rich men, or he must join a rich man's household and accept a position hardly different from that of a slave.

Cland.—The land held jointly by all the members of a clan comprises undulating pasture land and bracken covered hillocks, hunting grounds in the forests surrounding the valley and, usually close to the village, an open grassy stretch used as burial ground and as a place where mithan can be tethered before slaughter or sale.

Generally clan-land is not held by a single clan, but by a group of two or even three clans that inhabit a separate quarter of the village, and may either intermarry or stand in a brother relationship. When a clan dies out the land does not become common village land, but goes by right to the traditional marriage partners of the extinct clan.

The importance of the clan-land lies not so much in the open pasturage, but in the forest tracts used for the extraction of wood and cane, for trapping and for hunting. These tracts are not concentrated in one block, but are scattered over the hills enclosing the Apa Tani country.
The two principal clans of Duta village, for instance, possess jointly twenty-nine tracts of common land in addition to their collective burial ground, Pape, in the central valley. These tracts are known by name and comprise a cluster of bare hills used for grazing, a piece of jungle with a salt lick for mithan, six tracts of forest near the village used only for cutting firewood, grazing mithan and sometimes for rat-hunting; the remaining twenty-one tracts are in widely separated areas, some near the Datta, a village of the Kha, west of Duta, others south of Hang village about one day's journey from Duta, and yet others east of Hang, being the most remote. In these tracts is the perogative of the owners, but any Apa Tani may hunt there with bow and arrow and even cut wood.

Within such clan forest, certain areas are the trapping preserve of individual clan members and it is indeed observed for instance that high in the hills, heavy game, particularly bear, is sometimes taken. Here again, however, it is the owner's exclusive rights that are protected, not the property of the owner. Such an area is the right to trap and catch the forest fauna and the owner's exclusive rights cover only trapping and the extraction of food; for hunting with spears or bows and arrows his piece of forest is open to all members of the clans with adjoining hunting grounds, a group which may comprise part of a village, a whole village or even two villages. It is only within this group that a man may sell his right more precisely his right to trap and cut wood within a circumscribed area. The prices paid for such rights are small compared to the prices of cultivated land or groves, and trapping grounds change hands for as little as a pig, a few daw or several cloths.

Common village land.—Within the Apa Tani valley the areas held jointly by all clans of a village are comparatively small and unimportant, but there are certain tracts of forest on the periphery of the Apa Tani country which are claimed by the one or other village without being the property of individual clans. These tracts are the used bowl of the main valley where the surplus water from the days' journey on their hunting trips, but they lie at too great a distance from the villages to be useful for trapping or as pasture for mithan.

The common village land within the Apa Tani valley, on the other hand, is mainly used as pasture for oxen. Theoretically it is a reserve where men short of land may construct new gardens and fields for dry crops, but such a transformation of pasture into cultivated land needs the consent at least of the connivance of the other villagers.

3. Methods of Tilage.—Only by the most intensive and skilful working of the available land can the Apa Tanis make themselves in an area where one square mile of land, comprising fields, groves, gardens, pastures, and watercourses, must provide the subsistence for at least one thousand persons, or, roughly speaking, two hundred families. Their methods of tilage are primitive, and indeed of a type proper to the neolithic age rather than to the world's great peasant civilizations of today, in so far as they depend entirely on human labour; but in other respects they are highly specialized and are proof of a far greater capacity for planning and concerted effort than the wasteful methods of cultivation in many parts of India, which for millenia have been familiar with the plough and the exploitation of animal labour.

Wat Crops.—The corner stone of Apa Tani agriculture is the cultivation of rice on irrigated terraces. Rice is the staple food, and all other crops are grown mainly to provide variety of diet and to utilize those portions of the country not suitable for irrigation. Rice too is the principal item in the Apa Tanis' export trade.

But for the high lying islands and the undulating tongues of land under dry crops, and the spurs and hillocks of the broken country, that the flooding of all the terraces at the top end of a side valley where a stream is first tapped and follow the course of the water from terrace to terrace, until it flows into the used bowl of the main valley where the surplus water from the days' journey on their hunting trips into the Kede, the river which traverses the entire length of the Apa Tani valley.

Everyone of the larger streams rising on the wooded heights that ring the Apa Tani country, is tapped soon after it emerges from the forest and reaches a gully wide enough to accommodate a series of narrow terraces. A short distance above the terraces occurs the first diversion from the stream but usually only a small water is here collected; the stream continues on its course while the feeder channel branching off at an angle to it as far as the source is used up by blocking it by a mud dam so that the owner's terraces can be flooded or drained as required. At the head of the valley the terraces are on an average narrower, perhaps 15 by 30 yards, are partly dug out of the hill-side and partly built up, with a difference of one to three feet in level of the individual terraces or groups of terraces. As the valley broadens, the terraces grow in size and the differences in their level dwindle to one or even half a foot. But where the terrace of a small ravine is too high to be included in the area of the central valley, subsidiary series of small terraces are built up to meet the water practically at its source. It is in these subsidiary valleys where poor men short of land are using every irrigable corner for cultivation, that the individual terraces are narrowest and the dams highest, the difference between one terrace and the next being often as much as five or six feet. But unlike the terrace builders as the Angami Nagas or the Hujugs of North Lupon, the Apa Tanis do not construct terraces that climb the mountain slopes for a thousand feet and more. The genius of the Apa Tanis has manifested itself rather in a meticulous and expert care for every crop, than in impressive feats of engineering. Yet the lay-out of the terraces is no mean example of co-ordination of effort and perfection of technique. In the side valleys, several hundred yards long, the most part of the terraces are tamped down and where the central valley only a shallow flow remains in the main channel, deep cut against times of heavy rain when floods are a threat to the dams. These courses are secured against flood erosion by rows of wooden stakes and threatened points strengthened by linings of strong bamboo matting. Along the embankments of the main channels run paths strewn with gravel which renders them usable even between the heaviest rains. After heavy rain there is always the danger of flood water breaking over the dams and submerging the sprouting crop. Normally, however water is not allowed to overflow the dams. Where two terraces lie on much the same level the mud-dam is cut to allow the water to overflow from one field to the next, but elsewhere the terraces are drained through wide wooden or bamboo pipes let into the dam; these allow of a steady flow from the higher to the lower terrace without the rush of water estimated for the rare heavy rain.

The rainfall is so ample and the many streams and rivulets converging from the ring of high wooded ranges bring so much water into the shallow bowl of the Apa Tani country, that the flooding of all the low-lying terraces is on the whole no problem. Water rights are not sold or bought, and there are no fixed rules as to which terraces have the first claim on the water of any particular stream. Disputes over water are said to be rare, but when they occur a settlement can usually be reached by division. There has been often been tapping of traps and particularly bear traps, dangerous to man and beast alike must somehow be regulated. Such an area is the right to trap and cut wood within a circumscribed area. The prices paid for such rights are small compared to the prices of cultivated land or groves, and trapping grounds change hands for as little as a pig, a few daw or several cloths.
The upkeep of the terrace fields, dams and channels absorbs a major part of the Apa Tanis' energy. The harvest is hardly garnered when repairs and alterations on dams are put in hand and throughout the winter, until the first days in May, men and women can be seen moving earth, levelling fields, constructing and rebuilding dams, often standing ankle deep in mud and water at a temperature only just above freezing point. This is not content merely to maintain an established system of terraces and channels but to the casual observer looks little short of perfect. If the yield of a field has not been up to standard an Apa Tanis will carry out improvements before the next sowing season: divide a large field perhaps not perfectly watered into two terraces, or conversely turn two terraces into one, gaining thereby the space of the dividing dam. For all such earth-works as well as the repairing of embankments and the levelling of fields the Apa Tanis shite to large flat bowls into which they carefully drop over the slimy surface of the partially flooded ground. When the work is done by parties of young men and girls, it is mainly the latter who with hoes hack back the soil and cut away the face of bunds and fields while the young men and boys load the soil on to the trays and drag it off for redistribution. Both flat wooden batons and iron hoes are used in the remodelling and repairing of broken fields. The wooden batons are long pointed sticks and the iron hoes are of the type in common use on tea gardens and are without exception imported from Assam; although today they appear indispensable to the Apa Tanis, old men still remember the wooden hoe-like implement used in their father's time and there can be no doubt that then the work of building terraces took up an even greater part of the Apa Tanis' time.

Although there do not seem to be many openings for an expansion of the area under irrigation, there passes no year without some small plot being turned into terraced fields. The easiest way of bringing new land under rice cultivation is to level and ring the dam with a plot previously used for growing millet, reusing on rain water to fill the terrace and soften the ground. But such fields can only be used for the early rice, for the shortest period of dry weather can seriously harm the crop. Where a perennial stream can be tapped and where the rainfall is insufficient for planting new fields for panic grass, such as like Michi Bamin and Hang and, to a lesser degree, Hari have still land for expansion and in the last two years new terraces have been built in outlying areas in marshy ground as well as built up the course of streamlets that trickle from some obscure source. Men of Hang village, for instance, have recently constructed a whole series of terraces on land that had been occupied by pine-groves and pasture, and have subsequently filled in a long channel across a pasture and split it up into several branches to provide sufficient feed for fifteen to twenty terraces.

We have seen that there are two types of rice-fields: those permanently kept under water or at least in a very moist condition, and those that dry out and harden soon after harvest. The former, which are considered the more valuable are not dug over and on these fields the water is allowed to drain off; these are cleaned and dug over with hoes before each period of cultivation and then flooded from channels; the water is allowed to filter slowly over the field and when the soil is thoroughly impregnated it is puddled by young men who, supporting themselves between two poles, treadle the mud underfoot so that to a depth of two or three feet the soil is churned to a smooth thick paste. On these fields the three varieties of early ripening rice (plate, plate and planting) are grown.

Distinct from low-lying, channel-fed terraces are those on higher ground, which depend almost entirely on monsoon streams. There the ground is dug over with hoes and the clods are broken by hand or moon-shaped hoes. On such terraces the channel water is scarcely enough to convert more than the surface soil into mud at the time of transplanting and during the period of growth the rice is largely dependent on the rain falling. All rice is sown in nurseries. These are small terraces lying for the most part immediately below the villages adjoining the granaries or in narrow protected valleys shut in by bamboo and pine groves. Only a few nurseries lie at any distance from the village, in the middle of the terrace fields. Throughout the year the rice fields are deep under water and a good deal of manure is regularly thrown in. In the months before the sowing of the rice, the surface water is drained off, the soil thoroughly cleaned and puddled until it turns into a thick cream, in which the workers sink up to their knees.

Sowing.—By the second half of February the nurseries (miding) lie ready for the seed, the surface of the mud is levelled by treadling and the small terraces rided by half hoops of split bamboo or, wherever there is danger from straying cows fenced in with fine bamboo lattice. The seed is not sprouted before sowing. The women scatter it dry, as it comes from the granary, over the surface of the mud. Each variety of rice is sown in a separate block, the larger part of the nursery being devoted to the late ripening kinds. After sowing the seed is not covered; within a few days it takes root and soon a thick film of green shoots covers the ground; then the water is allowed to filter into the field.

The transplanting of the rice begins in the middle of April. First the seedlings of the early ripening plate rice are planted out in those newly flooded terraces which have been dug over with hoes and then softened by treadling. At the time that men and boys are still busy in rebuilding and preparing other terraces and the transplanting is accomplished the rice and girls who lift the seedlings from the nurseries, tie them in bundles and carry them still wet from the water in open work basket to the fields. Starting at the edge of the field they move forward as they work, planting single seedlings at intervals of about 8 inches.*

Next the plate rice and then the planting rice, both early ripening varieties are transplanted on terraces prepared in a similar manner. The three early varieties of rice are also grown on outlying terraces with scanty water supply, but here transplanting awaits the first heavy rain and is indeed often deferred till the first half of May.

All through the spring months on the dams continues and at the end of April begins the transplanting of the three late ripening varieties of rice (tema, elang and rade) which are known collectively as emo and for which the best land is reserved. The late ripening rice-plants are long pointed shoots which to have been cleaned by hand, but not dug over and where the previous year's rice-plants are already sprouting. After a period of years such terraces are also dug over and then the seedlings are planted into the soft, newly turned soil before the field is actually flooded. Towards the end of the transplanting season, young men and boys, largely free from other work, join in finishing the transplanting, but the major part of this work is still done by women.

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* In the plains of Assam the workers move backwards when transplanting, and plant three or four seedlings in one place and at a distance of about 20 inches.
By the middle of May all the fields in the central valley are planted out, and people are busy transplanting on distant, low fields of side-valleys, and as we see presently, with the work on their dry land.

Lastly emu rice is planted even in some of the shallower waterways and appears to thrive in spite of the current and of periodical submersion on days when heavy rain floods the channels.

The main rice-harvest, when all *emu* rice—the white *empu* and *raze*, and the red *elang*, all bearded varieties, are reaped at the same time begins in the middle of October and lasts until early in November. It demands perhaps the greatest concerted effort of the year and men, women and children work without respite for two or three days. The women reap the rice with sickles, bought in the plains and used nowadays generally in place of the knives of Apa Tani blacksmiths, cutting the stalks about a foot from the ground. Tied into sheaves the ears are heaped together and the men thresh out the grain on the spot in a somewhat unusual fashion. The sheaves are beaten against a slanting wooden board and the grain slides down into a large carrying basket, which is immediately carried off to the granary; the straw which is the Apa Tani's principal food, is gathered about the house with the help of the women, who carry it to the field in baskets, generally in place of the knapsacks of the villagers.

Seed grain of all types of rice is separated from the food supply while still on the fields, the best yielders being allocated for this purpose, but the rest of the harvest is poured on the floor of the granary for Apa Tanis do not use baskets for storing their grain. The granaries are built on wooden poles, and roofed, not with thatch but with ribs of split bamboo. There are no devices to keep away rats, which are a pest both in houses and in the granary.

When the harvest is over, the cows are let loose on the fields and throughout the winter months they are free to graze on the stubble but there are too few of these animals for their manure substantially to benefit land under such constant and intensive cultivation. The Apa Tani, however, recognize the need for preserving the fertility of the soil and great care is taken to spread the manure over it. Throughout the winter and spring months, from the end of the harvest until the time for transplanting, women and men are to be seen daily carrying baskets of rice chaff, pig and chicken droppings, ashes and kitchen refuse to the fields. Thus the Apa Tani have almost the same idea as the Rajputs that much of what he extracts, and the rich humus washed away by rain, is returned to the soil, to be received by the roots of the plants. The Apa Tani have no fences in their fields; the territory of each village is a natural one, stretching up to the broken country on the fringes of the valley. Besides the fenced-in gardens that often adjoin groves of bamboo and pine, there are the stretches of open fields, used almost exclusively for the cultivation of dry fields. The principal dry crop is *Eleusine coracana* and of this two varieties are grown: an early millet (*mipa*) which is mainly planted along bunds of open fields, and in garden plots, and a later ripening millet (*mipa*) cultivated on upland hill terraces. These dry fields are also planted on rice-field bunds. Both varieties are, like rice, transplanted, and this seems to be a peculiarity of the Apa Tani. Neither among the neighbouring Dassah nor anywhere else in India have I heard of *Eleusine coracana* a crop equally suitable for shifting cultivation and peasant farming—being transplanted or sown in any way other than by transplanting. The Apa Tani grow the *nelum* in gardens near the houses or in small fenced-in plots on islands surrounded by rice fields. They scatter the seed densely over the moist soil, but do not cover it with earth. At the end of April, when the young plants of the *mipa* millet are about 5 inches high, they are planted out in gardens and on the dams of rice-fields. This work is usually done by two women: the one, wielding a pointed stick, makes holes in the earth and the other moving after her, plants the *mipa* seedlings. Once in the field the Apa Tani determination to make the fullest use of every square foot of their country. When the millet ripens it lines every path along the dams and although the yield on the dams excluding one terrace may not be very considerable, the total amount of millet grown on many miles of dam must come to thousands of baskets. An additional advantage is that the roots of the millet strengthen the soil, not only during the period of cultivation, but even when the crops have been reaped and the drying dams have the tendency to crumble.

A few weeks later, mainly in the first half of May, late ripening *sara* millet is planted out on the remaining rice bunds, and on the many an odd bit of dry ground between paths, dams and channels. These plots are laid out in neat beds, a few feet square, separated by paths, and single seedlings are planted at intervals of about 5 inches. Immediately before planting the tops of the seedlings are clipped and this is said to lead to a quick, strong growth.

But the preparation of the dry fields has to wait until all the work on the irrigated terraces and most of the transplanting of rice is completed. It is only the first half of May that the Apa Tani find the time to dig over the dry fields, still covered with last year's stubble. This is mainly a man's job; it is done by groups of three to six young men, but occasionally one or two girls may work with them side by side. Today large iron hoes are used for turning over the soil, but in the old times the work was done with wooden
hoes and must then have been even more strenuous. Most of the dry fields are almost flat, but some run up the gentle slopes of the broken country and there rough terraces are built to prevent erosion and too rapid drainage. There is no attempt to flatten these terraces, a moderate gradient being considered no disadvantage for dry crops. After the men have turned over the soil, the women break up the clods and smooth the ground with the small hoe (yadi) which is made of split bamboo looped so that the crossed ends form a handle. Finally the sate millet is taken from the nurseries and the seedlings are planted out one by one on the dry fields. Here the women do not hole the ground with sticks, but press the plants gently into the level surface of the rain soaked earth.

Millet is weeded twice, and this too is done by women with their bamboo hoes. The early miha ripens at the same time as the plure rice in the first half of August. It is grown in small quantities, and the reaping is done almost entirely by the women who cut off the ears and take them home for immediate consume. Only rarely is the early millet stored in granaries. Miha millet is stored with the grain still in ear; it is never threshed until required for the pot, when threshing and husking is a combined operation conducted with heavy pounding in bowl shaped blocks.

The harvest of the sate millet follows the emo rice harvest, early in November and millet is thus the latest ripening crop. The ears are cut with sickles and carried into the granaries, where they are heaped on the floor.

Millet is mainly used for making beer, but it is sometimes also crushed and made into a rough kind of bread. Apa Tanis do not sell millet to outsiders, and they sometimes even buy millet from neighbouring Dafas.

Although familiar with Setaria italica and Sorghum vulgare both cultivated by Dafas and Miris, the Apa Tanis only grow Eleusine coracana.

The dry crop next in importance to millet is maize, and of this the Apa Tanis cultivate three varieties: nire a white and red variety, ripening before the plure rice and thus the first of all the grain crops, nite a white variety ripening together with the plate rice, and nite tan, a red variety with very small grains ripening together with the plaping rice. All three varieties of maize are grown in the gardens inside the village, but nire and nite are also cultivated in the more distant garden plots near groves and dry fields. The individual grains are dibbled into the ground 8 to 10 inches apart and maize is thus the only grain crop the Apa Tanis do not transplant.

The other garden crops of the Apa Tanis are beans, chillies, tobacco, tomato, cumber, taro, ginger, potatoes, coriander, and a coarse kind of spinach. All these vegetables are sown in the gardens both inside the villages and near bamboo groves early in March, and chillies, tobacco and tomatoes are transplanted a few weeks later.

The Apa Tani beans (perung) are a small non-climbing variety with seeds of a light golden brown, that are dried and eaten boiled. The chillies cultivated in the Apa Tani country are larger than the kind commonly grown in India; they find a ready market in the plains and are indeed the only vegetable grown not only for home consumption but for sale in the plains of Assam, where Apa Tanis exchange them mainly against salt.

Tobacco is cultivated with great care; all Apa Tanis both smoke and chew tobacco from a very early age. The first leaves are plucked early in May; these are not dried whole, but are cut up, trampled under foot and then dried on mats.

Marrows ripen in September and October and are boiled, but cucumbers are usually eaten raw.

Taro plays no very important role in Apa Tani diet and is grown much less than in the neighbouring Dafas country, but ginger is a favourite cooking spice and thinly sliced is eaten on many ceremonial occasions.

Potatoes and tomatoes are obviously of comparatively recent introduction and are neither very large nor very extensively cultivated. The first potatoes are dug up as early as May, and considering how economically Apa Tanis are in other respects it is strange that they often dig up and eat potatoes hardly as big as a cherry.

The point of view of their value to Apa Tani diet the leafy, spinach-like vegetables are probably the most important garden produce. These are grown and eaten in very large quantities; with a gap of a few winter months they are available throughout the year. Though not specifically grown for food, young bamboo shoots from the bamboo groves are gathered and eaten in large quantities in March, April and May.

It may be noted here that cotton does not rank among the dry crops of the Apa Tanis. Their weaving industry is more highly developed than that of any tribe in the vicinity, but the cultivation of cotton on land urgently required for growing food crops is apparently not considered an economic proposition and the Apa Tanis purchase nearly all their cotton from neighbouring Dafas.

Graves: Covering less ground than the irrigated rice terraces, but rather more than the vegetable gardens, the groves of bamboo, pine and fruit trees form an integral part of Apa Tani economics. Villages of up to a thousand houses would have difficulty in finding sufficient building material in nearby forests, unless regeneration kept pace with fellings.

In the hills surrounding the Apa Tani country various kinds of bamboo occur but that cultivated in carefully tended groves is a medium sized straight stemmed variety of male bamboo, that stands up well to the cold winters with seasonal snow. According to tradition the Apa Tanis brought this species with them when in the dim ages of the past they arrived in the Apa Tani Valley. Be this as it may, the Apa Tani bamboo is not found in the surrounding countryside except where it has been cultivated in the villages of nearby Dafas. Other Dafas do cultivate isolated clumps of bamboo, usually the giant spraying species also found in Assam. The Apa Tani lays out whole groves of bamboo, spacing the roots at two or three foot intervals, and rigorously prunes every shoot allowing only one or two stems to grow from each root. Once established a grove will retain its regenerative power indefinitely and can be exploited over a period of years. Before laying out a new grove the Apa Tani cleans and levels the soil almost as carefully as on his dry fields, surrounding the whole plot with high fences. The roots for a new grove are lifted from an overcrowded grove and planted in shallow holes during the months of December, January or early February. After three weeks growth in April, May and June, the male, the Apa Tani bamboo never flower or seed, and the planting of roots is the only way of propagation.

In good soil bamboo grows to a size usable for house-building in four years, but only bamboos of seven to ten years' growth are strong enough for house posts or main rafters.
Pinus excelsa is the most characteristic tree of the Apa Tani country. It does not occur in neighbouring valleys of similar altitude, and the Apa Tani hold that they brought it with them when they immigrated from the country north of the Kamla and Subansiri River. At some points well over 6,000 feet high on their traditional route of migration there are small numbers of pine trees and the Apa Tani claim that their ancestors planted the trees when they passed by the country.

Pinus excelsa is a magnificent tree, which in the Apa Tani country grows to a height of over 170 feet; it is found both in the forest of the lower slopes and in groves near the villages. In the vicinity of villages groves of bamboo are generally interspersed with pines or part of the grove may be set aside for pine trees; but in groves where pines have grown to a great height bamboos do not thrive in the shade of their spreading branches.

The time for planting young saplings, brought from the forest or more often taken from other groves, is February and the first half of March. For four or five young trees suitable for transplanting (about one to two feet high) one dao or a cloth of rice of similar value is paid. The wood of Pinus excelsa is used for building purposes, roughly cut house posts, or long slender rafters as well as for firewood; the Apa Tani take proper precautions against the tree known to them as Thakhan, a pink flowering peach, smaller but not essentially different from the peach grown in Europe either in flower or fruit. These peach trees are planted not only in groves, but also in gardens and close to houses. Pile is a very small pear and Picha a green yellow fruit slightly oblong, reddish with white pulp.

They are considered village or clan property. All fruit trees are planted in March or early April. Where the groves on flat land close to the villages contain as a rule only bamboo, pines and fruit trees, whereas in the steep slopes, pines are sometimes interspersed with a few other trees valuable as building material. For in re-afforesting a slope with young pines, Apa Tanis sometimes leave existing timber which is considered to be a part of the grove out on the slopes surrounding the valley are a remarkable tribute to the Apa Tani's skill in forestry; the trees are usually of uniform age and the entire grove is fenced in to protect it against stray cattle.

Animal Husbandry.—In Apa Tani economics the breeding of domestic animals plays a secondary role, but a very considerable number of the mithan and pigs required for sacrifice and slaughter are annually raised by the cultivators and the herdsmen. It is no longer the practice to let out the women or men of Tani or Mibor villages, nor to sell them to others. All cattle are kept tied up on long hide ropes. The Apa Tani never experience in the keeping of cattle, but believe that it must lie somewhere between two and three thousand. They usually sell his surplus rice for a handsome price.

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Most groves contain besides bamboos and pines also a number of fruit trees and in the spring the fresh green of forest, garden and grove is splashed with the pink, white and deep rose of their blossoms. There are four distinct kinds of fruit trees cultivated by the Apa Tani. The peach has, apart from its material value as a source of meat, a fictitious value as a medium of transactions, the value of a field can only be expressed in mithan. Indeed mithan is in a manner of speaking the recognized currency in all transactions to do with land: the value of a field can only be expressed in mithan. It thus appears that the mithan has, apart from its material value as a source of meat, a fictitious value as a medium of exchange. A man, for instance, who has a surplus of grain and wants to acquire additional land, will usually sell his surplus rice for mithan and than with these mithan purchase land. Bride-prices, ransom payments and fines are usually paid in mithan, and while pigs are the sacrificial animals at most of the communal agricultural rites, mithan must be slaughtered at the rites and feasts performed by individuals who want to raise their prestige.

I have no statistics regarding the number of mithan owned by Apa Tanis, but believe that it must lie between two and three thousand. Only a very few of these animals are, however, to be seen in the Apa Tani valley and Apa Tanis say that if they kept all their mithan near their villages and cultivation “there would not be a blade of rice or millet left”. Mithan prefer the shade of forests to the open pastures, and roam single or in small groups rather than in large herds. Considering the manner in which mithan are kept by the Apa Tani, it can be said that they are ‘domestic’ animals. For example, by clearing the recognized currency in the interest of the whole community.

But many mithan owners, and I believe they are the majority, do not keep their animals in the Apa Tani country at all; they give them into the care of Daffa and Miiri friends. Not only are Daffas and Miiris experienced in the keeping of cattle, but their country is also far better suited for mithan than the Apa Tani valley and they can keep the animals fairly close to their villages without risking great damage to the crops, their jhum being as a rule well fenced in. For the reward for keeping another man’s mithan is one call or a little salt fed from the palm of the hand and the soft call "Leli leli leli" brings an animal from the thicket. The Apa Tani are connoisseurs in mithan characteristics and an animal’s points are so catalogued in their minds that identification is no difficulty, but rich men with many mithan sometimes make “Longs” in the Naga Hills in the belief that they increase the animal’s extent. The Apa Tani are not afraid ofATIVE infections, the colouring of Apa Tani mithan cover a wide range: there are black, white and pichald mithan, mithan with white or black stockings and many with lovely creamy patches that deepen to orange where the hair is longest.

In some of these valleys there are natural salt licks and it seems that a mithan let loose in such a haunt, will not stray far afield. Some of these forest pastures are many hours’ walk from the Apa Tani villages and theft and unguarded mithan is the most frequent cause of trouble between the Apa Tanis and their Daffa and Miiri neighbours. Every four or five days a man will either go himself or send a slave to have a look as his mithan; a little salt fed from the palm of the hand and the soft call "Leli leli leli" brings an animal from the thicket. The Apa Tani are connoisseurs in mithan characteristics and an animal’s points are so catalogued in their minds that identification is no difficulty, but rich men with many mithan sometimes make “Longs” in the Naga Hills in the belief that they increase the animal’s extent. The Apa Tani are not afraid ofATIVE infections, the colouring of Apa Tani mithan cover a wide range: there are black, white and pichald mithan, mithan with white or black stockings and many with lovely creamy patches that deepen to orange where the hair is longest.

Neither Apa Tanis, Daffas nor Miiris control the breeding of mithan, and as the animals are largely left to themselves and the bulls are never castrated any selective mating would indeed be impossible. Besides the mithan owned by individuals, there are a number of mithan which are the common property of village, khel or clan and these are used for sacrifices in the interest of the whole community.

Less valuable than mithan, but used in the same manner for sacrifices, as a source of meat and as currency, but never milked, are oxen of the small breed common in the plain of Assam. This cattle is almost certainly derived from imported stock and even today Apa Tani buy calves in the plains and drive...
them up to the Apa Tani country. Those born in the hills have a thicker coat than plains cattle and they stand up well to the frost of winter. Unlike mithan, cattle rarely leaves the open parts of the valley, usually remaining on the grasslands near the villages. In the spring and summer there is ample grazing, but in the winter, when the pastures are shrivelled and brown, the cattle lives precariously on the rice and millet stubble of the previous harvest. When the Apa Tani make no attempt to feed their cattle, and the cows are allowed to wander over the dried out rice terraces and millet fields, any damage done to the brittle dams being outweighed by the value of the manure.

As soon as the rice and particularly the millet on the dry fields is planted out the cattle is banished to the grazing grounds at the ends of the valleys and the fields in the vicinity are carefully fenced so that a cow would not pass through narrow passages and lanes, before it could reach the centre of the valley where there are unprotected plots.

Very little care is given to this cattle, and there is no system of herd boys. Summer and winter the animals are in the open day and night. Theft of cattle is therefore easy, and it is more the drastic punishment meted out to offenders—death being the penalty for the violent theft of cattle—than the precautions that provides a safeguard. The neighbouring Dafas do not steal cows as frequently as mithan, for thieves would have to venture close to the villages and in driving off the cattle in the open country they would risk being intercepted.

Crosses of mithan and plains cattle are known, and hybrids count for ritual purposes as mithan. But the Apa Tani certainly do not use cross-breding, and cattle and mithan are kept apart by their own habits and preferences for different grazing grounds. The problem of cross breeds is therefore of little practical importance.

No goats are kept in the Apa Tani valley. The goat is too destructive an animal to be let loose in such a carefully husbanded area. A few Apa Tani do however own goats and keep them with friends in neighbouring villages. But Apa Tani, that they are strong and excellent to eat. They are useful in the propagation of disease bringing spirits, and the meat is, of course, readily eaten. On the whole, however Apa Tani are not interested in goats; they think of them only as meat and not as an investment. This attitude is born out by a comparison of tribal values; a Dafa considers the price of a she-goat higher than that of a he-goat but the Apa Tani, indifferent to the possibilities of goat-breeding pay more for a large male goat.

Pigs in certain respects the favourite domestic animals and here the word domestic applies in its narrowest sense. For Apa Tani pigs are housed below the pile-born dwellings in boarded-up enclosures between the house-poles. Once a pig enters this enclosure it leaves it usually only on the day of slaughter. No pigs roam free as they would elsewhere. There are few Dafas or Miri pigs which find a good deal of food rummaging about the village, the pigs of the Apa Tani must be fed, and no household can afford more than three or four full grown pigs a year. The food given to pigs consists of the husks of grain, the drugs remaining from the brewing of millet and rice beer, kitchen refuse, the scraps left on the table. This is regarded as very much of the greatest importance to the Apa Tani pigs. A pig is a very necessary sanitary institution and the house of a poor man without any pigs has not a pleasant smell.

Yet, comparatively few pigs are bred. Apa Tani find it on the whole more profitable to buy young pigs from Dafas and Miris and feed them until they are full grown rather than keep sows for breeding purposes, and hundreds of pigs are imported annually into the Apa Tani country. However, if a man decides to breed from his sow and has no boar of his own, he borrows a young boar and shut it up for the boar's owner a small fee or promises him a certain amount of pork. Apa Tani pigs are kept down by the indigenous race. Dogs are more highly prized than any other meat, and sides of bacon are not only the most acceptable dish but are also the most acceptable gifts between friends and kinmen, but are a recognized currency for ceremonial payments.

Fowls are kept by all Apa Tani for the sake of their eggs as well as for their flesh. For the taking of omen and for innumerable mirror sacrifices and offerings chickens are needed and on a bamboo structure erected on the occasion of a single sacrificial rite one may sometimes count as many as a hundred shells of eggs, broken in the course of the ritual. Required for so many ritual purposes chickens are therefore expensive. Two eggs count as a day's wage, a hen costs as much as a knife and a big cock as much as a short doe or a simple cloth. At night chickens are shut into baskets or roost in the rafters, but during the day-time they run about the village, feeding mainly on refuse and the fallen grain from the winnowing fans and pounding blocks.

Dogs are of the ordinary parish breed common all over the plains of Assam. The most frequent colouring is a reddish brown, but black, white and pie-bald dogs are by no means rare. If the Apa Tani ever had a distinct breed of dog (and it stands to reason that like the Nagas the tribes of the Eastern Himalayas at one time possessed dogs different from the mongrels of the Indian plains) the strain has been so diluted by inter-breeding that the type is no longer recognizable. Many of the Apa Tani dogs going to the plains 'return with the distinctions used up in the fray, and this costly and time-wasting bit of new blood must have ruined any indigenous race. Dogs are also bought from Dafas and Miris, but the canine population of the villages is kept down by the frequent use of dogs as sacrificial animals. Though Apa Tani eat dog, few dogs are slaughtered only for the sake of their meat; they are the sacrificial animals proper to the rites performed by raiding parties and are accepted by the gods in times of sickness and personal disaster. The value of dogs in the Apa Tani country is therefore far higher than in the plains of Assam or among the neighbouring tribes.

Apa Tani dogs live on scraps and kitchen refuse, and few look at all well fed. They are not badly treated, living undisturbed in the houses, hunting with their masters and in the evening pressing with the children round the hearth fires, but the Apa Tani expects his dog to fend for himself and does not often give him a very substantial meal.
5. Division of Labour.—An exhaustive discussion of the division and use of labour would lead us too far into the sphere of sociology, but agriculture cannot be entirely divorced from the human element and so we must consider not only by what methods the Apa Tani’s land is cultivated, but also by whom the work on the fields is actually done.

In families of average means most of the work of fields and gardens is done by husband and wife and their children as well as any relative or slave who may be a member of the household. On some days this working unit engages in one task, but on others the members go about their different occupations necessary for the maintenance of the holding, the husband being mainly responsible for the building and up-keep of dams, terraces channels and fences, for the digging over of fields and the planting of trees, and the wife being mainly occupied with the care of nurseries and gardens, the transplanting of rice and millet and the weeding of crops. But this division of labour is not complete, and on many occasions men and women work side by side, be it in building dams or even in transplanting rice. Though a couple is normally quite capable of cultivating their land without outside help, there are yet many times when help is either sought or given by other members of the community.

From childhood every Apa Tani boy or girl belongs to a labour gang (patang) and this association continues to some extent in later life. Thus a man who has to rebuild a rice terrace will ask some of his patang friends to help in the work, and in turn he will work on their fields whenever his assistance may be required. Similarly women often join forces in the tedious work of transplanting rice-seedlings, a group of four or five women working in turn on each other’s fields. No payment is made for such mutual assistance, but the person on whose field the group works is expected to provide a mid-day meal or at least a fair amount of rice beer for the labourers.

Whereas married men and women work only at times with the members of their old patang, boys and girls, from the age of seven or eight until they set up their own households spend most of their working days with their own patang. All members of a patang are approximately the same age and often of the same clan; there are girls and boys in a patang, and if they are of the same clan, they are debarred from marriage. But in some patang there are only girls and boys of different clans and there it happens quite often that working companions become lovers and marry when they grow up.

As a rule patang work in turn on the fields of their members’ parents, and a man whose son or daughter has joined a patang has thus a right on the services of the entire patang whenever his turn comes. These services are shared, except that he has the obligation to provide the patang with a meal to be eaten on the fields. But rich men can sometimes hire a patang out of turn for wages and then the hire is divided equally among all its members.

The hiring of patang is, however, only one of the means by which rich men obtain the labour necessary for the cultivation of their large holdings. Many poor men and women subsist entirely or at least to a large extent on the grain received as wages for daily labour, and as a rule they have little difficulty in finding employment. For although rich men have usually a number of slaves or dependants who work for them throughout the year, they often need additional labour to keep abreast with the agricultural calendar and complete the building of dams, transplanting and harvesting in proper season. The average daily wage is just under two seers of husked rice, and this is just enough to feed two persons for a day. Thus if a husband and wife both work for wages, they can support themselves and two or three children, but unless they engage in trade and go to work in the plains of Anam, it is almost impossible for them to better their position by saving and thus acquiring land of their own. True, there is the reserve of clan-land where new terraces can still be carved from the hill-sides, but the really poor who live from hand to mouth by daily labour, can seldom spare the time for the strenuous task of building new terraces.

Apa Tani agriculture depends thus both on the mutual help of the owners of small holdings and on the labour hired by the rich. Co-operative and capitalistic trends exist side by side and neither trend shows at present any sign of eliminating the other. The man of modest means who cultivates his fields with the help of his family and the patang of his children is in danger of being ousted by the owner of a hundred fields who has the poor very much chance of effecting a more equal distribution of the existing land.

6. The Annual Cycle.—Agriculture is the dominant factor in the Apa Tani’s life and a brief table of the work done month by month will demonstrate how the annual cycle revolves round agricultural pursuits.

We will begin with the month of Kume, corresponding to January-February, with the first preparations for the new cultivating season:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kume</th>
<th>Repair work on the dams of terraces begins. Gardens are newly fenced and new groves planted. Manure is carried to fields and gardens. The cattle is allowed to wander over the fields. People go to work in the plains and to trade in Daifa and Mimi villages. The Morum feast is celebrated with a ritual scattering of rice over fields and phallic fertility dances; individuals raise their prestige by slaughtering mithan. Rites in honour of the earth deity are performed. Young men spend much time in hunting and trapping.</th>
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<td>(January-February)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Kume or Pager-polo</th>
<th>Dams and channels are repaired and new terraces laid out. Rice is sown in the nurseries and millet in the seed beds. People go to work in the plains and to trade in Daifa and Mimi villages. In the villages whose turn it is to celebrate the Mlokung, large stocks of firewood are accumulated, assembly platforms are rebuilt, posts for the festival are dragged in and erected. Hunting expeditions continue.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(dam-building month)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(February-March)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moko</th>
<th>Gardens are prepared and maize, potatoes, taro, ginger, tobacco, spinach, marrow, cucumbers and chillies are sown. Fruit trees are planted. The repair work on terraces and the digging over of fields for the early rice continues.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(March-April)</td>
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The Mlokung, the greatest Apa Tani festival, is celebrated by one of the three village groups. Pigs and fowls are sacrificed for the deities of earth and sky. When the rice seedlings sprout the Mlokung rite is performed. Hunting expeditions continue.
cul~ure.

from among the factors that may have 70

Apa Tani Culture seem to be at home in the sub-tropical regions of

eri. The preparation of the irrigated fields is completed. The transplanting of rice begins and is usually completed except on a few outlying terraces. Millet is planted in gardens and on the rice bunds. The dry fields are dug over. The first green vegetables are ready for consumption.

The transplanting of the late rice and of all the millet is completed.

Weeding of the dry fields and the irrigated terraces. Plate rice and mipa millet come into ear. Vegetables including cucumbers and potatoes ripen.

The crop is harvested in early November. The men collect wood against the time of the

Apa Tani agriculture is a very complex and elaborate system of cultivation, essentially different from the simple shifting cultivation of their Dafla and Miri neighbours. The Apa Tanis have developed the exploitation of their country to a high degree of efficiency and unlike many jhum-cultivators they have succeeded in preserving indefinitely the fertility of the soil.

The fact that 20,000 Apa Tanis can subsist and maintain a comparatively high standard of life on less than twenty square miles of cultivable land speaks for itself and there can be no doubt that very few tribes can boast of such an achievement.

How it is that in an area where all other tribes follow as primitive a form of tillage as jhum-cultivation, the Apa Tanis alone should have developed such elaborate methods of intensive farming, is a question we cannot yet hope to answer. Mishmis, Abors, Miris and Daflas alike are jhum-cultivators and even the partly Tibetanized Monbas of the Dirang Dzong area have nothing to rival the Apa Tanis' system of rice cultivation. Indeed the nearest Assam hill people whose agricultural methods are in any way comparable to those of the Apa Tanis are the Angami Nagas, who inhabit the hills round Kohima, over a hundred miles to the south-east beyond the Brahmaputra Valley. And even this similarity is very limited. The Angamis show extraordinary skill in constructing irrigated terraces following the contours of steep hill-slopes whereas the Apa Tanis concentrate mainly on the intensive cultivation of the valley bottom and have nowhere attempted large scale cultivation along hill-slopes. The Apa Tanis' cultivation of perennial rice and their transplanting of millet has no parallel anywhere in the Naga Hills, nor have the Angami Nagas gardens and groves comparable to those of the Apa Tanis. Yet there are elements common to Apa Tani and Naga culture, and though direct connection need be assumed, there can be little doubt that both civilizations have some of their roots in the same cultural sphere, a sphere, which despite the Tibet-Musan languages now spoken by the Apa Tanis and Nagas, is probably associated with the neolithic civilizations of the Austroasian and Austroasiatic races. Certain elements in Apa Tani Culture seem to be at home in the sub-tropical regions of Assam and Northern Burma rather than in mountains of Southern Tibet, but influences from across the Great Himalayan Range may have reached the Apa Tanis no less than their Dafla and Miri neighbours. Elaborate irrigation has been observed among the Tibetans of Ghayul Dzong, near the upper course of the Subansiri - barely 70 miles north-west of the Apa Tani country and it would be premature to exclude an inspiration from that side from among the factors that may have contributed to the remarkable development of Apa Tani agriculture. Anthropological research in the Subansiri Region has only just begun and much work will have to be done before we can view Apa Tani culture in its proper perspective.

See, F. Kingdon Ward Assam Adventure, London 1942, page 44.
VILLAGE ORGANISATION AND TRIBAL JUSTICE AMONG THE APA TANIS

The complex economy of the Apa Tani, which is based on the peaceful co-operation of large groups, is matched by a social order fundamentally different from that prevailing among the neighbouring Dafla and Miri tribes. There every household stands by itself, friendship and alliances are ephemeral, and even members of the same clan as well as inhabitants of the same village may wage war against each other. Tribal feeling is vague and does not find expression in political units of any stability. The head of a Dafla household is a law unto himself, acknowledging no binding allegiance to a larger group, tied neither by property in land nor by tradition to a definite territory, he is always free to sever his connections with the village in which he may be living, and to seek his fortune in new surroundings and carve from wooded hills new land for his jhum cultivation.

Not so the Apa Tani. To migrate is for him well nigh impossible; he is tied to his valuable land and to the one valley where alone he can carry on his elaborate system of agriculture, and thus he is linked for better or worse with a village community of several thousand souls.

Indeed all Apa Tani have a very marked tribal consciousness, a great pride in their 'national' culture and way of living, and a passionate attachment to their small homeland which they have turned into a veritable garden, and which they jealously guard against encroachment by warlike neighbours.

For the Apa Tani the superiority of the village or the centre or nago-shrine, and into clans.

According to Apa Tani tradition all mura were originally the slaves of the mite freemen, but today this position is often obscured by the wealth and personal influence of individual mura, some of whom have gained a certain prominence through the newly established trade with Assam in which to engage the more conservative patricians consider beneath their dignity. Yet the innate superiority of the mite is never questioned; there is no inter-marriage between the two classes and every mura, whoever his material circumstances, stands still in a relationship of dependence to a patrician family which involves certain obligations on ceremonial occasions.

Besides this horizontal division of Apa Tani society into patricians and plebeians, there is the more obvious vertical division into seven villages, ranging in size from 160 to over a thousand houses, into 'quarters' (which in accordance with the terminology of the Naga Hills we may call "khels"), each with a ritual centre or nago-shrine, and into clans. The loyalty of the "khel" is sometimes stronger than the loyalty to the village, for the Apa Tani know no more important political tie than that between the clans using the same nago as their ritual centre. The visual symbol of the social cohesion of the individual clan (or sometimes two or three closely related clans) is the lapang, an assembly platform built of enormous wooden boards and fulfilling all the functions of a mediating meeting place. It is on these lapang that the clan members meet and councils are held; it is below the lapang that criminals are tied up and it is on the lapang that after an execution the ritual weapons of the executioners are displayed.

In the following outline of the structure of the Apa Tani villages, the clans are grouped according to the 'khels' and nago groups, and the mura clans are specified as such: every mura clan is enumerated immediately after the mite clan to which it stands in a relationship of dependence.

Hang village.—Hang which comprises 887 houses, is not as clearly divided into 'khels' as for instance Bela. But there are three nago shires, each used by a group of clans.

Nich'e nago ... Tapi, Nuru, Padu (mura), Buliu (mura); Kago, Budu (mura), Talo (mura); Pomyo, Hari (mura), Laili (mura); Belo, Mudang, Talo (mura); Hibu, Tablin, Tenyo.

Nami nago ... Nami, Vur or Penji.

Naran nago ... Naran, Takhe, Nea.

Hari village.—Hari which comprises 451 houses is divided into two 'khels', Hage and Pato, each of which has one nago.

Hage ... Hage, Doging (mura), Landi (mura) Dusu (mura); Mudo (or Doka).

Pato ... Tasso (or Chigi), Gate; Mipla.

Bela village.—Bela which comprises 500 houses is divided into two 'khels', Hage and Pato, each of which has three nago.

Ruru, Tajanq and Kalung.

Ruru

Padi nago ... Padi, Khru, Nenke, Ruka, Koda, Duyu, Havung.

Nani nago ... Nani, Dui, Tajanq.

Tage nago ... Rade, Tage (mura), Milo, Min (mura).

Tabu nago ... Tabu.

Kalung nago ... Kalung, Taging, Taliang, Lod, Naran, Mom, Koru, Rabi, Subu.

The corresponding Dafla and Miri terms, which are sometimes also used by Apa Tani, are Gute and Guhi.

*Nevertheless some poor mite have seized the opportunity of bettering their conditions in this way, and have in late years gone with bands of slaves to the plains.
Haja village. — Haja consists of 640 houses and is closely linked with Duta. There is no clear division into 'khels', but the clans using the same nago shrine form units which resemble 'khels'.

Khimle nago .... Khimle, Dusu (mura), Dora (mura).
Nada nago .... Nada (sub-clans Dumpr and Plagang), Miri (mura), Hidu (mura).
Taru nago .... Taru, Taro, Taku Pemu (mura), Kago.
Puna nago .... Haji, Puma, Duma, Duma, Duma, Duma.
Nendid nago .... Nendin, Pura, Neenko.

Duta village. — Duta comprises 193 houses and is not divided into 'khels'; there is only one nago.

Chigi nago .... Chigi, Koji (sub-clans Akhang Koji and Aio Koji), Honyo (mura), Yachang (mura).

Mudang Tage Village. — Mudang Tage which consists of 307 houses has only one nago shrine, but the clans are grouped according to localities which give their names to some of the lapang.

Tadu lapang .... Tadu, Dohu.
Nami lapang .... Tage, Lyagi (mura).
Mudang lapang .... Mudang, Legang (mura).
Nako lapang .... Mudang.
Naran lapang .... Buru, Hating.

Michi Bamin Village. — Michi Bamin village comprises 160 houses and consists of the Michi 'khel' and the Bamin 'khel'; they have separate nago shrines, but Bamin is inhabited mainly by members of mura clans some of which are dependent on mite clans of Michi.

Each of these villages occupies a site in the houses and stands close together in long streets and lanes. Two villages, Duta and Mudang Tage, practically merge into each other, but this proximity does not imply any close social connection; instead, Duta acts in certain respects together with Haja and not with Mudang Tage.

In what respects does a village function as a social unit? The most obvious expression of its unity is the simultaneous observance of the principal festivals and genea by all the members of a village. Some villages own community-owned pasture land, and generally forests and pastures are owned by individuals, groups of clans, or clans, whereas all cultivated land is private property. Boundary disputes involving entire village communities do, however, occur and in recent years Hang and Michi-Bamin quarrelled over a piece of land on which thatching grass grew. Michi-Bamin resisted the encroachment of Hang, and was supported by several other villages. Occasionally quarrels between individuals are taken up by their respective village communities and two or more villages may then oppose each other. In such an event the village functions as a social and political unit, but there are differences when only one quarter or 'khel' of a village is at variance with another village, or when two 'khels' of the same village have a quarrel. This leads us to the inner organization of a village. Most villages comprise two or more 'khels' and each of these 'khels' has one or two separate nago shrines, where important rites are performed and the trophies of war, such as the hands of slain foes, are kept until their disposal. Duta village, on the other hand, has only one nago shrine and the Apa Tani say themselves that for this reason Duta is more united as a village, and that it is easier for Duta to act as a body than for most other villages. In villages where there are several nago, each is the focal point of a group of clans. A 'khel' consisting of several clans may stand slightly apart from other 'khels' separated perhaps by a belt of garden plots and hedges, but more frequently the 'khels' merge imperceptibly into each other. A 'khel' acts in many cases as a separate social unit; one 'khel' of a village may have a feud with a neighbouring Duta village, while other 'khels' may continue trade relations with their co-villagers.

Within each 'khel' there are several clans ('halu'). These clans are strictly exogamous and no clan is found in more than one 'khel'. Each village contains two clans of which different villages have the same name, they are still considered separate units and may intermarry. Decent in the clan is patrilineal. Certain clans of the same village are, however, regarded as standing in a 'brother' relationship and no marriages are permitted between their members.

Within a village the clans are as a rule localized, the houses of all members of a clan standing close together in streets or clusters. Most clans have a sitting platform (lapang) as their social centre, and certain sites that concern the whole clan are performed on or near this platform. Occasionally two or three clans share one lapang, but very large clans have more than one sitting platform. A clan is either of mite or mura clans, but in most villages the number of mite clans is on the whole greater than that of mura clans.

Within a village all men who live in a certain area and are members of the same nago shrine form a group with whom the men from another village do not interact. These groups are not necessarily expected to act in nearly all circumstances in complete solidarity. Only very close relationship through the maternal line may outweigh this clan solidarity and determine a man to take sides against a member of his own clan.

The representatives of the clans, who in their plurality constitute a kind of village government, are the buliang, men of character and ability, who are appointed either from among the members of a family which owing to its wealth and status always furnished one or two Buliang or on account of their personal influence in the community. There are three types of buliang: the aka buliang, old men past the time when they can take a very active part in the conduct of village affairs but with whom lies the ultimate decision in all important matters; the yapa buliang, middle aged men who carry on negotiations and sit in the village councils and who keep the aka buliang informed of developments and place agreed settlements and disputes before them for sanction; and finally the ajang buliang, young men who are employed as messengers, go-betweens and assistants of the yapa buliang, and act as the leaders of the young generation. In practice this division of duties is not always as clearly cut, and some of the older ajang buliang assume gradually the functions of yapa buliang. But normally a yapa does not become an aka buliang until the death of the Akha buliang representing his clan or group of clans. The Aka buliang appoint the Ajang buliang from amongst the ranks of the eligible young men, and in this selection they do not necessarily give preference to members of their own clan but see to it that their clan-group is represented by men of talent and efficiency.
The buliang are rewarded for their services to the community by ceremonial gifts of beer and meat on the occasion of village feasts and during the Mloko an annual festival celebrated by the whole tribe, every buliang receives gifts from his opposite member in the village standing in a relationship of ceremonial reciprocity to his own village or quarter.

Though the buliang are the arbiters of tribal law and the upholders of tribal justice they are primarily the spokesmen of their own clan or clan-group and not village headmen with absolute authority. Their duties are not those of a police and they do not take action unless a dispute has become a public issue which must be dealt with by the community as a whole, be it by mediation or by the use of force.

The Apa Tani is for all his social sense a great individualist and if he is wronged by a fellow tribesman his first reaction is not to appeal to the buliang, but to retrieve his loss or vindicate his honour by taking the law into his own hands. As a rule it is only when a quarrel has dragged on or when it begins to undermine the peace of the whole community that the buliang enter the field of action.

Astonishing as it may seem to the outsider, the Aya does not quarrel over the unfaithfulness of a wife or husband, by attaching each other's property or even capturing each other's children or relatives. More than once have I seen houses fenced in with high bamboo palisades in which the owner held a co-villager imprisoned and it is no unusual thing to kidnap a defaulting debtor employed moleste relative and guard against his escape by putting his foot into a heavy log. A few examples will demonstrate this system of all-side enforcement of the laws and make it obvious that the underlying idea is not the punishment of an offender but the realization of a claim or the extraction of compensation under pressure.

In Kach, a sub-settlement of Hang village, I once saw a house surrounded by a bamboo fence, higher than its roof, without any entrance in front. The only open ing in the palisade was at the back of the house, so high up that to enter one had to climb up a ladder outside and down a ladder inside. A platform, a good deal higher than the house gable, was erected above the back verandah and served as a kind of sentry box. When I asked for the reason of these fortifications I was told that a prisoner was kept in the house. The prisoner, as Ponyo Tamo, the owner of the house, explained was his own son-in-law, Tapi Pusang, and he had seized him on account of his bad treatment of his wife, Ponyo Tamo's daughter, Sante. Tapi Pusang had married a sister's daughter of Ponyo Tamo, but divorced her after a short time. Then he married Ponyo Tamo's daughter Sante, paying one mithan-cow as bride-price. Though the marriage remained childless Pusang and Sante lived together for about ten years. But some time ago Pusang had grown tired of his wife and had told her to leave his house. Several time he drove her away, as it seems with the intention of marrying another wife. Sante, however, was not willing to leave him and returned to him again and again. Some seven months ago Pusang came to Tamo's house and told him to take his daughter back. Tamo refused and when he failed to persuade Pusang to agree to a reconciliation, he seized him and tied him up with a heavy log on his foot. To prevent his flight or rescue he kept watch every night.

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Tamo said that he would release Pusang if he either consented to take his wife back or paid a ransom of one hundred mithan-values* to atone for the insult to Tamo's family. For the last seven months Tamo, with his whole family including his daughter Sante and her imprisoned husband Pusang had been living in the fenced-in house, and Pusang was at that time still determined neither to take back his wife nor to pay the ransom.

But when I re-visited Kach a year later the fence had been removed from Tamo's house, and I was told that Pusang's clansmen had ransom him by paying to Tamo forty mithan-values as compensation. The parties were reconciled. but Pusang and Sante had finally separated. In the negotiations leading to the release the buliang of Hang village played no doubt an important part, but it is significant that for many months they took no action to prevent the imprisonment of one fellow villager by the other.

That attitude had been that the quarrel concerned only the two families and it was not called for until the parties approached them with the request to effect a settlement.

Rather different were the circumstances which led another Apa Tani to transform his house into a fortress. In the main-street of Reru, a "Khel" of Bola village, I found a house surrounded by a firm bamboo-palisade and was told that the owner Nani Jile was there living in what amounted to self-inflicted confinement. He had quarrelled with his father's brother over the possession of mithan-cows and in the course of the dispute had captured his cousin's wife and kept her for a month with a log on her foot in his house. To effect her release her husband paid a ransom of five mithan-cows and five mithan-calves, but Nani Jile still did not set her free and in the end the husband with some friends forced their way into Jile's house and rescued the woman. Nani Jile was sure that his cousin would take the next opportunity of revenge and capture him or a member of his family. To provide against such a fate he fortified his house, and for the last five months neither he nor his wife nor his children had left the narrow space enclosed by the palisade. From their verandah they could see out through the fence on to the village-street and chat with passersby, and their friends and relatives were, of course, free to climb over the carefully guarded palisade and converse with them. The last chance of escape was only by fetching water and bringing in foodstuff provided by Jile's relations-in-law. The latter helped the slaves also in the cultivation of Jile's fields, but Jile and his wife and children were debased from any productive work.

After some months, however, Jile relaxed his precautions, and when about half a year later I came again to Kach, the fence round Jile's house had been removed and another house across the street was fenced-in. It was his cousin's house and Jile himself was kept in it as a prisoner. Soon after he had dropped his vigilance and ventured out of his house, his cousin, still smarting under the insult heaped on him and his wife had captured Jile and he refused to set him free until Jile's relatives had paid him full compensation. To which he had already paid through the works of his brother in-law Tamo, and when I finally left the Apa Tani valley the dispute, which had lasted for nearly two years, had not come to an end, but I have little doubt that Jile was ultimately ransomed and the cousin reached some kind of agreement which freed them from the fear of being captured and imprisoned.

In this case too the buliang took no action and the general attitude of the villagers was indeed that the quarrel of the two cousins did not concern anybody but themselves and their nearest relatives.

While the capture of one's opponent is a favourite and usually fairly effective means of pressing a claim, it is a much rarer event to see a dispute settled by what we call "mediation." In the Apa Tani valley the "civilians" are by no means always the arbiters of tribal law and the statutes thinks his honour at stake, he resorts to a very different procedure to vindicate himself and humiliates

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* Mithan-values is the unit in which prices are expressed; one full-grown mithan cow counts at about five mithan-values.
his enemy. This procedure known as *liudu* involves the ritual destruction of wealth and recalls in that respect the *potlatch* rites of the North-West Americans. A man who challenges a co-villager to a *liudu* competition starts by killing one or several of his kinsman in front of his opponent's house and leaving the meat for the other villagers to eat. Sometimes he adds to the holocaust valuables, such as Tibetan bells, bronze plates and swords. If his opponent accepts the challenge he must slaughter the last of his cattle. But Ponyo Tamar, deeply wounded by the insult to his house and anxious to preserve his prestige, was out for a fight and forestalled any action on Lampung's part by challenging him to a *liudu*. He began the competition by slaughtering in front of Lampung's house three mithan-cows and smashing one Tibetan bell, one bronze-plate and one sword. Lampung retaliated by killing in front of Tamar's house four large mithan, but he died before he had time to complete his part of the competition. Next Tamar killed ten mithan and Lampung answered by killing twenty. The following day Tamar slaughtered thirty mithan, and Lampung, far from admitting defeat, collected sixty mithan and killed them in a single day. Thereupon Tamar called upon all his kinsmen and gathered eighty mithan. He was prepared to slaughter them, but the *buliang* intervened and persuaded him to take only sixty, thereby matching Lampung's last bid without outstripping him. A settlement was achieved at the annual meeting of the co-villager, but Tamar, enraged by the killing of his slave's guest, seized two cows belonging to Belo Lampung and slaughtered both cows close to his house. Lampung was apparently not keen on continuing the quarrel. He ignored his legitimate claim to a fair share of a mithan belonging to Belo Lampung, another prominent man of Hang. But the matter seemed forgotten and for a full year Licha Seke lived in Hang without being molested. Then one day when he was going to cut fire-wood Belo Lampung captured him and kept him for one night in his house. Ponyo Tamar considered the case of a man who was living in his slave's house an insult to himself, and offered Belo Lampung five mithan-cows for Licha Seke. But Lampung said that nothing but Seke's death would satisfy him. Next morning he and his kinsmen took Licha Seke to the public execution place on the bank of a stream, beheaded him and then cut the body into pieces and threw them into the water.

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arrival ambushed them as they were returning and killed one man and one woman. The people of Bela were exceeding by angry at the attack on their trade partners, particularly because it was committed on Bela territory, and they demanded that Hage Sa should pay compensation to Linia. When Hage Sa refused two "kites" of Bua declared a gambu against Hage Sa, who took up the challenge and was supported by his village.

On the day following the meeting of Bela and Hari men, they lined up on an open field midway between the two villages. Numbers were fairly equal and the parties attacked each other with arrows and spears, sometimes sallying forth to thrust at an opponent with swords, while the women brought up reinforcements in the shape of new bamboo-spears. Many were wounded, but after two on each side had been killed the gambu came to a standstill; there was no formal peace-making, but the dispute was considered settled and both villages resumed friendly relations.

Another gambu in which Hari was recently involved resulted also from the interference of one Apa Tani village with the Dafsa friends and traditional trade partners of another. The events leading up to the fight are rather involved. Two Apa Tani friends, Tache Tagang of Hang and Tasso Sili of Hari went to Bua, a Dafsa-Miri village two days journey, from Hari, to purchase cotton. On their return journey they were ambushed in the vicinity of the Hari former area. Hake Tagang was kept in stocks at Hidjat and Tasso Sili was sent across the Kru River to another village. From there he escaped and made his way home, but Takhe Tagang had to be rescued by his friends of Hang, who employed an influential Dafsa of Licha village as go-between and negotiator.

After his return, Takhe Tagang blamed his friends and trade partners of Bua for having made no efforts to effect his release, although he had been captured on the way from their village to Hang. So when he heard that some women of Bua were coming on visit to Hari to attend the Miko festival, he and some other Hang men ambushed the two women and took them to Hang.

Both women were kept in stocks and when the Hari men demanded their release Hang refused. At that Hari challenged Hang to a gambu and the Hang men replied that they would fight, shoot arrow for arrow, hurl spear for spear and draw sword for sword. Hari gained the support of the villages of Bula, Midang Taga and Michi Bamin, who was hunting and grazing grounds adjoin Bua and who had at that time all pacts of friendship with Bua.

On the day fixed for the gambu, the warriors of these four villages marched to Hang, and formed a long line on the fields in front of the village. The men of Hang were furious about this challenge and in anger took one of the captive women to a nage, killed her and burned the body. Then they came out to fight.

The battle raged for some time inconclusively, watched by crowds of warriors from the neutral villages of Haja and Duta. Just when the men of Hari and their allies were on the point of pushing the Hang men back into their own village, and of entering the labyrinth of streets, the rumour spread that the son of Hang's richest and most influential man, Ponyo Tamar, had been mortally wounded. The news sobered the Hari men, who realised the seriousness of such an incident and they withdrew from the fight. The rumour was actually exaggerated and the boy, though hit in the chest by an arrow, escaped with his life. On Hang's side two men had been wounded, but there were no fatal casualties on either side.

Two months after the gambu the surviving Bua woman was ransomed by her husband, but there were no formal peace-negotiations between Hari and Hang; normal relations were resumed gradually, the gambu being considered sufficient revenge for the insult suffered by the Hari men through the capture and subsequent murder of their guests.

Another gambu was fought by Hang on account of a boundary dispute with the small village of Michi-Bamin. The later was supported by Midang Taga village and the two parties lined up on opposite banks of the Kele River, and shot at each other with arrows. One man on each side was killed, and as a result Michi-Bamin, though hardly one-fifth as populous as Hang, retained its right on the disputed land.

Whereas a lisuda is as a rule the ultimate outcome of a civil dispute between equals, and the gambu is the last resort for ending tension between two village communities, which for one or the other reason could not be resolved by the ordinary ways of arbitration. Neither of them fall within the sphere of tribal justice whereby offenders against the accepted moral standards and the common interest of the community are brought to book by public action. Such tribal justice in the narrower sense of the word comes into operation as a device to check anti-social or criminal act arouse the anger of the community and the leading men confer and decide to punish the offender.

In a society where wealth is held in such high esteem as among the Apa Tantis crimes violating rights in property are considered extremely serious, and the punishment for habitual theft is death. A first offender will not be dealt with as severely, but may be tied up for some days beside a lapang, being both uncomfortable with his leg fastened in a heavy log of wood and exposed to ridicule. Subsequent offences may be ex piated by the payment of compensation, but if a person habitually steals the community is divided and no ceremony is performed afterwards.

Haro Tann, a young unmarried slave girl belonging to Ponyo Hakhe, a respectable citizen of Hang. She was unruly, and often left her master's houses and went to stay in other houses. Ponyo Hakhe made no particular effort to detain her, for she was useless as a worker and had a reputation for petty theft. Once she went to Mai, a neighbouring Dafsa village, which is often visited by Apa Tani who weave cloth for the Dallas for wages. In Mai Tann also began to steal, and when it became heard of her dreadful conduct, she was no longer contented to commit the thefts, but on being caught and fearning no doubt that the thefting of her slave might bring him into conflict with some of his Dafsa neighbours, he went with his son Ekha to bring her back. Ekha captured her in the forest near Mai. Ponyo Hakhe, Ponyo Tamar and other important men took her straight to Khgo, the public execution place near the Kele River, and Hakhe beheaded her. They cut her body into pieces and threw them into the river. No part of the corpse was taken to the village and no ceremony was performed afterwards.
Very similar was the fate of another slave girl of Hang, Ponyo Rali. She was unmarried, very young and utterly irresponsible. She strayed from her master's house, living now in this and now in that house, and had casual sexual relations with numerous young men. While her promiscuous habits would have been a matter of indifference to the other villagers her stealing of rice, fowls and beads caused general annoyance. When one day she was caught red handed in the house of Tanbin the master, Ponyo Kara, made up his mind. She was tied up and thrown in the house of the customary punishment for habitual theft. His son-in-law seized her and she was tied up at the Ponyo lapang. The important clansmen gathered and resolved that she should die. Her master's slaves dragged her to the execution place, and the buliang and clan-elders followed. At the execution place she was killed, not by one man, but by all those present, who hacked up her body and threw it to the river with all her clothes still on. Simultaneously a religious ropo-ceremony was performed at the nego after the body had been cast as a captive enemy—been kept tied up at the lapang.

Rather different from these two executions, which amounted to no more than the riddance of the community from a public nuisance was the killing of Chigi Duyu, the member of a patrician family of Duta. Chigi Duyu had had his hand in several doubtful cattle deals, and was finally found in the possession of a stolen cow from Hang. I was told that he had been known as a thief for years; he had stolen cows and mithan belonging to Ang Tani and to the Duta, and at one time he owed to the former and to the latter a big sum of stolen Dafa cattle in Apan Tani villages. Thereby he became a menace to the peace between the two tribes, and a cause of dissension among the Apa Tanis themselves. When at last he was caught selling a cow, undoubtedly stolen from a man of Hibu clan of Hang, the prominent men of Hang held council and decided to enlist the support of the buliang of other villages in dealing with the offender. They went from village to village and the case was debated first on the assembly platforms of Hang, then on those of Hari and Ben, and finally on the lapang of Haja and Michi-Bamin.

Thus practically all prominent Apa Tanis were aware of the contemplated action and had agreed to the capture and killing of Chigi Duyu. Only his own co-villagers seem to have been excluded from these discussions, no hint or rumour of which reached the intended victim.

Shortly before the Morum Festival, an annual rite when all the seven Apa Tani villages strengthen theirs of friendship by reciprocal gifts and the prominent men of Bela and Hang, according to a mithan, agreed to the deal. But this would not disturb the general peace

The day after the execution I returned to Duta from a short tour in Dafa country, but the Morum Festival was in full swing in both Haja and Duta I noticed nothing unusual. Three days after the execution Chigi Duyu's relatives held the funeral rites with chanting and wailing. As they had been unable to recover any part of the body, they buried Chigi Duyu's cloth, ornaments and hat close to his house and

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While any murder or even the capture of a member of a friendly village constitutes a breach of the dafa between the villages concerned the execution of Chigi Duyu was obviously considered a very different matter, and even his kinmen could not seriously deny that the executioners had acted within the limits of tribal custom. When I arrived home in Dafa village I went to Hang I found on the Taliang lapang were Chigi Duyu had been killed, a pile of shields and spears. They remained there until two days later when Hang performed the ropo-ceremony. At this rite a mithan, the price of which had been raised by public subscription, was sacrificed, and all the men danced with shields and spears as we had seen them do during the full rites at the disposal of the hand of a slain enemy.

The Apa Tanis, who live in crowded villages in a strictly limited area, must have a fairly severe code of justice and criminals must be drastically dealt with if serious disorder is to be avoided. As the Apa Tanis have no prisons or other means of segregating bad characters, the death sentence is the only effective means of eliminating a disturbing element. Sanction from the tribal territory to crime may either involve his home village in a dispute in the Dafa or Mori village in which he finds refuge, or turning renegade he may put his knowledge of Apa Tanis country and grazing grounds at the service of hostile raiding parties, and thereby take revenge on his own tribesmen.

However, I have heard of at least one concrete case when an Apa Tani sold a troublesome slave to Dafa. Public opinion is not much in favour of such deals, because there is the strong feeling that Apa Tani slaves should not be disposed of outside the tribe, not even as a punishment for criminal offences. When some
years ago Michi Pilia sold a boy of slave class, Duli Pilia, to a Dafla of Mai, his action was followed by endless litigation, and was obviously not regarded as a legitimate way of dealing with a youthful thief. Duli Pilia was the son of a woman married to one of Michi Pilia's freed slaves; he developed at an early age the habit of stealing rice from granaries, and Michi Pilia had repeatedly to pay compensation. Tired of being held responsible for his misdeeds, he sold the boy, then little more than twelve years old, to Mai Holi, the headman of the Dafla village of Mai. The boy's maternal kinmen, who live in Bola village, objected violently to this transaction and one of them, Tage Kago, captured the man who had acted as go-between in the negotiations which had preceded the sale. To ransom his friend Michi Pilia had to pay five mithan, but he retaliated on his captor by capturing not Tage Kago himself, but his patron Milo Rayo, a man of patrician family. Milo Rayo of whom who had to pay twelve mithan to Michi Pilia. But as everybody, and particularly Michi Pilia, was tired of the quarrel the parties agreed to bury the dispute by concluding a pas-pact, i.e. a pact of friendship such as arranged between individuals in a way similar to the conclusion of a dapo-treaty between villages. To seal this pact Michi Pilia slaughtered one mithan and paid to Milo Rayo seven mithan and various valuables.

The slave boy remained with Mai Holi where he seems to have given no more trouble, but in May 1945 he was captured by an Apa Tani of Hang who had a private quarrel with Mai Holi and seized the boy with the idea of enforcing a claim for mithan. A remarkable feature of the ensuing negotiations was Duli Pilia's violent objection to being brought back to the Apa Tani country; he protested that he had become a "son" of Mai Holi and wanted to live as a Dafla.

Whereas theft committed by a member of the Apa Tani tribe or a person of other extraction living permanently among the Apa Tanis is definitely considered an offence against the community and is often dealt with by public action, a different view is taken of thefts by visitors to the Apa Tani country. Such thefts are treated more or less as civil disputes, and the owner of the stolen property is out for compensation, usually greatly exceeding its value, rather than for punishing the offender.

A few days after the execution of Chigi Duryu for theft, an Apa Tani surprised a Dafla woman removing rice from a granary of Mudang Tage village. Finding herself observed she fled, dropping her basket, but vagabonds were convinced that visibility to the owner of the granary, Tage Takr, took the basket to Talo and asked everybody to whom it belonged. Toko Holi, one of the richest and most influential men, recognized the basket as belonging to one of his wives and when he heard how Tage Takr had come by it, he offered to pay compensation. But on his way back to Mudang Tage Takr and his companions met Toko Holi's wife and captured her.

Negotiations for her release were initiated almost at once. Toko Holi offered one mithan, but Tage Takr demanded a ransom of two mithan. Four prominent men of Talo, and some of the most respected akha buliang of Haja and Duta went as mediators to Talo. All these negotiations took place in a most amicable atmosphere and no one had the slightest doubt that the incident would soon be settled. After a few days an agreement was reached and Tage Takr released Toko Holi's wife on receiving a ransom of a Tani wino in addition to one mithan. I have subsequently that Toko Holi's wife had been caught stealing on previous occasions, and that her husband was so annoyed by this habit, that he refused to accord her any longer the status of a wife, but kept her in his house like a concubine of slave origin. Her own brothers, who lived in Talo, had repudiated her, and had even suggested that it would be better if Toko Holi killed his wife rather than allowed her to bring disgrace upon his house.

But the Apa Tanis were indifferent to this aspect of the case. It was not their business to reform or punish a criminal Dafla woman, but her attempt to rob them of their rice entitled them to compensation, and so they seized her to make sure that her husband would pay up.

It may be argued that the Apa Tani's conception of tribal justice is strictly utilitarian. The preservation of social harmony and equilibrium is the supreme aim. The man or woman of low social status or little wealth who through the habit of petty theft becomes a nuisance and a source of irritation and disunity is usually greatly exceeding its value, rather than for punishing the offender. The idea of enforcing a claim by means of settling endogenous disputes, although as a means of settling endogenous disputes, although the Apa Tanis have evolved an effective system of preserving tribal harmony and dealing with social elements in a way which not only eliminates the source of disturbance but acts as a deterrent to other potential law-breakers.

The very fact that in the face of habitual crime the leaders of the tribe, fully backed by public opinion, take action against the offender, distinguishes Apa Tani justice from the attitude vis-a-vis crime prevailing among their Dafla and Mihi neighbours. There every family feeds for itself and retaliation is practically the only answer to any trespass on property or attack on persons. Raids on houses and the slaughter of whole families feature in the recent history of most of the larger Dafla settlements, and the Daflas lack an independent authority comparable to the Apa Tani's buliang which could check such raids as led to a series of raids and counter-raids. Such unbridled violence is unthinkable among Apa Tanis, and while I have heard of a good many instances of buliang competitions and of a smaller number of pre-arranged gantu fights, there has within human memory been no raid of Apa Tani on the house of a fellow-tribeman. Individuals may be seized and held to ransom, but the wholesale burning of houses and massacre of families, which is so common an occurrence in Dafla feud, is foreign to the Apa Tanis as a means of settling endo-tribal disputes, although they resort to it in wars with neighbouring tribes. Public opinion and the social sense of the vast majority of Apa Tanis is too strong to permit such drastic and unilateral action. The buliang as the Perkshing tribe allow individual citizens ample scope to fight out private disputes without outside interference, but once the public peace is endangered they come down heavily on an offender guilty of criminal acts or they end by negotiation a quarrel which has assumed threatening aspects. And in this work as guardians of the peace they are supported by the other tribesmen who realize that in an area as congested as the Apa Tani valley the security of life and property are dependent on the maintenance of law and order.
The position of slaves among the Apa Tanis

Slavery is an institution prevalent among most of the hill-tribes of the North-East Frontier, but the social position of slaves varies greatly from tribe to tribe. Among the Dafas, for instance, any man, however powerful, who has captured any enemies and is then subsequently sold as a slave. But similarly, a slave or a man born as the son of a slave may gradually improve his position, and gain not only economic independence but a social status equal to that of the freeborn. Thus slaves do not form a caste of their own, but becoming a slave is an incident of fate, and in no way an immutable condition.

Not so among the Apa Tanis. In their more static society, the slaves and descendants of slaves constitute a class from which no one can rise whatever may be his talents. Such slaves are very useful. But sometimes their love for freedom makes them capture their masters, and then they are sold as slaves. Under no circumstances can an Apa Tanis pass from one class to the other; mite and mura do not inter-marry; a man or woman born as a mura will always remain a mura, and his or her legitimate descendants will also be mura.

Thus the Apa Tai tribe is permanently divided into the two classes, mite and mura. But to the outsider this division is not at once obvious. Mite and mura dress similarly and their social habits and customs are much alike, and in many cases they are not markedly different in their way of life. In some cases each family shares each other's food, and though the richest people are generally of mite class, there are a good many of very poor mite, while some mura own considerable wealth.

The origin of this division is doubtful. The Dafas too recognize a grouping of clans into two classes known as mite and mura, but among them freemen as well as slaves may belong to either class. There is no doubt the possibility that the mite and mura of the Apa Tanis represent two different, though today largely assimilated, ethnic elements, and it is certain that all foreign slaves acquired by Apa Tanis and even those members of other tribes who have been permanently to live among Apa Tanis have been absorbed only within the mite class. A certain difference in physical type between the Apa Tanis of the leading mite families, and the average mura is unmistakable. It is mainly among the former that we find high stature and the European features which distinguish many Apa Tanis from all other tribes of the Subantri Region, whereas typologically the Apa Tanis of the mura may be of frequent admixture.

In my note on "Village Organization and Tribal Jurisdiction" I have pointed out that there are a number of separate mura clans, but that in addition some of the patrician clans have mura as well as mite members. It is not impossible that some of the clans consisting today only of mite were once mite mura clans, and that their mite families have died out while the families of slave descent multiplied. The fact that in some cases a mite or mura class of foreigners purchased or captured in war, who are the absolute property of their masters and can therefore be accurately described as 'slaves'. Such a slave living in his master's house, and dependent on him for every necessity of life, has in theory no rights whatsoever. He must do what his master orders, he can be sold at any time without cause, owing to brutality or criminal tendencies, but if he be a liability rather than an asset, his master may even kill him. But the average slave's daily life does not reflect this insecure status. A slave is assured of food and shelter, shares in his master's meals and is given clothes only slightly inferior to those ordinarily worn by his master. There is nothing in his hair-dress and appearance that stamps him as a slave. The work he does is essentially the same as that of free men, he joins in all the family's work, he is entitled to a very necessary share of other people's food, and though the richest people are generally of mite class, there are a number of very poor mite, while some mura own considerable wealth.

In some extent the position of a slave depends on the manner in which he was acquired and there are various ways in which a man or woman may become the property of another.

1. Slaves acquired by inheritance.—Many wealthy Apa Tanis of mite class inherit from their fathers a number of slaves, the slave families having been associated with their masters. Such slaves bear their masters' clans-name and if this is, e.g., Pono, they are known as Pono guchi or Pono mura. They may have grown up in their master's house, or in a separate house given to their parents close to their master's house. It is stated that a mite man of some wealth inherits on his father's death a young boy and girl, who may be the children of slaves belonging to his father's household or may have been bought in their childhood by his father. They will live in his house and work alongside his own sons and daughters on the fields and in the house; like all young Apa Tanis they will at an early age join a working gang (patang) consisting of boys and girls of similar age, both mite and mura and like the parents of the other members of this patang, so their master will have a right to the work of the entire gang on certain days, and on these days the master's death price. The payment of the bride-price is important for the future of the children. If the girl is a slave's daughter and the boy's master pays to her owner the full price, say one mithan, one cow and one don, then all the couple's children will belong to him; if he pays only a small price, say one calf and one dae, the sons will belong to him and the daughter to the girl's owner, or if there are only sons they will be divided, and if he pays no price at all all the couple's children will become the property of the girl's owner. This is the general rule, but variations may result from special agreements or circumstances.

As soon as the couple has one or two children and sometimes even before, the master may give the slaves a house-site and help him to establish a household of his own, provided he has proved a reliable and good worker. The Apa Tanis speak of slaves living in houses of their own as free. The slaves and there is a gliding scale in the degree of dependence between such slaves and their masters, the owner-slave relationship developing, particularly in the second and third generation, often into a patron-client connection. Sometimes such a 'separated slave' is given only a house-site and a piece of garden, and continues to work hard for his master's benefit, and his main all requirements of grain and cloth. Particularly the cutting and bringing of wood is a task for which in a big house hold such slaves are very useful. But sometimes a 'separated slave' is given by master a few rice-fields and some dry land of his own and in this case he is for his food supply largely independent of his master, and works for him only occasionally and when specially requested. The crops he reaps on his fields are his own and he can, if industrious, begin to acquire small wealth; he may be married or refuse to serve others. His master when called upon to do so, the latter cannot take back the land bequeathed nor in the case of the mura's death can the heir contest the separated slave's claim to the land. This land is inherited by the slave's sons and there can be little doubt that many freed mura families are descended from separated slaves.
Usually the children of a ‘separated’ slave-couple remain with the parents, but work, according to the arrangement made at the time of the marriage, occasionally for either the father’s or the mother’s previous owner. As long as their parents are alive it is in some cases and by mutual agreement that half-grown boys or girls go and live in the master’s house which is incidentally seldom more than a few yards from their parents’ home. But if their father dies before they are young enough to fend for themselves, and I have come across actual cases of the sons of separated slaves who of their own free will went to live in the house of their master or some member of his family, although they retained their father’s land.

Slave-families attached for generations to some prominent mite family, bear the clan-name of their masters, but there remains no memory of any other name or association.

3. Slaves acquired by purchase.—Besides inherited slaves many wealthy men own slaves whom they have purchased either from Apa Tanis or Dafas, and I should say that nearly half of the slaves living in their owners’ houses have been bought by their present masters. That many a rich man, owning a large number of rice-fields, is anxious to increase his number of slaves and dependants, and to acquire thereby cheap and ever available labour, is easily understandable but what induces slave-owners to dispose of their valuable human assets?

A slave-owner faced with the necessity of providing mithan for a sacrifice, of paying a fine or of ransoming a captured relative, or with any other emergency may find the sale of a slave the quickest way of obtaining the necessary animals or valuables. He will normally sell not a ‘separated slave’ but a young boy or girl living in his house, or in rare cases a married couple with or without children. A slave whose services fetch a price of three to five mithan, or a middle-aged slave may change hands for as little as one mithan and one cow. Another reason for the sale of a slave is disagreement between him and his master. It seems that the relations between masters and slaves are generally cordial, but if a slave gives trouble to his master or in his presence, that a man should discover that one of his male slaves had a love-affair with his daughter he would first warn him and, if not availed of, he would sell him. Similarly a slave embarrassing his master by stealing is likely to be sold provided anyone is prepared to buy him. But if he is a notorious character, his master may cut his losses and expel him from his house.

While the selling of slaves to other Apa Tani villages is a common practice, Apa Tani slaves are seldom sold to other tribes and public opinion is definitely against the sale of Apa Tani outside their own country. I have heard only one Apa Tani slave who has recently been sold to Dafas. In 1943 Michi Pilia of Michi-Bamin sold a young boy of Duli clan (one of the mura clans of Michi-Bamin) to a Dafas of Mai village. The boy’s parents had been heavily indebted and had agreed to work for Michi Pilia in the position of slaves if he paid their debt and worked lor one year for Nada Karu. It seems that relations between masters and slaves are generally cordial, but if a slave gives trouble to his master or in his presence, that a man should discover that one of his male slaves had a love-affair with his daughter he would first warn him and, if not availed of, he would sell him. Similarly a slave embarrassing his master by stealing is likely to be sold provided anyone is prepared to buy him. But if he is a notorious character, his master may cut his losses and expel him from his house.

Though Apa Tanis do not approve of members of their tribe being sold to Dafas or Miris, they themselves purchase a good many slaves from Dafas, preferably children, who can be as easily assimilated. It is difficult to estimate the number of Apa Tani slaves of Dafas origin, for those bought as children dress as Apa Tani and speak only Apa Tani, marry Apa Tanis and bearing their master’s clan-name do not appear as strangers even to the other villagers. The resultant absorption of Dafas blood within the mura population explains perhaps the difference in physical type between many mura and the members of the more prominent mite families. It seems that many Dafas slaves remain all their life in their master’s house, and that it is as a rule the children of slaves, who were sold by their father, who sell them. A young slave may change hands for as little as one cow and calf, one large pig and some clothes and daoo.

Slaves already in the possession of a master who has acquired them by inheritance, purchase or capture, are not the only persons who may be offered for sale. Some Apa Tanis, although born free, have been sold by their own parents or kinsmen into slavery. Thus there is in Haja village a girl of Mudang Tage who was sold by her own brother for four mithan when he was short of grain; and another girl was sold by her own parent for the same reason for two mithan. It seems, however, that only people of mura and particularly the descendants of separated slaves sell their children or relations. The status of persons sold in this way is equal to that of any other slave, they lose their clan-name and all rights to inherit from the free members of their family.

4. Slavery resulting from economic obligation.—Distinct from individuals born as slaves, captured in war, or sold as slaves by their relatives, are those who lose their freedom economically. An Apa Tani and also a Dafas dealing with Apa Tanis automatically guarantees his business connections with his own obligations. If a man borrows rice or any other commodity and cannot or will not repay it within a reasonable time his creditor is entitled to attach his person and to make him work as an unpaid servant until he has repaid his debt. It is customary in this period the debtor temporarily deprived of his freedom and initiative, speaking not as a slave, for he can earn money by extra work for other men and may go to work in the plains and clear his debts with valuable bought there. But if several years pass and the debt remains unfilled, his position becomes that of a slave, and if he causes his creditor any trouble he may even be sold. A debtor’s service in his creditor’s house, is not necessarily the result of compulsion, but may be based on mutual agreement and the position of ‘bond’ is given to a great deal of friction between Apa Tanis and Dafas. For Apa Tanis often give credit to poor Dafas in the expectation that sooner or later their Dafas customers will be unable to pay, and they will be able to force or to persuade them to become their bond-servants and finally their slaves. A few examples will demonstrate this:

1. Two years ago Serbi Tade, a Dafas of Jorum, came to live in Bela and borrowed a great deal of rice from Duyu Talu. When he could not repay Nada Karu of Haja agreed to pay one mithan for the rice if Serbi Tade came to work in his house until he had repaid the mithan. Serbi Tade agreed and worked for one year for Nada Karu. Then he escaped to Licha without repaying the mithan.
2. Three years ago Lishi Tamo, a Dafa of Licha, came to Haja and stayed for about one year in Pura Pilas house. During that time he bought on credit rice from Haj Kacho. But he could not pay and Haj Kacho seized him and kept him tied up in his house. Haj Kacho released him by paying his creditor one bullock, one brass plate and one Tibetan sword on the understanding that Lishi Tamo would work for him like a slave until he had repaid the value of the ransom. But soon afterwards Lishi Tamo fled to Licha.

3. Padi Layang, a prominent Apa Tani of Bela, sold large quantities of rice on credit to a Dafa of Femir. Then the latter died leaving one son, but no property. So Padi Layang took the son in compensation for his loss. But the boy did not like to live among Apa Tanis and requested Padi Layang to sell him to a Dafa village and take the price in clearance of his father's debt. Complying with his wish Padi Layang sold him to a Dafa of Licha for one mithan-cow with call, one cloth and one pig. The buyer however protracted the payment, and when within a year the slave-boy died he refused to honour his obligations.

Although an Apa Tani of gute class, if defaulting in the payment of a debt, may also be seized by his creditor, in practice he never serves his creditor in the capacity of a slave, it is said that all his kinsmen and clansmen, rather than suffer the disgrace of a gute man working as a slave, will subscribe to his ransom.

5. Slaves acquired by Capture.—Many of the Dafa slaves owned by Apa Tanis have been captured in raids either by Apa Tanis or by Daflas who then sold them to Apa Tanis. When Apa Tanis raid a village and make prisoners, they keep them as a rule for several months in stocks and await their kinsmen's offers of ransom. If no such offers are forthcoming or the offered ransom is too small, they sell the captives as slaves either among themselves or to neighbouring Daflas. Children a e usually disposed of in the Apa Tani country, but women are sold to more distant villages, where the chances of escape are smaller.

When last year some Apa Tanis of Hiju and Duta raided Limia they captured the two wives of a Dafa and his son, who was about 15 years of age; the two women were subsequently released on receipt of ransom but not the boy. The captor sold both to another man of Haja for two mithans.

When the Apa Tanis of Bela last raided Dodun, a Dafa village near the Khru, they captured ten women and ten small boys. Only three of the boys were ransomed. All the remaining captives were sold; the boys to Apa Tanis and the women to Dafa villages such as Mai and Leji.

Apa Tanis never receive from both other men any ransom for the captives they hold. There is no exception to the rule that every slave that newly acquired slaves are not in every respect reckoned as slaves but bear, whether separated or not, the master's clan-name. A slave belonging to a mura clan of the same village, even his five deendants in the second and third generation are conscious of their origin, although they bear, whether separated or not, the master's clan-name.

There is, however, one exception to the rule that every slave adopts his master's clan-name and counts for matters of exogamy as a member of his master's clan. Actually however, a newly acquired slave's previous clan-name is both remembered and used, and it is only his children who are generally known by the master's clan-name. If a slave belonged to a mura clan of the same village, even his five deendants in the second and third generation are conscious of their origin, although they bear, whether separated or not, the master's clan-name.

That newly acquired slaves are not in every respect reckoned as mura members of their master's clan emerges from the fact that the male and female slaves of one mura are allowed and sometimes even encouraged to marry. An Apa Tanis, for example, bought a Dafa youth and a Dafa girl, for instance, told me, that he asked them to marry, but that they did not like each other and refused, and a slave whose life-story is recounted below married the daughter of one of his master's other slaves.

7. Sex relations and Marriage rules.—Premarital sex-relations of a fairly promiscuous character prevail among boys and girls of all classes, and slaves and the children of slaves are not excluded from the general community of the village youth. Thus young slaves may become the lovers of mite girls, and slave girls have often casual love-affairs with mite boys. As a rule, however, a man has no sex relations with his own female slaves or the daughters of his slaves, and he cannot accord to a slave woman the position of a second wife or recognised concubine. Some of my informants were emphatic that sexual intercourse between a mite man and his slaves never occurred, and they voiced no doubt the official and theoretical view. Others went so far as to contend that if a man chooses to keep a slave girl as his mistress, no one would interfere, but that it was not a usual thing to do. Still others admitted that if a man has a son from a slave girl, the boy takes the father's name, but does not inherit his status; he is a mura, and may become the founder of a new mura branch of his father's clan.

As public opinion does not favour permanent unions between mite and slaves, little is said about any attachment of a slave owner to one of his female slaves. So much is clear, however, that female slaves are neither free to��e the concubines of their masters as for instance among Konyak chiefs, nor that intercourse between a man and his slaves is considered clan-incest. The very fact that sexual intercourse between a slave and his master's daughter does not seem to incur very heavy penalties disposed of any assumption that sex relation between masters and slaves count in Apa Tani opinion as incest.

Any child born by an unmarried slave-girl in her master's house, is his property and takes his clan-name. Even if the father happens to be a mite man, he can make no claim to such offspring.

Slaves are expected to marry slaves or girls of mura class. A free mura girl marrying a slave who still lives in his master's house takes his status and marries his master; she is sold either together with her husband or even separately. A slave girl marrying a free mura man, on the other hand, gains her freedom provided the husband pays her master her full price. The customs regulating the fate of a slave's children have already been described in detail.

It shall be made clear that the masters allow the slaves a good deal of freedom in arranging their marriage affairs. I was repeatedly assured that a master cannot prevent a slave-girl from going to live with the man of her choice, even though he may lose thereby her help in house and field. He may demand a bride-price but cannot enforce its payment and his only compensation for the loss of a slave who may have cost him five mithans is
the claim on her children. This is demonstrated by an occurrence which illustrates so many aspects of Apa Tani slavery that it deserves quotation in full:—

Tiling Tayo, a mura and dependant of Michi Tamo of Michi-Bamin village, married to a Ponyo mura girl of Hang, quarrelled with his patron and went to live in Hang, taking with him his wife and small daughter. In Hang he found refuge in the house of Hibu Goji, but having no land for cultivation, he soon found himself in difficulties and at a time when he was at the height of his employment to sell his daughter Mado for one mithan worth of rice to Hibu Goji’s brother Riku; but he failed to inform his host Hibu Goji of this transaction. Riku gave Tiling Tayo the rice, but when he demanded the child, Goji heard of the deal and claimed the girl for himself, pointing out that he and the family had contributed to live in his house, and that having offered them shelter he had the first claim on Tiling Tayo’s daughter. So Goji returned to Hang. But Riku started a liisud competition of destroying wealth; between them they killed 47 mithans but at last the headmen (julung) intervened, the competition was stopped and the girl Mado was given to Riku, who sold her subsequently to Hibu Rave for six mithans. After she had worked for Hibu Rave for about ten years, she fell in love with a fellow servant, a mura dependant of Kago Tamo, and went to live in his house. Hibu Rave raised no objection and decided to compensate for the loss of the service of a girl which she had cost him. Mado had no children, and Hibu Rave died some time afterwards without leaving any direct heirs. Had Hibu Rave left a son and Mado had had any children, her daughter would have been claimed as slaves by Hibu Rave’s son.

8. Property rights of slaves.—A slave living in his master’s house neither possesses property nor can he acquire any property of his own. He depends on his master for food and clothes and all he earns belongs to his master. When he goes to the plains (and many wealthy Apa Tanis, though themselves never leaving their own country, send their slaves to work in the plains) all the goods purchased with the money he earns as wages, belongs to his master. Usually he is allowed to keep a cloth and perhaps a little salt, but this is a concession and not a right. Before he acquires any of these goods as his own benefit, though as a matter of courtesy he may give his master a piece of salt or cloth. As long as he fulfills his obligations their land cannot be taken back by his master, and is inherited by his sons. His master can now no longer sell either him or his wife, but his children are still the property of his master, and may under certain circumstances be sold. While he manages his own land and reaps its entire crop, of which no share goes to his master, he still has to work on his master’s land whenever his help is required. If the died young his children return to his master’s house and have the status of slaves until in time they themselves are separated, but normally his sons are allowed to work on his land and to succeed him in the enjoyment of his property; and when his daughters marry he is usually given a share in the bride-price. If he dies without direct male heirs, his parents are entitled to inherit, but not being entitled to inherit.

The dependence of such separated slaves on their masters lessens with each generation, until a stage is reached when a man’s mura have no other obligation than to give him the heads of all animals slain in the chase or killed for sacrifice; and this obligation remains even if the one time slaves become as rich and richer than the patouchi. But if such a man’s family, descended from slaves and bearing the name of a mite clan dies out, all their property reverts to their master’s domain.

If a slave dies without leaving sons or brothers, the slaves who lived in his house are not taken over by distant kinsmen, but are allotted some inferior parts of their master’s land and house-sites on the outskirts of the village. They thus acquire the status of separated slaves and owe their late master’s kinsmen only the usual tribute of animal heads.

9. Obligations of a master towards his slaves and dependants.—While a slave is living in his master’s house, he is fed and clothed as a matter of course and even if he leaves a separate house and has fields of his own his master helps him whenever necessary with loans of grain. He affords him, moreover, protection of person and property—an important point in a society where the individual can expect little protection from official bodies. Most violent of all is an oath taken to such a poor man, for which no compensation is made in the case of his death; this happens to be captured by Dafas. In general slaves are less liable to capture than wealthy men of mite class, but there are yet many cases where slaves or freed mura are captured and then ransomed by their masters or patrons.

Thus Nani Dole, a separated slave of Nani Habung of Bela village, was captured by men of Licha when out hunting. His master ransomed him with two Tibetan bells, each worth one mithan, and one dao; Dole is under a separated slave of Nani Habung, was also captured by Licha men, and ransomed for 1 mithan, 2 Tibetan bells of mithan-value, 2 brass plates, 2 Tibetan dao, 3 Apa Tani dao and 3 Dafo cloths; all this was paid by Nani Pungan, his master’s father.

Cases such as these are numerous and Apa Tanis seem to consider it a matter of honour to ransom any of their dependants, who happen to fall into captivity. The ransoms are sometimes higher than the price of a slave and this tends to show that Apa Tanis feel real responsibility towards their dependants. A slave-girl of Dafa birth, brought up an Apray by Padi Layang and recently captured by men of Licha and kept in stocks for three months; to effect her release Padi Layang paid a ransom of 3 mithan-cows, 3 female mithan-calves, 4 Tibetan bells, 4 bronze plates, 4 Tibetan dao, 2 big endi cloths, 10 Apa Tani cloths, 20 Apa Tani dao, and 1 maund of salt. This is far more than the price of any slave, and even the fact that the girl in question was pregnant does not explain so extravagant a ransom if Apa Tanis regarded their slaves only as an investment.

10. Treatment of criminal slaves.—Normally the masters of slaves have no need to resort to any drastic means to assert their authority, and I have never heard of corporal punishment inflicted on slaves for such reasons as laziness or inefficiency. It is only when a slave refuses consistently to obey his master’s orders or commits an offence which would be criminal even if committed by a free man, that serious action is taken. Even then this action, though sometimes a pathological procedure, is not geared to the idea of punishing the slave for his own justice. The obvious way of getting rid of a troublesome slave is to sell him, but if the slave has a notoriously bad character, a buyer is not easily found. In such a case, a master, unable to control his slave, may disclaim all responsibility and leave him to his own resources or may take the lead in inflicting on him the death-penalty as demonstrated in the case of a former slave from Hang village which I have described in detail in the note on ‘Village Organisation and Tribal Justice.’

Though in these two cases the death sentence was imposed for habitual stealing, it must not be supposed that equally drastic action is taken against all thieves. A slave woman of Haja who was caught in a petty theft during my stay in the village, has several times been punished by being put into stocks and by having her hair clipped, but has remained incorruptible and is yet tolerated.
In the case of another slave executed some years ago in Hang the guilt is less clear:

Hibu Tajang was the son of slave bought from Michi-Bamin and had been separated and given a house and land of his own by his master Hibu Hipa. He was married, but had no children. It seems that while in Hang he proved a general nuisance by refusing to obey his master and torturing the authority of the village headmen. At last he fled to Tako (Toko), a nearby village, bringing the villagers of his bad record and requesting that he should be returned to Hang. The men of Tako complied with the request, seized him and brought him back to Hang. There he was kept for two nights at the Hibu sitting platform and then executed by his master and several other prominent men. His offence is somewhat obscure, but it seems that his unprotected refusal to work for his master and escape to Tako, were the main reasons for the decision to kill him.

No case of a slave committing a murder is remembered, but there can be no doubt that in such an event the culprit would be executed.

If a slave commits any offence, such as killing purposely or by accident another man's mithan, his master is responsible for the payment of compensation. But the aggrieved person may at once take the law into his own hands, seize the offender and keep him tied up until his master pays the compensation he has paid the former master.

11. Escape of slaves: Cases of Apa Tani slaves running away from their masters seem to be rare, and this may be due to two reasons. The treatment of slaves is on the whole good and the Apa Tani country is so small that a slave must flee to another tribe to be sure of avoiding recapture. The many slaves going annually to the plains return practically without exception, although they could find there ample employment and undoubtedly realize that if they stayed away their masters could not recover them. But only two Apa Tani are known to have escaped to the plains in recent years; the one a boy, is serving in the Political Officer's Permanent Labour Corps.

Apart from Hibu Nipa, whose flight to Tako cost him his life, I have heard of only one Apa Tani slave who fled to a Dafsa village, and this was a girl of Hang, who after her owner's death escaped with her Dafsa husband, like herself a slave, to Sekhe a village south of the Panior River.

Captured as slaves, the other men, when they have any means, try to impress the visitor both with their own importance and that of one particular rich man of mithan families, to whom they refer as 'raja' and who is their master or patron. They appear in no way oppressed or timid and many of them are well dressed. These are usually men who have been given their own houses and fields, slaves still living in their master's house are usually less ostentatious in their manners.

For an outsider unfamiliar with the language it is, of course, very difficult to judge the social and psychological standing of a slave. The visitor may find it at first difficult to distinguish between the dignity and noble bearing of certain members of prominent mithan-families, but sees little difference in the behaviour of the rest of the men. After some time he will realize, however, that some men with a smattering of Assamese and a particularly pushing manner are slaves or descendants of slaves. Those most familiar with the plains of Assam describe themselves as gaonbura and try to impress the visitor both with their own importance and that of one particular rich man of mithan-class, to whom they refer as 'raja' and who is their master or patron. They appear in no way oppressed or timid and many of them are well dressed. These are usually men who have been given their own houses and fields, slaves still living in their master's house are usually less ostentatious in their manners.

On the other hand, every slave living still in his master's house must be conscious of his dependence on the latter's goodwill, and aware of the potential danger of being sold. Yet, even such an event does not terrify him from a fellow slave or for all Apa Tani slaves; for instance, that even after a change of masters he is necessarily still within easy reach and often within sight of his old home. Though in theory the members of a family may be sold separately I have never heard of a case when husband and wife have been forcibly separated by the master selling one without the other.

The difference in the material standards of living of the average slave and the poorer people of mithan-class is not in their greater food and clothing but in the fact that on an average slaves have to work harder; even when middle aged they have to undertake tasks, such as wood-cutting, which among free men are left to boys and young men. The main disabilities of the slaves, however, lie in the social sphere. They are excluded from the competition for social prestige which is an engrossing and extremely important part of an Apa Tani's life. Not for them are the thrills and the access of self-reliance which a free man gains from performing such rites as the mithan sacrifices at the Morum festival or asserting his wealth and prominence in a lissudu competition.

It is only when they are 'separated' that slaves can acquire wealth, and those who are economically successful, can gain a certain influence in their village. Some of the larger mithan clans are represented on the village councils by their own biling, but these are men born free whose dependence on their patrons is only of a ceremonial nature.

Failing infinitely more detailed knowledge of the Apa Tani than I have been able to gain in the short time at my disposal, it would be dangerous to generalize on the psychological position of Apa Tani slaves, but the following sketch of a life story of a slave of Dafsa origin may illustrate how members of other tribes are living absorbed into the mithan class of the Apa Tani:

The teller, Taj Tako or, as he calls himself more frequently, Ponyo Tako, is an old man of rather striking appearance; very tall and lean, with a narrow, well chiselled face, an elegant and very thin hooked nose and deep-set light brown eyes. He knows some words of Assamese and uses them mainly to assure you again and again and with immense pride that he is a man of a great 'Anka raja', meaning Ponyo Tako is an exceptionally influential man in Hang.

Taj Tako's parents were Dafsa of Licha, but his father Taj Tamar quarrelled with his brothers and went to live in Haja, where he stayed in the house of Kago Buti. There Tako was born. His father was a great hunter and while in Haja he largely supported himself by hunting deer and wild pig and selling the meat. Sometimes he worked on Kago Buti's fields or cut wood and his wife helped the women of the house and earned wages in rice by going to work on other people's fields. When leaving Licha his family were living with him and they were somewhat like the Tibetans; subsequently at Chardar by Apa Tani of Michi-Bamin who had watched him burying them in a bamboo groove. After the theft Taj Tako fled to Haja with his wife and child, and went to Mai, his wife's home village. There it was not long before he persuaded his wife's kinsmen to join him in capturing some of Michi-Bamin's mithan, On
a moonlit night they went to Michi Bamin's pasture land and were just driving off five mithan, when they ran into some Apa Tani. Tamar aimed an arrow at one of the men, but another Apa Tani hurled a pointed bamboo fence pole and hit him in the throat. He died on the spot and his companions fled. Next day his body was buried by the man of Michi-Bamin.

Tako was then a small boy, some five years old, and he and his mother went to live in the house of Mai Niri. When he was about ten years old, Mai Niri sold him to Tania Doni of Talo. Subsequently his mother married Taji Topu of Mai, but died soon afterwards. When Tako was a boy of seventeen or eighteen, he ran away from Talo; he stayed for three days with his relatives in Mai and from there he went to the plains and stayed in Rangajan village near North Lakhimpur, first for a few days with Bogo Tora, who worked in a tea garden, and then for one year with another Dafla who had some cultivation.

As he had been separated from his mother while he was still very young, he knew very little of his father, and to find out the circumstances of his death, he went one day to Hang. There he met Ponyo Tamar, who was already one of the richest men of the village, and Tamar suggested that Tako should stay with him in Hang. Tako, who did not like the idea of spending all his life in the plains, readily agreed, and Ponyo Tamar paid subsequently three mithan to Tania Doni of Talo in order to avoid the accusation of harbouring a run-away slave.

At first Tako stayed in Ponyo Tamar's house; he went cutting wood and worked on the fields, and often he would go hunting; in Talo he had learnt woodcraft far superior to that of Apa Tani and so he made himself popular by supplying Tamar's household with game. Tamar had another Dafla slave married to an Apa Tani woman, and Tako found favour with their daughter. She dressed as an Apa Tani and spoke only Apa Tani, but Tako did not mind this and she came to live with him as his wife. When Tako's eldest son was born, Ponyo Tamar gave him a separate house, quite close to his own, and a garden plot in which to grow vegetables. But Tako did not care to have rice-fields of his own; he was quite content to work for Tamar and receive from him the grain he required. He has altogether three children, two sons and one daughter.

His eldest son Lorna, though not yet married has been given two rice-terraces by Tamar. Of his own accord he went to live in the house of Tamar's sister, the wife of a very rich man, but he cultivates separately and cooks on a separate hearth. To Tako's younger son, Teke, Ponyo Tamar gave also two rice-terraces, but instead of setting up a household of his own Teke continued to live in Tamar's house. Although he is not yet married, he too cooks on a separate hearth. Tako taught both of his sons to be good hunters, but otherwise they are just like Apa Tani.

"I myself", says Taj Tako, "have become half an Apa Tani, and at home I speak Apa Tani with my wife and my little daughter. Life among the Apa Tania is very pleasant, far better than in a Dafla village. As the man of the Anka Raja Tamar, I am in want of nothing. Yes it is good to live here in Hang."

We would, no doubt, be mistaken in assuming that all Daflas are as happy among the Apa Tani as Taj Tako, but other cases of Daflas entering voluntarily the service of Apa Tani masters in a position very similar to that of slaves are not wanting.
The Apa Tani’s economic relations with neighbouring Populations

By a collective effort unparalleled among the hill tribes of the North-East Frontier the Apa Tani have developed the natural resources of a single bowl-shaped valley, less than 20 square miles in area, to such a high degree that the 20,000 members of the tribe can maintain themselves in this one valley on an economic level distinctly higher than that of neighbouring tribal folk. A system of agriculture combining optimum exploitation of the limited land with indefinite preservation of soil fertility enables the Apa Tani to produce sufficient food for themselves as well as a surplus, which constitutes not only a broad margin of safety, but is normally available for export. Despite the lack of animal traction and ploughs Apa Tani agriculture has advanced beyond the stage of subsistence farming. On an average every man working on the land produces more than he consumes; the balance can be spared for feeding craftsmen and a small class of men engaged more in social and political leadership than in manual production with still sufficient to be exchanged against commodities which are in short supply in the Apa Tani country.

The relations between the complex and highly specialized Apa Tani economy and the more primitive economy of the neighbouring semi-barbaric Dassas and Miris are a remarkable example of the independence of basically different cultures. Trade appears today as a necessity for the Apa Tani, but while they have for centuries inhabited the same territory and their economy has attained the stability resulting from long undisturbed growth, their less stable neighbours have frequently changed. Tribal tradition tells us that Dassal clans, which now stand in close trade relations with the Apa Tani, lived only four or five generations ago in distant valleys to the north-west where they had probably little knowledge of Apa Tani country. Trade with a people able to supply large quantities of grain is for them undoubtedly a novelty, but experience shows that whatever may have been their previous economy, they were not slow in availing themselves of the new opportunities. The position of the Apa Tani is different. They have often been the only firm rock in a sea of shifting and warring tribes, and must more than once have seen their neighbours of yesterday defeated and scattered by more powerful newcomers. But these new-comers conformed to the same economic pattern as the populations whom they had displaced and were usually willing enough to step into a barter system by which they could obtain grain and the wares of expert Apa Tani craftsmen.

Apa Tani economy has thus for long been tuned to the exchange of goods with the outside world, and there can be no doubt that any change in this external marketing would seriously disrupt the structure of the delicately balanced economic system.

Today the Apa Tani are in need of goods produced by their tribal neighbours as well as of articles of Indian and Tibetan origin. We will first consider the trade by which they obtain the products of Dassal and Miri tribesmen.

*inter-tribal trade.—The trade between Apa Tani and their Dassal and Miri neighbours is largely based on the complementary nature of their respective economies. The Apa Tani are primarily agriculturists and their densely populated country offers little scope for the raising of large numbers of domestic animals. The Dassals on the other hand, are indifferent cultivators, but, living loosely scattered over extensive areas of jungle-covered and grassy hill-sides, have ample opportunity, and as it would seem considerable aptitude, for breeding cattle, goats and pigs.

The exchange of surplus Apa Tani rice against surplus Dassal (or Miri) animals is therefore to the advantage of both tribes. Apa Tani require mithan and pigs for sacrifice, and they value meat, and particularly pork and bacon so much that they will go to great expense and trouble in order to obtain animals for slaughter. At the time of the Morum, the principal annual festival, the need is greatest; the typical mating season for turkeys is in England at Christmas and an Apa Tani desirous of gaining social prestige can do not better than to sacrifice a number of mithan during the Morum feast.

The need of Dassal for the agricultural produce of their Apa Tani neighbours is less constant and not immediately connected with ritual observances, but depends mainly on the quality of their harvest. In years when their jhum fields yield exceptionally good crops, they may be able to dispense with grain purchases altogether, while in times of scarcity they will pay double the normal price for supplies of Apa Tani rice.

Rice is usually paid for in mithan, and the Apa Tani are always willing to take these animals which have practically the value of a currency, and function as such in all barter transactions concerning land. The normal price of a full grown mithan cow is 30 carrying baskets of unhusked rice, but in years of food shortage among the neighbouring Dassals and Miris it may drop to as little as 15 carrying baskets, each containing about 30 seers. A Dassal or Miri in need of grain usually comes himself to the village of an Apa Tani friend and if he succeeds in concluding a bargain he and the members of his family carry the rice back to their own village. Usually the price is paid at once and many a prospective buyer brings a mithan with him when he comes to negotiate a deal. But sometimes Apa Tani give rice on credit, and quarrels arising from the delay over payment of such debts have been the cause of many bloody feuds between the two tribes.

For the Apa Tani have the tendency to use advances of grain as a means whereby they may bring their debtors gradually under their control; according to Apa Tani custom it is indeed perfectly regular that a man unable to repay a loan should become the dependent of his debtor until his debt has been cleared. But although an inscrupulous, or temporarily embarrassed Dassal may, when hard-pressed, acquire to such a position which differs but little from the status of a slave, he will grasp the first opportunity of getting his own back, and many raids on Apa Tani or their cattle have been led by previous Dassal bond servitors who employed their familiarity with the country to their former master’s detriment.

The fact that with which trade disputes develop into full scale feuds is responsible for the curious position that the traditional trade-partners are often also the hereditary enemies.

* It must be remembered, however, that only those Dassals and Miris whose villages lie within one or two days’ journey of the Apa Tani rely on trading supplies; the existence of such centres of supply is a product of the same desire to monopolize the trade demand and while other Dassals and Miris fall back on jungle produce and cultivate large areas of jhum, searching out new land whenever the old is exhausted, the neighbours of the Apa Tani would appear careless of their agriculture methods and are content to cultivate exhausted soil or imitate the wet cultivation of the Apa Tani with limited success. Nor is the rice crop of the Apa Tani inexhaustable; only rich men can afford to dispose of part of their crop, and in their desire to acquire mithan they will sell rice to Dassals while their poorer co-villagers go short.
Each of the seven Apa Tani villages has traditional trade ties with certain Dafla and Miri villages usually with those whose land borders on their hunting grounds. Thus Hang entertains trade relations mainly with the Dafla villages of Leji, Pochu, Mai and Jorum; Michi-Bamin and Mudang Tage + with Mai, Jorum and Talo (Toko); Duta and Haja with Jorum, Talo, Nielom, Likha, Licha and Linua; Bela with Linua, Dodum, Taplo, Percir, Murga, Rakhe, and Bua; and Hari with Rakhe, Bua and Taplo (Chemir). Such traditional trade ties do not amount to a definite monopoly, but under normal circumstances an Apa Tani of Hang would not go to trade with Nielom or Licha, Dafla villages within the sphere of influence of Duta and Haja. ++

Between the traditional trade partners there may exist a formal peace treaty (dapo), there may be temporary hostilities excluding all trade, or there may be a state of undefined relations, usually an interim between an open feud and the conclusion of a new peace-treaty. During such an interim period a small measure of trade is kept up by slaves, who can without very great risk of capture go backwards and forwards.

A complete paralyssation of trade between an Apa Tani village and all its Dafla trade-partners results for the Apa Tani, with their highly specialized economy, in real hardship, and hostile feeling must run very high, before they will abandon all individual trade contacts. There are innumerable instances of Apa Tani continuing to trade with Dafla who to all intents and purposes are at war with other families of the Apa Tani's own village. It is only when a feud has unleased particularly violent sentiments of anger and revenge, that an area dominated by a Dafla clan may become dangerous for any Apa Tani and the flow of trade ceases. Both sides are then forced to obtain necessities or market their goods by using other and often circuitous trade channels.

The inconvenience, to say the least of it, thus caused to the estranged trade-partners becomes obvious when we consider the range of usual exchange goods. Besides buying mithan for rice, the Apa Tani obtain from Daflas almost all the cotton required for their highly-developed weaving industry. As almost all their land is under food crops, it is not economical for Apa Tani to grow their own cotton. They buy the raw cotton, gin it, spin and weave it into cloth, and very often sell the cloth again to the original suppliers of the cotton. Usually they barter the cotton for rice, Apa Tani made dao, or cotton cloths, but there is also a system whereby Apa Tani women experienced in weaving can obtain cotton in exchange for their services as weavers. They go to Dafla villages and undertake to weave cloth on the understanding that during their stay they are fed and that finally they are given as wage a quantity of cotton equal to that which they utilized in weaving cloth for their clients.

Though not a cotton growing people the Apa Tani possess probably more and better textiles than any of their neighbours, and they weave not only for home consumption but with the definite idea of using cloth for barter transactions. Through Apa Tani traders, as well as through middlemen of other tribes, Apa Tani cloth reaches areas as distant as the Upper Panior Valley, the Khru valley and the Miri villages on the upper Kania.

Dao and knives manufactured by Apa Tani smiths are also articles of trade and on their trading visits to villages of Daflas or Miri Apa Tani usually carry with them dao and knives for small payments. Dao, knives and cloth are the main exchange goods with which they purchase pigs, dogs (which the Apa Tani's eat—and the Daflas do not), fowls, tobacco, cotton, gourd vessels, dried bamboo shoots, and also such articles of dress as cane belts, cane hats, and fibre rain-coats. Sometimes they give in exchange also salt which nowadays they obtain from the plains of Assam. The salt extracted from the ash of certain herbaceous plants grown in the Apa Tani country is no longer an important article of trade, but it is probable that before Aryan salt was easily available this home-made 'salt' found ready buyers among the Apa Tani's tribal neighbours.

A minor item of trade are earthen pots. Among the Apa Tani's pots are made only in one village—Michi-Bamin—and even there only by certain clans. Many Apa Tani purchase therefore pots from such Dafla villages as Jorum and Talo, paying usually in rice. But as shortage of fuel limits the production of finished pots in those villages, Apa Tani sometimes buy unburnt pots, and carry them across the country denuded of forests by the Dafla's cultivation till they reach the forest-belt which divides the Apa Tani from the Dafla country; there they build fires and bake the pots before taking them home.

No currency is used in trade transactions between Apa Tani and Daflas, but both tribes have their systems of values, which though similar, do not completely coincide. The Apa Tani scale of values is as follows:

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<tr>
<td>1 pachu</td>
<td>2 eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 1 small chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 1 day's wage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 paroe</td>
<td>1 middle-sized chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 1 small knife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 34 seers unhursed rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 soe</td>
<td>1 hen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 1 knife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pue</td>
<td>1 short Apa Tani dao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 1 cock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 1 plain white Apa Tani cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 64 seers unhursed rice, such as contained in a pue yagi (basket).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pili</td>
<td>1 average sized Apa Tani dao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 1 white Apa Tani cloth with red and blue border.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 1 white bazar cloth (worth in North Lakhimpur about Rs. 2-3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 1 white Apa Tani cloth with red and blue border.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pulan</td>
<td>1 long Apa Tani dao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 1 white Apa Tani cloth with broad multi-coloured border</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 1 small pig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 3 pue yagi of unhursed rice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Mudang Tage has some hunting grounds on the opposite of the valley that adjoin the Bua-Chemir area and Apa Tani of Mudang Tage also go to trade in these villages when the opportunity offers.

2 Apa Tani of one village, related by marriage or through the maternal line with another Apa Tani village with a different set of values, may however sometimes engage in trade and establish friendships with such villages other than those of their traditional block.
1 pupe 1 small blue and red Apa Tani cloth
or 1 middle sized pig
or 4 pue yagi of unhusked rice.

1 punge 1 normal-sized blue and red cloth
or 3 white bazar cloths
or 5 pue yagi of unhusked rice.

1 puhe (or apa) 1 long Assamese dao
or 1 double cloth cloak
or 1 big male goat.

1 hu 1 pig of the size of a dog.
or 6 pue yagi of unhusked rice.

1 hane 1 Assamese silk cloth
or 1 large pig
or 7 pue yagi of unhusked rice.

1 pum 1 small Tibetan sword.
or 8 pue yagi of unhusked rice.

1 puiang 1 large Tibetan sword
or 9 pue yagi of unhusked rice.

1 new large Tibetan sword
or 10 pue yagi of unhusked rice.

In these standard values practically any price can be expressed; the value of irrigated land is however usually reckoned in mithan.

A few examples will give an idea of the prices of the more costly commodities. An embroidered cloth such as is worn by priests on ceremonial occasions is worth one puiang plus one puhe; a cow is estimated at 2 puiang plus one puhe, a small mithan at 4 to 5 puiang; and a full grown mithan cow as 8 puiang or 80 pue yagi baskets of rice.

The correlation of values ruling the barter transactions with Dassas and Miris corresponds in many respects to the above scale of values, but prices are never stable and depend to a great extent on the local relation between demand and supply as well as on the individual Apa Tani's skill in bargaining. Thus an Apa Tani trader venturing with some cloth and dao to Miri villages north of the Kamla River, may obtain much better prices than if he tried to dispose of them in such nearby villages as Jorum and Talo.

When trading in distant villages Apa Tanis barter their wares not only for such commodities as pigs, fowls or cotton, which they require for their immediate use, but accept payment also in the shape of valuables such as beads, small bell-metal bells (maji) and bell-metal discs, which have in many ways the character of a currency and are purchased with the definite idea of an ultimate advantageous resale.

Almost all barter transactions between Apa Tanis and neighbouring tribes are simple business deals devoid of ritual or institutional associations. While among Dassas the purchase of a valuable prayer-bell creates between seller and buyer ceremonial ties comparable to those between families linked by marriage, and such ties add materially to a man's prestige and security, economic gain is practically the sole motive in trade transactions between Apa Tanis and Dassas; barter transactions between Apa Tanis and Apa Tanis are, however, wrought up in a certain ceremonial formality which includes a meal at the expense of the buyer; even in the case of a large transaction, the necessity of giving and taking food between Apa Tanis is felt.

2. Trade with the Plains of Assam.—Though most of the commodities in use among the Apa Tanis are produced by themselves or bartered from their tribal neighbours, the import of a small number of articles from the plains of Assam has to-day become necessary. We do not know for how long the Apa Tanis have been in the habit of obtaining iron and salt from Assam, nor whether in olden times they obtained these goods from other sources. Today Apa Tanis purchase these articles not only for their own use but also for resale to tribesmen of villages further from the plains.

For six months in the year, i.e. from April to September, no Apa Tani normally ventures on a journey to the plains; but during the rest of the year, Apa Tanis travel to the plains. In bad weather, when communications are easier, numerous Apa Tanis have for years been accustomed to visit the plains of North Lakhimpur. Their number varies from year to year, but even before 1945, when Government began employing Apa Tanis on a large scale as porters, several hundred of them used to come to North Lakhimpur and the surrounding villages. Most of them were men and young boys, but a few Apa Tani women occasionally accompanied their husbands. Men of wealth and high status never went to the plains, and when I first arrived in the Apa Tani country I found that none of the clan-headmen had ever left the hills. Only slaves, descendants of slaves or very poor men were in the habit of going to the plains.

The goods which such men took with them for sale were of little importance. They usually carried chillies (pipum of a particularly large variety very much in demand among plain people), which they bartered for salt or for their daily requirements for the time of their stay in the plains. Most of them found employment as agricultural and forest labourers, and worked for periods ranging from ten days to three months. Before the war they earned daily wages of four to five annas but nowadays they can earn Re. 1 and sometimes even as much as Rs. 1-8-0 a day.

Among the goods purchased in the plains, salt ranks first. To the present-day Apa Tani it has become almost indispensable both for their own consumption and as an article of exchange for their trade with other tribes. Salty substances gained by filtering water through the ashes of bracken and certain other plants are used for cooking, but are not considered equal to proper salt. Every year many loads of salt are brought up from the plains and a good many Apa Tanis go there for the specific purpose of purchasing salt.

Other goods bought in the plains are iron hoes, axes, bowls of bell-metal and more rarely brass pots, Assamese silk cloth (endi cloth), occasionally ordinary cotton cloth, woollen Bhutia cloth, locally known as 'tonga', beads, bracelets, brass hair-pins and ear-rings, safety pins, cows, pigs and dogs.

*Since the operations of 1945, which put a check upon the Panier below Potin and the route frequented by Government porters rendered unsafe for travellers, Apa Tani trade to the plains in between the open seasons.
Iron hoes have become a definite necessity for the large iron hoe of the type used in tea-gardens has completely replaced the older wooden type. Hoes bought in the plains are also the main raw material of Apa Tani blacksmiths, who manufacture from the metal axes, adzes and knives. Recently the Apa Tanis have been experiencing difficulty in obtaining hoes. It seems that formerly most of the hoes purchased in the plains were either discarded or stolen from tea gardens, the thieves being tea garden coolies who traded them at cheap rates to hill men thus avoiding detection. But since iron implements have become expensive and scarce, the tea gardens have tightened their control and are using even worn hoes, which previously were disposed of locally at cheap rates. If the shortage of hoes continues for any length of time Apa agrarian and Apa Tani blacksmiths will find it hard to make hoes. Woolen Bhutia blankets are much prized, but they are rarely used in their original form; the Apa Tanis unravel the woolen yarn, dye it in various colours and use it for the manufacture of woollen ceremonial cloths and the embroidery of cotton cloth. For the last few years no Bhutia blankets have been obtainable in North Lakhimpur and the Apa Tanis most highly developed craft has had a serious set back. Actually, if the mixed silk-cotton type are worn by all the wealthier Apa Tanis wrapped round the body and held in position by iron pins or modern safety pins. They are softer and warmer than cotton cloth, and worn under the shift embroidered cloaks they are useful and aesthetically pleasing. The men who work in the plains of Assam for wages often buy 'endi' cloths and sell them to rich men in their own country for rice, domestic animals and in rare instances even plots of land. Similarly white and more rarely black cotton cloth is bought in the plains; some is taken up by Apa Tani customers and some is traded out to Dadas of the interior. Plain, machine-made cotton-cloth is, however, not very popular among Apa Tanis, and rarely worn by men of good social status. It is indeed very inferior to home-spun Apa Tani cloth, and is bought in the plains also large numbers of dogs and small pigs, both of which are eaten and used for sacrifice.

Most of the beads nowadays worn by Apa Tanis are small, blue glass beads bought in the bazars of the plains. But many women possess also necklaces of much larger beads of transparent or dark blue glass from the Basantapur and Ramnagar area. Some of these are bought directly from India, but a large number are local manufacture. To-day they are out of fashion and are rarely worn. All women are eager to exchange them for other beads or even to sell them for a small price. Red beads of definite types are now much in demand. In their hair-knots men wear bell-metal pins which are without exception manufactured in the plains. The brass ear-rings of the women, cut from thin brass sheets as well as the metal ear-rings of men are also purchased in the bazars.

Safety pins are universally worn, and are used to pin together the ends of clothes, both imported and local, when they are wrap round the chest. Previously straight iron pins were used for the same purpose, but safety pins have almost entirely replaced them. The present importance of the safety pin among the Apa Tanis is reminiscent of the role of the spindles in the bronze age. Most men wear apart from those actually in use on the safety pins or earring pins round the neck. Just as safety pins have ousted the straight iron pin, so cheap bracelets of white metal, and occasionally more expensive ones of silver have taken the place of the wrought iron bracelets made by Apa Tani blacksmiths.

This list of articles bought in the plains is not necessarily exhaustive, but includes all those things which have secured a definite place among the Apa Tanis' material possessions, and are purchased regularly and in appreciable numbers.

In the selection of the articles imported from the plains the Apa Tanis evince on the whole extraordinarily good taste. They have rejected everything gaudy and flimsy and prefer either such solid and plain things of superior material as hand-woven silk cloth and substantial, beautifully shaped vessels of bell-metal, or raw materials such as woolen Bhutia blankets which enable them to develop their own crafts.

Since the trade of the Apa Tanis with the plains of Assam is virtually a one-way traffic the Apa Tanis bring in from Assam (and from the plains), the rise in the price of most commodities during the war years has not affected them to any appreciable degree. For the wages with which they buy their trade goods have been raised in proportion, and although an 'endi' cloth may today be four times as expensive as in former years, yet the Apa Tanis need not work any longer to earn the money which will buy it. They realize perfectly well that it is not the value of the goods which has increased but the value of the money which has decreased; and they express this by saying that money has become 'cheap.' The exchange value of the plains goods in their own country has on the whole remained unaltered; for an 'endi' cloth, for instance, the same amount of rice is paid to-day as it was yesterday.

The lack of certain commodities in the bazars of the plains, on the other hand, is affecting the Apa Tanis very considerably. Most seriously felt is the shortage of salt. For the Apa Tanis were used to buy it easily in the plains, and still to have a surplus for trade. The sale of salt in North Lakhimpur is restricted and though special arrangements have been made to supply the hillmen, not sufficient salt has been made available to meet all their legitimate demands. While the Apa Tanis themselves have to restrict their consumption, the tribes in the interior to whom they used to trade their surplus are even worse off.

Along the trade divide between Assam and Tibet, on the upper Khu and upper Kamla there has always been a scarcity where salt was scarce, and with the supply which used to trickle through from Assam dried up, this scarcity has become even more severe. If it continues the tribesmen may try to obtain through their northern neighbours more Tibetan salt, but such a re-orientation of trade cannot be effected rapidly.
The shortage of salt in Assam and not a rise in its price, which is controlled, has led to an increase of its exchange value in the Apa Tani's trade transactions with Dafas and Miris. While in previous years Apa Tani had, for instance, to pay 12 seers of salt for one small pig, they can now obtain a pig of equal size for 6 seers. Likewise there is a change in the comparative values of salt and cloth; but I do not think that this has been exploited for any kind of speculation, nor has the exchange value of salt risen as much among the Apa Tani themselves.

3. Trade in Tibetan goods.—Though the Apa Tani have no direct contact with Tibetans, they use a good many articles of Tibetan origin which reach them by devious routes through their Dafas and Miri neighbours. The employ of such Tibetan articles for ceremonial and ritual purposes points to an old association with Apa Tani culture, and there are indeed indications that in the not too distant past most of the foreign commodities needed by the Apa Tani came from or through Tibet rather than from Assam. Even to-day there is hardly a respectable Apa Tani who does not possess at least one Tibetan sword, at the time of feasts thousands of Tibetan beads are worn, and bronze plates of Tibetan make are one of the standard valuables used for larger payments. Tibetan prayer bells, known in Assamese as dno gante, are not of the same importance as among Dafas, and few Apa Tani possess famous specimens of their value. But the more ordinary types, such as may cost two or three good cloths, serve also the Apa Tani as useful barter objects, and Apa Tani traders purchase them sometimes from tribesmen of the Kamla and Khru valleys.

Large beads of conch-shell as well as sky-blue porcelain beads, though possibly of Chinese origin seem to have reached the Subansiri area via Tibet. While Dafas and Miris wear them on many occasions, Apa Tani do not wear such beads only at special rites, such as the Morom festival and neither men nor women wear them simply as ornaments.

Most women, however, possess strings of crudely cut cylindrical glass beads of dark blue colour and it would seem that these have also come from Tibet. They are quite different from any beads manufactured or known in India to-day, and if they had even been available in large numbers in the plains of Assam, other tribes, such as Nagas, would have doubt also obtained some. To-day, they are no longer popular, and have indeed very little market value. Their place has been taken by smaller and smoother glass beads of a similar dark blue colour which have for some years been available in the bazaars of North Lakhimpur. This change-over is one of the instances of Apa Tani preferring machine-made goods to Tibetan articles.

While the Tibetan origin of such objects as swords or prayer bells is unmistakable, we cannot say for certain whether the wool which the Apa Tani require for many of their embroidered ceremonial cloths came of old from the same source. Apa Tani greatly value strips of coarse woollen cloth known as 'tonga', and all the wool used for multi-coloured embroidery is obtained by unravelling such cloth. Very similar strips of woollen cloth reach the tribesmen on the upper Kamla from villages standing in trade relations with Tibet, and it is more than probable that in olden times some such cloth filtered down as far as the Apa Tani valley. But for many years before the war Bhutanese woollen cloth of identical type was available in the bazaars of Assam where Apa Tani could obtain it much easier than from their tribal partners. Most, if not all of the wool now in use among the Apa Tani has certainly come from North Lakhimpur, and when during the war years this supply was cut off the Apa Tani experienced a very definite shortage of wool; that Tibetan wool was no longer obtainable, is easily explained if the middle-men through whose hands it might have reached the Apa Tani, had for years ceased to trade wool beyond the Assam-Tibet trade-divide.

But swords and valuable of Tibetan manufacture continue to reach the Apa Tani, and the high esteem in which they are held guarantees that even should trade with Assam increase there will for many years be a market for such products of Tibet. Tradition surrounds them with an aura of high value and great antiquity; the bronze prayer-bell is to the Apa Tani (as indeed even more to the Dafas) a work of divine artisans, the Tibetan sword an indispensable requisite at every mithan-sacrifice, Tibetan beads the prescribed ornaments for the priests. No Apa Tani who has ever been to Tibet will ever forget the vague idea of Tibet. A few adventurous men have visited villages near the trade-divide between Assam and Tibet, but within living memory no Apa Tani seems ever to have penetrated into areas visited by Tibetans. I have heard of a Dafa from the Upper Khru who stayed for some time in Duta and told of his journeys to a country, which to judge from his descriptions must have been a part of Tibet. But he was probably an exception and we are safe in assuming that very few of the tribesmen who trade directly with Tibetans have any knowledge of the Apa Tani, or ever purchase Tibetan goods with the express purpose of serving the Apa Tani market. Most of the swords, beads or bell-metal articles of Tibetan origin owned by Apa Tani, reached them through the channels of casual village to village barter, and only in rare cases did adventurous Apa Tani traders hasten this slow trickle by purchasing trips to the Khru and upper Kamla valley.

Until some years ago Apa Tani went occasionally to the Khru valley, towards the region of Lebha via Licha and the Palin valley. For salt, silk and cotton cloth and dno they purchased dried bamboo shoots and locally collected rubber with which to waterproof their baskets as well as Tibetan swords, beads, bronze-bells and plates, obtained by the Khru tribes from yet other tribesmen dwelling closer to the snowrange. But the recent feud between the Apa Tani and the powerful Licha clan which commands the entry into the Palin valley has blocked this trade route, and for the last few years no Apa Tani have dared to visit the upper Khru Region.

But though occasionally the hostility of neighbours may deter even the intrepid Apa Tani from visiting his trade-partners in distant valleys, there is yet no other tribe in the Subansiri area which has developed barter among Tani themselves. The exchange of goods is a necessity for the elaborate and complex Apa Tani economy, and the Apa Tani exhibit as much ingenuity and persistence in pursuing every possible opportunity for a profitable trade deal as he has employed in developing the resources of his own country.
Trade and Barter among the Tribesmen of the Panior Region

The present note deals mainly with the tribesmen inhabiting the Panior valley, the area immediately south and south-west of the Apa Tani country as well as the Kiyi valley, all of which I visited this season. Such information as it contains on conditions in the Par valley to the west of the Apa Tani country, where the unexplored country near the upper Khru to the north, was obtained from tribesmen familiar with these areas.

The division of the Daflas into several groups of phratries, each embracing numerous exogamous clans, has been outlined in my "Notes on Tribal Groups in the Subansiri Region" and there I have shown that the old localisation of phratries and clans has been obscured by recent migrations. For the purpose of these notes on Trade it will therefore be convenient to use instead of phratries and clan-name the exogamous or endogamous exogamous marriage groups and the kinship system used of, e.g., of the lower Panior Region (including the villages of Selsemchi, Potin and Sekhe), the Upper Panior Region (including Dorde, Likhipulia and Mengo) and the Mai-Talo Region (including Pei, Pochu, Mai, Jorum and Talo, villages standing in particularly close connections with the Apa Tanis).

The two main pillars of the economic structure are subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry. Compared to these activities all other means of income are of minor importance, and even the Daflas living nearest to the plains depend for their subsistence rather on trade and wage labour. Except for those of the Mai-Talo Region who are strongly influenced by Aoa Tanis and have learnt to build irrigated terraces for rice cultivation, all Daflas obtain the bulk of their food-supply by shifting cultivation. In the Par and lower Panior valleys, there is no wet cultivation, but in the upper Panior and Kiyi valley as well as in the upper Khru and Panyi valley modest quantities of rice grown on irrigated terraces supplement the produce of the jhum-fields.

Most Daflas villages are in normal years self-sufficient for their food-supply. An exception are Jorum and Talo who buy regularly rice from Aoa Tanis, and certain foothill villages, such as Selsemchi, who in years of indifficult harvests purchase small quantities of rice in the bazaars of Upper Assam. Daflas call rice in coarse good med of meat; they are good trappers and hunters, and keep large numbers of mithan, cows, pigs, goats and fowls. Salt, procured partly from Assam and partly from Tibet, is the only item of diet for which all Daflas rely on outside supplies.

Cloth, iron and various implements on the other hand are imported in considerable quantities and some groups of Daflas can no longer do without the wares of Assamese bazaars.

The trading activities of the Eastern Daflas can thus be divided into three categories: Trade with the Plains of Assam, Trade with Tribal neighbours, and Trade with Tibet or populations under Tibetan influence.

Least is as yet known of the third category, but there are indications that for certain groups of Daflas on the Panior and upper Khru, trade in tribal articles is as vital as economic relations with Assam are for the Daflas of the foothills.

1. Trade with the Plains of Assam.—During the cold weather many Daflas of the Par valley and the lower Panior valley, and smaller numbers of Daflas from the Mai-Talo area and the Kiyi valley, visit the plains to earn money by contract and daily labour and to make profits by acting as contractors or as middle-men in trade. In the plains adjoining the Eastern Dafla Hills there are the following villages of Plains Daflas: Rangajan (7 houses), Duluhat (6 houses), Borbali (4 houses), Dibia (3 houses), Nij Luluk (4 houses), and Sebbari (11 houses), (11 houses).

(a) Wage Labour.—At the time the tea gardens near the foothills were newly laid out, Daflas from nearby villages were employed for felling trees and clearing jungle, and it seems that during the months when there was little to do on their jhum-fields, hundreds of Daflas flocked to this congenial work. The men they earned was of little use in the hills, but it enabled them to buy in the bazaars cloth, glass beads, brass vessels, matches, pan and betel, the use of which is unknown in the hills. While labour for tea gardens may have wetted the Daflas' appetite for many Indian goods, to-day, when the area under tea is no longer being expanded, this field of employment is nearly closed. But other and even more profitable work is open to the hillmen. Sugar plantations owned by Assamese as well as Nepali settlers, are on the increase, and the usual method of the sugar-planters is to cultivate one plot for three or four years and then to take up new land on temporary tenure. The Daflas, expert in cutting trees and tough canes, are offered very good wages for clearing the jungle, a work unontongial to both Assamese and Nepali. They usually work on contract and the present rate for felling the jungle on one para of land (roughly 1/4 acres) is Rs. 22 to Rs. 25. A man working very hard can cut a para of jungle in ten days, and it is no unusual thing for a Dafla to earn as much as Rs. 100 by working for a month and a half in the plains.

Daily labour is far less lucrative, and consequently not as popular as contract labour. Unlike Apa Tanis, who are the most sought-after of all the face labourers, Daflas do not offer themselves in cane-cutting, but it is a comparatively easy way of earning money for Plains Daflas and people from such foothill settlements as Selsemchi or Joyhing. It is estimated that the total annual cash earnings of the Extrem Daflas, but they cannot be incomconsiderable. For most of the salt consumed by the tribe as far as the trade-divide with Tibet, cloth to cloth the etire population of the lower Panior and the Par valley. Numerous iron implements and a great many beads and bracelets and various small articles such as matches, pan and betel are purchased with the money earned by the men who work in the plains of Assam.

The Apa Tanis, on the other hand, do not cultivate their fields, do not seek work in the plains are somewhat different, just as the type of work they do is different. The Apa Tanis with their highly developed weaving industry, their knowledge of manufacturing salt from ashes, and their fastidious insistence on the high quality of all
articles of daily use, are not in the habit of using many of the cheaper bazaar products, but poor men with little or no land of their own need an outside source of income if they want to lessen their dependence on the wealthy men of their village. The goods they buy with their earnings—Assamese silk cloth, bell-metal cups, iron hoes and salt—they barter in their village for rice or trade to their neighbours further in their village. The Hill tribe

Among the Dafas, on the other hand, small land is common property and even the poorest man can find some land to which he can cultivate and enjoys in consequence a measure of economic independence, even should he have sought the protection and share the house of a more prominent man. The main incentive for earning cash is here the need for a number of staple products, such as the now indispensable bazaar cloth, and it is therefore not only the poor man, but also many a young man of well-situated family who will occasionally work in the plains. The high bride-prices customary among Daflas are another motive to engage in wage labour, but more detailed investigations would be necessary to ascertain the percentage of inpecunious young men who save up their earnings so as to be able to buy valuables acceptable as bride prices.

(b) Sale of products in the Plains.—The range of cash gaining tribal products for which there is a market in Assam is small. The Dafas of the lower Panior Valley and the Par Region sell in the bazaars and to individual hillmen, such goods as bamboo shoots, palm leaves and incense, as well as chillies, taro, maize, oil seed, brinjals, beans and tomatoes grown in their gardens. But it is only in a few villages standing in constant contact with the plains that Dafas cultivate vegetables with the specific purpose of sale. On their rare expeditions to the plains the Dafas of the Interior take only chillies, for which there is apparently always a demand, and dried bamboo shoots, which are mainly bought by tea garden labourers.

Live-stock is but a minor item in the trade with the plains. Occasionally a mithan is bought by Plains Daflas and either used for sacrifice or resold to Muslim butchers. Sale of other domestic animals to plainsmen is a rare occurrence, though a Dafa badly in need of cloth or salt may sell a goat or a chicken in one of the nearby bazaars.

Some twenty years ago the Dafas made handsome profits by collecting and selling wild rubber, which at times was valued at Rs. 5 per peal. But in demand for wild rubber rapidly decreased and the price dropped so low that rubber tapping was no longer profitable. Of late the industry has been revived, however, by Government initiative and the price of rubber has been fixed at Rs. 1-8-0 per peal. Yet, only small quantities are being delivered under this scheme. In former years Assam offered also a market for vegetable dyes, particularly madder, but chemical dyes have almost completely displaced these forest products.

We thus see that whereas the Dafas, by acquiring a taste for more and more bazaar goods has become increasingly dependent on the plains, the plainsman has less and less use for the products of the hills. The inevitable result is that the emphasis is shifting from trade to wage-labour, and that the hillman, no longer a producer of goods valued by the Assamese villager, has to sell his own labour if he wants to obtain the products of the plains. The one exception is perhaps the illicit trade in hemp (ganja). A fair amount of ganja is grown in the hills and sold by Hill Dafas either direct to Assamese and Nepalis dealing in prohibited drugs, or, probably more often, to Plains Dafas, who have their standing connection with dealers supplying ganja to tea-garden labourers and other plainsmen.

What goods do the Dafas purchases with the cash earned by labour or received in payment of goods? On the whole the Dafa purchaser is strictly practical and buys in the bazaars and from individual plainsmen—only articles for which he has an immediate use. His pride of possession, leading to the accumulation of unempt goods, is still confined to the traditional valuables of Tribetan origin, and Indian products are with very few exceptions bought for the sake of their usefulness and not for the prestige their possession lends to the owner.

Cloth, sa't and iron rank foremost among imports from the plains. Whereas all Dafas of the Interior, i.e., of the Mai-Talo group, the Kiyi valley, the upper Panior valley and the Khur Region, weave their own cloth, either of cotton or of bark fibre (pud), the Dafas of the lower Panior valley and the Par Region rely to-day entirely on bazaar cloth. Old men and women still remember a time when cotton was grown and flax fibre woven into cloth, and there is indeed no reason to believe that these goods have completely disappeared. Most of whom immigrated only a few generations ago from areas to the north and north-west into their present habitat, were always ignorant of the crafts widely practised in their homelands. But the ease with which foreign cloth can be procured, rather than any preference for the imported cloth, has killed tribal weaving somewhat in this Kiyi group of villages. Even the Sutin or Sakti of Dafas of villages such as Bhaluk and Sagorit it is the impression not of independent and yet unadministered tribesmen, but of a population largely detribalized by long contacts with the plains. This impression is incidentally quite erroneous and is created only by the dirty and flimsy machine-made cotton cloth which they wear in place of the strong traditional Dafa cloths. Unlike Apatani women who prefer white cloth, Dafas like cloth of dark blue, orange or wine-red colour, but nowadays such cloth is seldom available and most men and women wear white cotton cloth of a cheap quality. Handspun and handwoven Assamese silk cloth is much prized and worn by prominent men but it is too expensive for common use.

Nearly all dos, knives, spearheads and arrowheads are manufactured by Dafa blacksmiths. The iron is obtained from the plains, but the quantity of iron imported each year is not very great, broken dos and knives being brought again and again for repairing new implements; a few hoes of the tea garden type are to be found in some Dafa villages, but the fieldwork is generally done with moonshaped bamboo hoes which are sometimes fitted with an iron blade. The Dafas say themselves that originally they were unfamiliar with the working of iron, but learnt the craft from Sulu blacksmiths, members of a small and elusive tribe, scattered now all over the hills from the upper waters of the Bar as far as the mountains between the upper Kamaia and the Subansiri.

Though Daflas buy today a good many beads in the bazaars these modern products of cheap glass are not very highly valued, and even cornelian beads cut to Assamese pattern do not fetch the same price as cornelian beads of Tribetan type. All Dafas women wear bracelets of brass or white metal and some have light metal chains and ear-ornaments bought in the bazaar. But the only Assamese goods considered "valuables" that can be used for ceremonial payments, are hand-woven silk cloths and old Assamese bronze plates.

Indian currency is today the common medium of exchange in nearly all transactions between Daflas and plains people, and in the villages nearest to the plains money is gradually gaining ground even in dealings between tribesmen. But in the Mai-Talo area and the Kiyi Valley money is not yet used as urrency and all endo-tribal trade is here on a barter basis.

* Recent developments caused by the opening of a Government shop at Dara are here not taken into account.
2. Trade with Tribal Neighbours.—The economic resources of most Dafas are so similar that there is little scope for any large scale interchange of their own products. The Dafa seems to lack moreover the trading spirit of his Apa Tani neighbour, and even men of villages close to the plains seldom purchase Assamese goods with the sole intention of selling them at a profit. When they do act as middlemen it is rather in casual barter transactions with friends, than in an organized system of trade. An exception is the trade in salt of which they do buy more than they can themselves consume, knowing that any surplus will be taken up by visitors from villages in the interior.

There is, of course, a continuous trickle of the products of local craftsmen from every centre of manufacture to the surrounding area. Dafas made by blacksmiths in the upper Par valley, for instance, find their way into the Panior and Kiyi valley, and cloth woven in the villages on the Panyi River can be seen in Mango or Licha. Miethan, pigs and grain are bought and sold as the need arises and ceremonial friends exchange a wide range of articles, both locally produced and imported, when they visit each other’s villages. Limited as such barter within the tribe may be, it does call for a common system of values by which the price of an article can be roughly determined. This system is nowhere absolutely rigid, and varies in some features from one area to the other, but it does provide a certain standard for the exchange of the most common commodities. In Potin, a village in the Lower Panior valley, the values are follows:

1 niealop = 1 very small chicken (about 3 weeks old),
or 2 eggs (originally 4 eggs made up 1 niealop, but their value has changed),
or 1½ seers of salt,
or 1 small knife, such as worn by boys.

The amount of grain valued at 1 niealop varies according to the season. 1 dir niealop or about 3 seers of unhusked rice as the measure used in the rains, and 1 dera niealop or about 4½ seers of rice is the niealop measure used in the cold weather after harvest

1 niealop lodni = 1 middle sized chicken,
or 4 eggs,
or 1 small cotton bazaar cloth such as worn by children,
or 3 seers of salt,
or 1 knife of Dafa make,
or 2 niealop of rice according to season.

1 yolo = 6 niealop,
or 2 hens,
or 1 pig between 4—5 months’ old,
or 1 goat about 4 months old,
or 2 cotton bazaar cloths (each about Rs. 2.4—0),
or 1 Apa Tani cloth with broad multi-coloured border,
or 1 Dafa das,
or 2 carrying baskets of unhusked rice (each about 18—20 seers).

1 opu puji = 1 middle sized pig,
or 4 cotton bazaar cloths,
or 1 long Dafa das,
or 1 Tibetan das,
or 16 seers salt,
or 5 carrying baskets of unhusked rice.

1 opu pukan = 1 sow,
or 1 Assamese silk cloth,
or 24 seers of salt,
or 8 carrying baskets of unhusked rice.

It is obvious from this list that the values of this system are not completely consistent, and it is indeed very doubtful whether the correlation of the individual values is perfectly clear in the mind of the Dafa.

Licha at the upper end of the Kiyi valley and not far from the trade-divide between Assam and Tibet has slightly different values. A niealop is also worth a small chicken or two eggs, but there only 1½ seers of salt, compared to 1¾ seers in Potin; the next highest measure is a bili worth one hen, or 1¾ seers salt, or 1 Apa Tani das, or 1 cotton bazaar cloth; a yolo equals 3 bili, or 1 pig or goat about 4 months’ old, or 1 Dafa cloth or 1 simple Apa Tani cloth or 1 small Tibetan das or 1 big carrying basket of unhusked rice. An opu equals in Licha 3 yolo, or 1 sow or 1 sheep or 2 Apa Tani cloths with broad multi-coloured border or 1 big Tibetan das; Assamese silk cloth or 10 seers of salt, or 3 big or 5 small carrying baskets of unhusked rice.

Thus it appears that in Licha salt and Apa Tani cloth are more expensive than in Potin, but that Tibetan das are rather cheaper and other commodities of about the same relative value. In the higher price of salt in Licha lies the margin of profit for the middle-man and the lesser price of Apa Tani cloth in Potin is due to the availability of bazaar cloth which keeps down all cloth prices. Thus these Dafas of the upper Panior generally bring with them the arrow provision which is to be found in the high mountains between Kameng and Panior and exchange it in Potin and Selsemchi for salt, cloth and bazaar beads.
The exchange of goods is in most cases a corollary to the establishment or strengthening of social contacts. Thus a marriage or a friendship pact sealed by the sale of a Tibetan prayer bell is usually accompanied by the exchange of numerous gifts extending often over a period of years, and in this way Assamese wares flow from the foothills and the Par valley to the Kiyi and upper Panior area, and Tibetan ornaments filter in the reverse direction from the Khru Region southwards.

It is these valuables of Tibetan origin, such as prayer-bells (majo), bell-metal plates, and beads of semi-precious stones, which are in demand by the young ladies of both Tribes. In addition to mithan—the Dafa measures wealth and they play, in tribal economy to some extent the role of a currency. They are bought and sold mainly for live-stock but in the area under review there is no organized trade in such articles. The purchase of a valuable majo is a long drawn out affair, wrapped up in ceremonial, and establishes a relationship of mutual obligation between the vendor and the purchaser. In times of stress beads may be sold for grain or for an animal required for specific purposes, but normally they are reserved for ceremonial payments and for the dowries of daughters married with full rites. The fact that these valuables of Tibetan origin have no place in the system of values regulating the barter of common commodities seems to confirm that they are meant for transactions of a higher order.

A situation very different from the economic relations between Dafa villages has developed in the country immediately bordering on the Apa Tani valley, and particularly in the Dafa villages of Mai, Jorum, and Talo. Here the recurrent exchange of goods between two complementary economies has not only enriched Dafa culture, but has for all practical purposes welded these Dafa and the Apa Tani villages into one economic unit.

The economics of the two tribes are complementary in so far as the Apa Tanis produce a surplus of grain but very little meat, and the Dafas of these villages rear large numbers of mithan, oxen, pigs and goats, but must, except after uncommonly good harvest, supplement their supply of rice by imports. It is said that the village of Talo alone sells on an average twenty mithan annually to Apa Tanis. They are invariably paid in rice and the price for a mithan varies according to size and condition. The vendor who has sold his animal at the Apa Tani fair, is paid with the small pig one and for a middle-sized sow two carrying baskets of rice.

The sale of animals for rice is only one aspect of the economic relations between the two tribes. The Dafas also barter pigs for Apa Tani cloth and Apa Tani does and knives, the Apa Tanis give rice in exchange for polo; gourd vessels and occasionally cotton, and many Dafas undertake to herd mithan belonging to Apa Tanis.

Particularly close is the interdependence of Dafas and Apa Tanis in the field of cloth manufacture. The Apa Tanis are expert weavers but, having practically all their cultivable land under food-crops, grow no cotton. The Dafas of the neighbouring villages, on the other hand, cultivate a good deal of cotton on their jhum, but do not weave enough cloth even to cover their own requirements. Much of their cotton is sold to Apa Tanis to spin and weave it into cloth, some of which is subsequently sold back to Dafa. By an arrangement whereby the women of the three tribes, Licha and Licha, and sometimes even Likh also buy rice from Apa Tanis, but they are probably less dependent on such purchases than Talo and Jorum, large villages whose jhum land is largely exhausted while the rice they have learnt to grow on irrigated fields does not cover their requirements.

Pigs and dogs, valued both as sacrificial animals and for the sake of their flesh, are also regularly bought by Apa Tani women for a small pig one and for a middle-sized sow two carrying baskets of rice. The exchange of goods is in most cases a corollary to the establishment or strengthening of social contacts.

Both Dafas and Apa Tanis greatly benefit from this regular interchange of their goods, and in any scheme for the economic development of either tribe care will have to be taken not to dislodge, but rather develop and extend this traditional trade. The Apa Tanis specialized on agriculture and certain crafts, and the Dafas specialized on the breeding of live-stock and the production of the raw material for the Apa Tanis' weaving industry achieve by this exchange a valuable adjustment to their somewhat one-sided economies. It is, however, only the Dafas of the Mai-Talo area and the Kiyi valley who entertain such close relations with Apa Tanis. Those of the Par valley trade only very occasionally with Apa Tanis and there is practically no direct trading between Apa Tanis and the Dafas of the Par Region.

Very little is as yet known about the relations between Dafas and Sulus, but it seems that in most contact areas the two tribes live in close symbiosis. The Sulus are a small tribe of hunters and trappers, famous for their bow and arrows, but little aptitude for agricultural work. Sulus of the high hills near the upper waters of Par and Panior regularly visit Dafa villages and exchange game, arrow poison, does and metal ornaments and pipes for grain and cloth.

In my "Notes on Trade and Barter in the Kamla Region" I have pointed out that Dafas and Miris merge imperceptibly into each other, and that the two names are largely arbitrary. In the contact zone on the Khru there is as much intermarriage and casual barter between Dafas and Miris as there is between Dafa villages, but as Dafa and Miri economies are identical—and not as Dafa and Apa Tani economies are complementary—these trade relations amount to no more than the—casual exchange of cloth, does and various Tibetan ornaments.

4. Trade with Tibet or Population under Tibetan influence.—All material objects, as distinguished from slaves and cattle, that constitute a Dafa's wealth are of Tibetan origin, and in this respect there is little difference between a Dafa living in the Par valley and regularly visiting the plains of Assam and a Dafa of the Kiyi or Polin valley.

His social status is judged by the number of Tibetan prayer-bells (majo) and bronze-plates he possesses. The number and value of Tibetan beads he can give as dowry to his daughter, and the number of mithan he can, if necessary, raise at short notice by the sale of these and other valuables of Tibetan make, Assamese goods, even bronze-plates and bell-metal cups not unlike some Tibetan articles, have never gained a similar place of honour in Dafa culture and an old connection between Dafas and Tibet or putouta of Tibetan culture is therefore beyond doubt.
But the Daflas of the Par, Panior and Kiyi valleys know little of the routes to Tibet or the exact nature of the trade by which Tibetan articles reach the tribesmen to the north and north-west. The only village as yet visited where I saw not only Tibetan beads and valuables, which have possibly been for centuries in the possession of Daflas, but also Tibetan textiles of obviously fairly recent make, is Mengo on the upper waters of the Panior. There red and black sashes of Tibetan wool and a few pieces of grey woollen cloth are worn and all these as well as a number of Tibetan ear-ring studded with semi-precious stones, have been brought from villages on the Panyi River, a right-hand tributary of the Khrû. It was in Mengo too that I met people from the Panyi valley, who spoke of a tribe of as they said, Tibetanized Daflas, known as Bosus, who act as middlemen in the trade between Tibetans and the Daflas of the Khrû and Panyi valley. These Bosus may have an economic position similar to that of the inhabitants of Agla Marra in the upper Subansiri valley, from whence the Miris obtain most of their Tibetan goods. The route from the villages on the Panyi to Tibet or perhaps only an area inhabited by Tibetans, seem to coincide with the route along the left bank of the Khrû, which was described to me by Miris of the lower Khrû valley. For the names of several villages tally in both accounts; it seems, for instance, fairly certain that the Daflas on the Panyi follow the river until its confluence with the Khrû near villages inhabited by the clans of Richo and Tamchi and that from there the route runs for some distance along the Khrû. One of the villages (Lokam) mentioned by a woman of Mengo, lies according to the Miris in the upper Kamla valley; but as villages are generally referred to by the names of the predominant clan and Khrû and Kamla lie so close together it is possible that there are settlements of Lokam clan both in the Khrû and the Kamla valley.

What emerges, however, from a comparison of the information gained in Mengo and among the Miris is that a Tibetan influence different from that apparent in the upper Kamlâ and Subansiri regions, stretches the Daflas by a route which follows, at least for some distance, the course of the Khrû. The people in Mengo spoke of “Tibetans living on this side of the main snow ranges” and it would seem that in their barter transactions with the local tribesmen these “Tibetans” rely mainly on small and comparatively valuable articles, such as bells, beads, ear-ornaments, dœ and salt and narrow woollen sashes, but do not dispose of sufficient woollen cloth to displace the Daflas' cloths of bark fibre.* They are said to purchase from the local tribesmen rice, animal skins, cane and dyes. Their need of rice, which is not likely to be transported across the Himalayan main range, would seem to support the assertion of the Mengo people that there are Tibetan settlements at a great distance from areas inhabited by Daflas; but rice may equally be required by Tibetan traders on monthlong visits to the area close to the upper waters of the Khrû. Tibetan currency is neither in use or even known in the areas so far explored.

In how far the Daflas of the upper Khrû region are dependent on Tibetan imports is not yet known, but it would seem that in as far as salt is concerned the divide between Assamese and Tibetan trade runs along the hills separating the Panior from the Pugo and Panyi valleys, thence northwards, west of the Pulin valley up to the Khrû at its confluence with the Pugo, and from there in a north-eastern direction along the high range between Khrû and Kamla (formed by Mount Ladu and Mount Rei) until it meets the Kamla at Godak and Rute-Hate (Guchi) (Map 83 E. D 1). The Daflas of the Pulin receive most of their salt from Assam, the men of Licha, some of whom visit the plains, acting as middlemen. Men of Gugi and of Tarrain in the hills between Khrû and Kamla assert that their salt comes from Tibet and the cloth worn by their co-villagers is pure cloth, cotton being unknown and Tibetan cloth scarce.

Conclusions—Today none of the Eastern Daflas are economically entirely self-sufficient, but the extent to which they rely on the exchange of goods with other populations varies greatly from group to group. For the Daflas of the Par valley and the lower Panior valley trade with Assam and the earning of wages in the plains has become a necessity; it is from the bazaars of Assam that they get practically all their cloth, the iron needed by their blacksmiths, and salt both for their own consumption and for barter with Dafla neighbours. The Daflas of the Mai-Talo area and the Kiyi valley are less dependent on direct trade with Assam, yet some of them visit the plains to buy salt and iron while others obtain these essentials from friends in the Panior and Par valley or from Apa Tani. Most of their trade-relations are indeed with their Apa Tani neighbours from whom they purchase not only rice, but a large part of their textiles and many dœ and khivas. The Daflas of the upper Panior valley (e. g. Likhipuria, Mengo) and of the Khrû-Panyi Region are as yet inadequately known, but it would seem that they are largely self-sufficient for their supply of grain and textiles. Salt and iron are thus the only commodities which they have to import and living to both sides of the trade-divide, they obtain small quantities from both Assam and Tibet.

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*Whether in this area there are really Tibetan Settlement south-east of the Great Himalayan Range is doubtful: none of my informants had been to such a settlement, though some claimed to have met Tibetan traders.
Trade and barter among the tribesmen of the Kamla Region

Ever since the Miri Mission in 1911/12 the tribesmen inhabiting the valleys of the Kamla and its tributaries have in official records been described as 'Hill Miris'. In my Notes on Tribal Groups of the Subansiri Region I have pointed out that this term is unsatisfactory because no clear dividing line can be drawn between the 'Dahas' and 'Miris', and the name 'Miri' is known only to a small minority of Assamese speaking hillmen. But pending a general revision of the names for the tribal groups of the Balipara Frontier I think it might be confusing to adopt a new terminology, and in this note the term 'Hill Miri' has been retained and is used for the inhabitants of the villages in the Kamla valley, in the valley of the Persen River (Map No. 83/J1; A 2), and the valleys of all other tributaries of the Kamla as far north as the South Kamla Sub-division and the upper Khru valley.

The Miris are today more dependent on individual men from villages on the north bank of the Kamla and some from the plains than any other tribal group in the plains. This dependency has increased during the last few years. The Miris from the hills have not only come to depend on the material produced by the plains for their own needs, but the plainsmen have been excluded from making any transactions with the hillmen, and the Miris in consequence have been compelled to buy the necessities of life from the Assamese, the Indian salt and the rubber made in Assam.

As Assamese peasants they went there to hunt and to fish for part of the year in a kind of symbiosis with the Miris, who always had access to the lands in the plains as long as they needed them for their own use. The Miris paid the rent usually in kind, and thus acquired a large quantity of Assamese goods for their own consumption. At one time, this rent was paid by the earnings of the South Kamla Miris in the plains, and the Miris sold large quantities of the catch of the river. The Miris of the Kamla, the Assamese, and the hillmen lived in constant contact, but the plainsmen were not entirely free from dependence on the hillmen, and they were not able to pay the rent in kind. They were compelled by daily labour, mainly in the fields, to look after the cattle of the Miris.

The Miris made a large contribution to the economy of the plains, by providing a large quantity of Assamese goods, and the Miris also large quantities of rubber, and also a considerable amount of manure which they used as fertilizer. This tilled the plains and made them more productive. They were not, however, able to pay the rent in kind, and they were not able to provide the hillmen with manure for their own use.

Trade with the plainsmen was more evenly balanced: and the Miris sold large quantities of tea, coffee, and fruit by paying what might be called a tribute or rent to the plainsmen. This rent was paid by individual plains villages to individual Miri clans on whose land they were situated. The payment of this rent was later taken over by Government in the shape of taxa. All Miris regard taxa as compensation for the rights on hunting grounds which they owned collectively just as in the hills they own their clan lands.

Even nowadays many South Kamla Miris visit the plains every cold weather and stay for weeks and even months in the villages with which they have traditional relations. There they still receive some hospitality from the Assamese peasants, who are willing to pay them rent, exchange a few products and find employment as agricultural labourers. Wherever possible they fish, drying and preserving the bulk of the catch for consumption in the hills, and it is one of their main grievances that for the last twelve years or so, they have been excluded from many streams and rivers whose fishing rights have been acquired by Mauzasars and where the fishing is now being done by immigrant Doms.

It is probable that the close contact between Hill Miris and Assamese villagers during several months of the year has led to an exchange of services on a not inconsiderable scale, and the South Kamla Miris are today more dependent on their connections with the plains than any other tribal group in the Subansiri Sub-agency. They not only obtain a large quantity of Assamese goods for their own consumption—besides living in the plains and on plains-products for up to one-third of the year—but they act also as middlemen for almost the entire trade between the North Kamla Miris and the plains of Assam.

This trade is largely one-sided. The goods exported from the hills to the plains are insignificant compared to the volume and value of Indian products imported by the hillmen, and their adverse trade balance is made up mainly by the earnings of the South Kamla Miris in the plains and the money received in the form of taxes from Government—a total annual sum of Rs. 615. But in the old days, still well remembered, trade with the plains was more evenly balanced, and the Miris sold large quantities of rubber and also a considerable amount of manure which was used as a dye. Then not only South Kamla Miris, but also individual men from villages north of the Kamla, as far distant as Baku and Bidak (near the confluence of Kamla and Khru) used to go to trade in the plains.

Today, however, only chillies, bamboo shoots and few other jungle products are taken for sale. The plainsmen on the other hand are not interested in the tropical crops of the Assamar, and they will not accept these goods on the market. Occasionally a Miri may sell a Tibetan sword or some other valuable in the plains, but such transactions are of little importance.

Money earned by daily labour, mainly in felling jungle, harvesting rice, weaving gardens, building fences and various other odd jobs, is the Miris' principal asset in their economic relations with the populations of the plains. The average daily wage paid today is Re. 1.

The Miris make a considerable contribution to the economy of the plains, and they are not a negligible factor in the farmers' income. They are not able to pay the rent in kind, and before the shortage of salt in Assam curtailed their supply, their profits were limited only by their carrying capacity, twenty or thirty being probably the maximum a man can carry in addition to his provisions on a trek of several days through the uninhabited mountain country which separates the plains from the nearest Miri village.
Hardly less essential than salt to the South Kamla Miris is the cloth which they are accustomed to buy in the plains. In none of the villages of the lower Kamla valley from Tano (Chemir) on the south bank and Dobom (Yukar) on the north bank eastwards do the women weave, and all cloth has consequently to be imported. Apa Tanis and the villages on the Khr and upper Kamla are a source of supply for a limited amount of cloth, but the bulk comes from Assam and here again the South Kamla Miris purchase not only enough for their own requirements, but enough to trade to their neighbours north of the river. Rich men wear Assamese hand-woven silk cloth, which is now worth Rs. 25 to Rs. 50 and is frequently used for ceremonial payments, but most of the cloth worn by Miris is ordinary white cotton cloth, now worth Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 a piece. This cloth is far less durable than the heavy cotton fabric woven by Apa Tanis, Daffas and Miris, and in the Miri country the value of a cotton bazaar cloth is only half that of an Apa Tani of Daffa cloth.

A commodity, equal in importance to cloth, is iron. Doo, knives and hoes are purchased in the plains and sometimes traded to the tribesmen higher up the Kamla valley. But though the Miris also buy a good number of dzo and knives from Apa Tanis, they are not well supplied with iron implements. Proper hoes are very rare north of the Kamla and even in villages such as Dobom, which maintains close relations with South Kamla Miris, the field-work is mainly done with spade-like bone implements made of the shoulder-blade of a mithan.

Besides the essential commodities of salt, cloth and iron, the South Kamla Miria buy in the plains brass and bell-metal cups, brass pins, tin mugs, silver ear-ornaments and bangles, and a great many glass beads, mainly red and blue. Some of these articles are bartered to the Miris north of the Kamla and Indian beads can be seen as far north as Rute-Hate (Guchi No. 83 E.D. 1). The trade between plainsmen and South Kamla Miris is conducted almost exclusively through the medium of money and in the villages south of the Kamla, as far west as the Pein River, Indian coins are so well known, that they may occasionally even be used in transactions between tribesmen, particularly for *pasa*-holders.

In this area money is readily accepted as a wage for porters. In the small group of villages west of the Pein River, Dobom (Yukar), Teplo (Chemir), Pemir, Rahke (Nyokun-Si) Taplo (Yukar), Bua and Tanco, all south of the Kamla as far as Dobom (Yukar) money is known, but very rarely used, and porters much prefer payment in kind. The people of these villages very seldom go to the plains and those that do are generally the slaves of rich men who are sent to work with the express purpose of obtaining cloth, salt and iron for their masters. Here the tribesmen's only chance of using money is to pass it on to friends in villages south of the Kamla. North and west of Rakhe and Dobom money is not in use and is not acceptable to porters.

The rise of prices in the plains has mainly hit the *pasa*-holders, who can now purchase only a fraction of what they were used to obtain for their *pasa* money. The Miris earning wages as labourers are less touched by the rise in the prices of manufactured goods. For wages have risen in proportion and with a month's earnings a man can buy roughly the same amount of salt and cloth as in former years. This is particularly so since the price of the two important commodities cloth and salt is controlled by Government. The rise in the price of certain other articles, however, is not reflected by a change of their value in the hills, and this is very inconvenient for officers relying on such exchange goods as beads. Red beads, for instance, now perhaps worth Rs. 3, which in peace time could be bought for a few annas, are still considered a good bargain. The cloth of a hardly accepted as a day's wage. Strips of imported and indigenous goods: the exchange rate of this cloth is far less durable than the heavy cotton comming only with great difficulty and at a price of Rs. 5 each are also considered worth only one fowl, and indeed on the upper Kamla I saw similar cloth of Tibetan origin for which no higher price had been paid. The shortage of salt, cloth and iron implements in the plains is also felt far into the hills, but it has so far not resulted in any considerable adjustment in the comparative values of imported and indogenous goods: the exchange rate between salt and pigs, for instance, has remained stable.

Summarizing we may say that trade with the plains of Assam has become an absolute necessity to the South Kamla Miria, and that the Miris as far north as Rei and Rute-Hate (Guchi) on the Kamla and as far west as Bindula and perhaps even Teuri on the Khr (83 E.D.1) are dependent on this trade for the supply of salt and many iron implements. For many of these tribesmen who get their iron from the plains) these tribesmen's indirect dependence on supplies of Indian iron is even greater than would appear from the volume of their trade with the South Kamla Miris. 2. Trade with Tribal neighbours and Endo tribal Trade.—Trade in articles imported from Assam and—as we will see presently—also from Tibet is only one aspect of the complex fabric of tribal economics. While largely self-sufficient in regard to food-supplies no Miri village produces all essential implements and articles of dress, and between the Miris and their tribal neighbours as well as between the individual Miri villages there is therefore a continuous flow of commodities. A very large percentage of this exchange of goods is not in the nature of trade', i.e., immediate material gain is not the sole motive of the transaction.

(a) It is mainly the Trade with Apa Tanis which falls into the category of commerce in its narrower sense. No other tribe between the Subansiri and the Kameng is as trade-minded as the Apa Tanis, who not only import regularly goods from the plains of Assam, but are themselves producers of high quality cotton cloth, iron implements and a salty substance gained from vegetable ash. Apa Tanis undertake trading expeditions which take them several days' journey from their own country, and the trade between Miris and Apa Tanis is almost entirely in the hands of such adventurous traders. For Miris seldom visit Apa Tani villages, and the people of places quite familiar with Apa Tani traders may never have seen the Apa Tani country.

The part of the Miri country more or less regularly visited by Apa Tanis comprises the villages of Taplo, Pemir, Murga, Rakhe, Bua, Tapo (Chemir), Ramgatse (Eium) and Lak (Rube-ya) south of the Kamla, Balu between Kamla and Khr, and Hova (Tako), Dobom and Bidak north of the Kamla. Only considerations of personal safety prevent Apa Tanis from venturing further afield; while I was camping in Taplo, Pemir this opportunity of the temporary temporary was seized to extend their trade as far as Sipi and Ghacham on the south bank of the Kamla. The market for Apa Tani goods, however, is not confined to the area actually visited by Apa Tani traders; Apa Tani cloth can be seen right up to the trade-divide between India and Tibet, and dzo and knives of Apa Tani manufacture filter even further north along the valleys of the Kamla and Selu and occasionally even as far as the Sipi valley.

Clot, dzo and knives and Indian salt are the principal articles sold by Apa Tani traders to their Miri customers. Of minor importance today is a salty substance manufactured by Apa Tanis from the ash of bracken and certain herbaceous plants, but before Indian salt was available in large quantities this local salt, still occasionally bought by Miris and Daffas may have been a more important item of their export trade.

(b) The Trade with Daffas comprises the villages of South Kamla Miris, and that the Miris as far north as Rei and Rute-Hate (Guchi) on the Kamla East and as far west as Bindula and perhaps even Teuri on the Khr (83 E.D.1) are dependent on this trade for the supply of salt and many iron implements. For many of these tribesmen who get their iron from the plains) these tribesmen's indirect dependence on supplies of Indian iron is even greater than would apparent from the volume of their trade with the South Kamla Miris. 2. Trade with Tribal neighbours and Endo tribal Trade.—Trade in articles imported from Assam and—as we will see presently—also from Tibet is only one aspect of the complex fabric of tribal economics. While largely self-sufficient in regard to food-supplies no Miri village produces all essential implements and articles of dress, and between the Miris and their tribal neighbours as well as between the individual Miri villages there is therefore a continuous flow of commodities. A very large percentage of this exchange of goods is not in the nature of trade', i.e., immediate material gain is not the sole motive of the transaction.

(a) It is mainly the Trade with Apa Tanis which falls into the category of commerce in its narrower sense. No other tribe between the Subansiri and the Kameng is as trade-minded as the Apa Tanis, who not only import regularly goods from the plains of Assam, but are themselves producers of high quality cotton cloth, iron implements and a salty substance gained from vegetable ash. Apa Tanis undertake trading expeditions which take them several days' journey from their own country, and the trade between Miris and Apa Tanis is almost entirely in the hands of such adventurous traders. For Miris seldom visit Apa Tani villages, and the people of places quite familiar with Apa Tani traders may never have seen the Apa Tani country.

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Only the Miri villages closest to the Apa Tani country, such as Rakhe, Pemir, Murga, Taplo, Bua and Tapo (Chehim) purchase rice from the Apa Tanis in times of scarcity and in such cases the purchasers themselves arrange for the transport. The difficulty of carriage excludes grain from the trade with more distant villages.

Rice is usually paid for in mithan, and the credit allowed by Apa Tanis to Miri customers who are in temporary difficulties often becomes the source of disputes and feuds. For a young mithan bull Apa Tanis pay approximately ten to fifteen baskets (i.e., 324-487 seers) of paddy, and for a full grown mithan cow twice this amount. But the goods taken by Apa Tanis on their trading trips are almost invariably sold against immediate payment, and the articles bartered for cloths, dao and salt, are of a wide range. Pigs rank perhaps first among the goods sold by Miri to Apa Tani traders, who buy only pigs small enough to be carried. Dogs and fowls are sometimes given with a payment, but Apa Tanis seldom visit Miri villages with the sole purpose of buying dogs or fowls. Besides pigs, Miri sell to Apa Tanis Tibetan beads and small prayer-bells of minor value, fibre rain-coats, fibre rain-hats, plated cane and grass belts, and occasionally Tibetan das. For a simple Apa Tani cloth they give a piglet or a rain-coat for a broad-bound cloth a middle-sized pig, for a large Apa Tani dao a small pig, and for a short dao a raincoat or perhaps a fowl and some plated cane rings. These rates are only approximate and are the starting point for individual bargaining rather than an accepted tariff in inter-tribal trade. Very valuable Tibetan prayer bells worth several mithan are never bought by Apa Tani traders, but Miris sell them small bells for two, three and four cloths as well as Tibetan beads.

(b) Trade between Miri villages and with neighbouring Dafas

Is generally of an altogether different order. Except for the excursions of the South Kamla Miris to the plains of Assam, where they purchase goods with the definite intention of reselling them, there is very little planned trade for trade's sake between Miris, or indeed between Miris and Dafas. Goods are exchanged and bartered either in a casual way between kinsmen and friends, or more often, exchanged in the course of the organized and ceremonial payments, when material gain is overshadowed by the social importance of the transaction. In this way cloth, dao beads, bronze plates and prayer bells filter from village to village, not along definite trade routes or through the hands of traders, but along the innumerable channels of reciprocal obligations between kinmen and ceremonial friends. Though the movement of goods is slow, the 'volume of this exchange is by no means inconsiderable, and there are villages which rely for their entire supply of cloth and salt on this class of barter.

The absence of a recognized medium of exchange excludes the possibility of fixing the value of any article with absolute accuracy, and the price of a string of beads or a cloth is usually described by comparison with that of another commodity such as a mithan, a pig or a dao. Yet there is a recognized small value which provides for a rough valuation of most current commodities and varies only in detail in the various groups of villages. A list of the basic measures in the villages on the upper Kamla will give some idea of the relative values of commodities.

Nilap—is the value of one day's wage; it is equal to 3 seers paddy, or 1 very small chicken.

Bili—is 2 nilap; 1 fowl or 6 seers of paddy or 1/3 seer of salt or 1 knife.

Telo—is 9 bili; 3 carrying baskets of paddy or 1 small cotton cloth or 1 dog or 1 small pig or 1 small goat or 1 small dao.

(1) Oyo—is the lower Kamla 1 yelo is equal to 5 bili or 2 carrying baskets of paddy or 1 white cotton bazaar cloth or 1 simple Apa Tani cloth or 1 small pig or 1 small goat.

(2) Oyo—is 1 big Dafa cloth with dark narrow border or 1 Apa Tani cloth with broad multi-coloured border or 1 middle sized pig or 1 full grown goat or 1 dao.

Punia—is 2 oyo.

The amount of grain equal to these standard values varies according to the season, and in the rains when food is short as little as 1 or 1/4 carrying baskets of paddy may be equal to articles reckoned as 1 yelo worth.

Among the Miris a full grown mithan is worth approximately 10-12 oyo (usually paid in the form of 50-60 carrying baskets of paddy and 1 pig), but when Miris have to buy paddy from Apa Tanis in times of scarcity they may get only as much as 30 carrying baskets for a full grown mithan cow.

The most important items of endo-tribal trade are, besides goods of Assamese and Tibetan origin hand-woven cotton cloth, other articles of dress such as cane-hats, rain-shields, gauntlets of bear skin and plaited cane, dao, knives, spear heads, as well as domestic animals and grain. Whereas the latter two items are sold and bought only within the radius of comparatively small economic spheres, cloth is often bartered to villages many days' journey from the place of manufacture, passing from hand to hand, and reaching the most distant point slightly battered after having been worn by several owners.

It has been mentioned that neither the South Kamla Miris east of the Pien River, nor the Miris on the north bank east of Bidak weave any kind of cloth. Those south of the Kamla wear mainly Assamese cloth and to a lesser extent Apa Tani cloth, but on the north bank one sees a good many cloths woven in villages of the Khru and upper Kamla valley. It seems that a steady supply of cotton cloth with a particular type of narrow dark border filters down the Khru valley; it is taken up by those Miris who have no weaving industry of their own and is paid for mainly in salt and iron implements. Cloth of a very similar type though with lighter coloured borders is manufactured in the upper Kamla valley and from there reaches the tribesmen in the Sipi valley who, neither weaving nor growing cotton, rely entirely on such cloth and imports of Tibetan woolen cloth.

There are only a very few blacksmiths among the Miris and their output is hardly sufficient to meet local requirements. Shortage of raw material is the main limitation to their productivity; Tibetan das are said to be unsuitable raw material for their process of forging, and their craft is thus dependent on broken dao and knives of Apa Tani and Assamese origin*.

Trade in dao and knives of Miri manufacture is consequently only of local importance.

The same applies to ornaments of brass and bell-metal which are made by a few Miri craftsmen from broken prayer bells and bronze plates of Tibetan and sometimes Assamese origin.

*It would seem that Tibetan das are made of laminated steel whereas Assamese and Apa Tani dao are forged in one piece.
Although some villages have a limited export trade in such articles as cloth and pots to areas where weaving or pot-making is not practised, there seem to exist no monopolies on either the manufacture or sale of such commodities, nor have I heard of any taboo on the manufacture of cloth, pots, dao or other articles preventing certain villages or clans from producing their own requirements.

Trade blocks may occasionally occur owing to local feuds barring the one or other route to the members of individual villages or tribal groups traditionally linked by social and economic ties. But among the Miris. I have not come across any example of a permanent trade block created by villagers which any Tibetans do not lose their middle-man's profits keep a route closed in order to prevent producers and consumers from getting together.

All that has been said of the trade and exchange of goods between Miri villages applies also to the trade between Miri and Dafas. The Tibetans do not recognize the two tribes; the people in the contact zone are not conscious of any essential difference such as between Miri and Dafas. Tani, and the dialects change gradually from village to village. Casual buyer transactions and the organized, ceremonial exchange of gifts occur freely across the arbitrary line drawn between the two tribal groups. Miri villages such as Balu, for instance, entertain relations with Dafas villages south of the Khru and trade with them in the same manner as with their own Miri neighbours.

3. Trade in Tibetan Goods.—Articles of Tibetan origin can be seen on any Miri visiting the plains of Assam, necklaces of large beads made from conch-shell, white stone, blue porcelain, and yellow stone; discs of bell-metal strung into women's belts, Tibetan swords and large tufts of yak's hair that form part of the fantastic head-dresses. It can thus be said that the market for Tibetan goods extends right up to the foothills and the Inner Line. But though the South Kamla Miris value Tibetan ornaments as much as any of their northern neighbours they lie outside the sphere of direct Tibetan trade influence, and have indeed only the vaguest ideas of the channels through which these articles reach their trade partners to the north. As one moves upstream along the Kamla valley, the incidence of Tibetan articles increases; whereas, in Dobom (No. 83 E. A.1) for instance, nearly all cloth worn is of Miri, Tani, Dafas or Indian manufacture, in the Mirror valley and Rute-Hate (Guchi) (No. 83 E. A.1) 10 miles to the north-west, about half of all cloth worn is of Tibetan origin. The Miris of the Sipi valley have no indigenous influence, and one day's march more brings one to Goba which relies for imported goods almost entirely on Tibet. Even more noticeable is the Tibetan influence in the villages of the Sipi valley, where Tibetan cloth is the common type of dress.

In the Miri country the trade-divide between India and Tibet runs through the villages of Rute-Hate and Sibiing-pa. The Kamla and the Goba (Codak) on the Kamla and the Kamla divide between the Kamla and the Sipi River. Up to that line most of the salt consumed comes from Assam, and beyond it Tibetan salt is in common use, but whereas Tibetan ornaments and valuables are traded across it and reach every part of the Miri country, Indian goods filter only very occasionally and in isolated instances beyond the trade divide into the country under Tibetan economic influence. The line running through Rute-Hate and along the Sipi River is the trade- and salt-divide and, therefore, the boundary of predominant Assamese trade influence, comparable perhaps to the lower Kamla as the northern boundary of the predominant Assamese trade influence. The belt lying between these two boundaries is served by tribal trade bringing in Tibetan goods in approximately equal quantities and it is in this area, equally remote from both sources of supply that salt is scarcest and most highly prized.

In this belt Tibetan articles are socially important as the traditional medium for ceremonial payments but their exclusion would not result in immediate economic distress. North and north-west of the trade-divide, however, Tibetan salt, cloth and dao are absolute necessities and the area between this line and the Himalayan main range is economically dependent on Tibet.

Little has so far been known of this area. The Miri Mission became involved in hostilities on its threshold and had to withdraw without being able to gather much information. This season I crossed the trade-divide from the Sipi valley and inspected the villages between the Kamla and the Sipi River. Up to that line most of the salt consumed comes from Assam, and beyond it Tibetan salt is in common use, but whereas Tibetan ornaments and valuables are traded across it and reach every part of the Miri country, Indian goods filter only very occasionally and in isolated instances beyond the trade divide into the country under Tibetan economic influence. The line running through Rute-Hate and along the Sipi River is the trade- and salt-divide and, therefore, the boundary of predominant Assamese trade influence, comparable perhaps to the lower Kamla as the northern boundary of the predominant Assamese trade influence. The belt lying between these two boundaries is served by tribal trade bringing in Tibetan goods in approximately equal quantities and it is in this area, equally remote from both sources of supply that salt is scarcest and most highly prized.

From Tumir (Tumir, Map No. 83 E. A.1) at the confluence of Kamla and Selu, a path runs via Noyi, Luyubia and Haki to Eru Sorong, a large village lying in the hills between the Kamla and the Selu. By the path through the Selu valley Eru Sorong is three days journey from Tumir, but there is a different and longer route via Tali. The people of Goba often visit Sorong, whereas they have few connections with the villages higher up the Kamla. The people of Sorong cultivate like other Miris, but wear exclusively Tibetan woollen cloth and through them many Tibetan goods reach the Mirs of the Kamla valley. From Eru Sorong it is only one day to Hai, a village lying close to a range of mountains, covered in snow summer and winter—obviously the 12 000—13 000 feet range between the Kamla and Subansiri.

By a path crossing this range one reaches in two to three marches the Subansiri valley. There on the right bank is the village of Tachi and on the left bank, connected with it by a cane suspension bridge, the village of Tappe. These and neighbourhood villages in the Subansiri valley are collectively known as Agla Marra.

The people of Eru Sorong, whose tribal name is Risi-Mashi, often go to Agla Marra, and I have met Tumur men who have repeatedly made the journey in their company. The people of Agla Marra are apparently of the same racial stock as Miris, but are to some extent Tibetanized. They speak a language known to some Sorong people, but not understandable to the Tumur men, and they wear Tibetan clothes, cut their hair and wear woolen caps and boots. They have guns and double-edged edged knives. Their houses are like those of Miris and they cultivate in Miri fashion. But besides mithan, they keep yaks and a few sheep, as well as dogs. "so fierce that they must be kept on iron chains." The yaks are kept both for the sake of their meat and for carrying loads. There is a track along the Subansiri between Agla Marra and from there for five days to Nime Na along a track passable for yaks; along a shorter and more difficult path which leads across high mountains it is three days.

Agla Marra is regularly visited by Tibetans who come to trade, and Agla Marra people and even some men of Sorong go to Nime Na, which is apparently in Tibet proper.

A large part of the Tibetan articles that reach the villages of the Kamla valley come by the Selu route through Sibiing-pa and Agla Marra. It is the route best known to the Miris of Rute-Hate, Goba and Noyi, and though the path from Sorong to Agla Marra is sometimes under snow it is described as not particularly difficult.
The route via Soreng is not the only one by which Tibetan goods reach the Kamla Miris. In the Sipi valley I was told of a route leading through the Mongö valley and from there across the hills between the Mongö and Subansiri. Beyond that there are many villages, and one of them Sheke, is regularly visited by Tibetans. The Mongö River is the Menga of the map (Sheet No. 83 L. A. 4), but is said to flow into the Sipi, and not into the Subansiri.

What is the nature of the trade between Tibetans and the tribesmen of Agla Marra and other area of the Subansiri valley.

The Tibetans and such tribesmen as go to Tibet bring woollen cloth and made-up woollen coats and caps, salt of reddish colour, swords, ornaments of various kinds, such as ear-rings, beads of conchshell and semi-precious stones, bells of bell-metal and prayer bells. It is woolen cloth, salt and swords which form the bulk of the imported Tibetan goods. In exchange for these commodities the Miris give skins of monkey, bear, tiger, fish-otter, barking dear, python and other snakes, as well as cane-ropes, saga pith, madder and other dyes. The people of Agla Marra systematically collect these exchange goods against the arrival of Tibetan purchasers and in the Sipi valley I saw a small bag under one ready for a whole deerhead.

All this trade seems to be barter and Tibetan coins are not known to the Miris of the Kamla valley as far as Goba and Tumr and of the Sipi region. Miris of the Kamla valley who are not in direct touch with Tibetans, but deal through middlemen of Sorang, gave me the following rates at which they exchange goods for Tibetan goods. For one or two skins they give 2-3 seers of salt; for a complete ottar skin with 1 sawd and 14 seers of salt; for a whole tiger skin 2 swords and 14 seers of salt; for 4 bear skins one large woolen cloth about four by two arm-lengths in size.

Animal skins are apparently easy to come by and not accorded a high value. For the the Miris of the Sipi, Selu and upper Kamla valley barter Tibetan cloth at surprisingly low rates. Strips of woollen cloth usually sold for a few different colours (approximately 54" long and 10" wide) for a whole tiger skin. Only big tailored cloaks or coats of a closely woven material (resembling broad-cloth) usually of purple or carmine colour, are highly priced. and on the periphery of Tibetan influence as much as one small mithan may be paid for such a coat.

In comparison to the low price of textiles, Tibetan salt is expensive. A middle-sized pig buys about 2 seers of salt, a big hen about 1/2 seer.

For a Tibetan sword of superior quality one big sow and one small pig are paid, for a sword of average quality one big or middle-sized pig or one full grown goat.

There is the general, and no doubt well founded belief, that most Tibetan textiles, and particularly the multicolored or mixed-wool material, the so-called "ed-dar" imported by the Selu, Kamla and Sipi route, while along the Subansiri a thick, long-haired black cloth is traded down, and most valuable objects such as prayer bells, bells of bell-metal, and semi-precious stones reach the Dafas and Miris by a route following the valley of the Khru, a route along which there is very little trade in Tibetan textiles.

The importance of these valuables for the social and ceremonial life of the Miris cannot be easily exaggerated. Tibetan prayer bells (known in Assam as des-gante and among the tribesmen as majo) are treated with the reverence and care accorded elsewhere to objects of art, and are almost considered animate beings, being given names and referred to as male or female; a majo of high class may be valued at ten mithans (today equal to about Rs. 1,000!) and more, but there are well of all grades down to those worth only one or two cotton cloths, valuation being according to metal and design. The sale of a valuable majo is as serious and consequential an undertaking as a marriage and creates between purchaser and seller a tie similar to that between families. Plates of bell-metal, valued up to one or even two mithan, are also used mainly for ceremonial payments and there are various other bell-metal objects, such as heavy armlets, which are accorded a similar value, and also valued in several grades, and included in lists for certain ceremonial exchange of gifts. There are more than a dozen classes of beads and it needs the experience of a connoisseur to accord to every bead its correct value. Some wealthy men collect beads one by one composing through the course of years strings of great beauty and worth as much as one or two full-grown mithan.

The difference in the quality of Tibetan goods reaching the Miris by the Khru route and those coming by the Kamla-Selu route is puzzling, and our knowledge of conditions in the area of the upper Khru is still so scanty that no entirely satisfactory explanation can be given. Pending further exploration I venture, however, the following hypothesis:

There is evidence for the existence of at least five routes leading from the Kamla Region to areas under Tibetan economic influence:

1. The Kamla-Selu route to Agla Marra, which is best known to the Miris of Rute-Hate, Goba and Tumr and which has been described to me by men in the habit of using it.

2. A route from the Sipi valley via the Menga (Mongö) to the Subansiri valley. This route is likely to connect up with a route coming from the Tsari area or Megyitun.

3. A route leading along the north bank of the Kamla as far as the snow-range and then across. The names of the villages on this route have been mentioned to me, but my informants knew little about the area to which it leads.

4. A route that, following the left bank of the Khru as far as Pias village, turns north to pass through Tarram (between Khru and Kamla) and emerges at Lokam in the Kamla valley where it joins route 3. It can be taken as established that the upper courses of Khru and Kamla lie close together that the tribesmen can cross from one valley into the other in two marches (probably four marches for porters).

5. A route following the left bank of the Khru as far as its source on the snow-ranges. This route seems to be used by the Dafas of the Panyi valley and the Lebla area, and is said to lead to Tibetan lements on this side of the Himalayan main-range.

The information on these routes from the observant of the Kamla Region seems to tally with the findings of explorers such as Kingdom Ward and F. Ludlow who approached the upper course of the Subansiri from the Tibetan side. True, none of them succeeded in descending for more than a few miles along the Chayul Chu or the Tsari Tsu into the area known to us as Agla Marra, but they encountered both at Lung on the Chayul Chu and at Migyitun on the Tsari Chu tribesmen described by the Tibetans as Lobas who gave my informants the same kind of knowledge. A Loba photographed by F. Ludlow at Migyitun is in every detail of dress and appearance identical with tribesmen of the Subansiri, and it would thus appear that route 2 leads across the Subansiri valley to Migyitun on the Tibetan border. Route 3 leads probably to the Kashong La, a pass which seems to connect the valley with an area not far from the source of the Kamla. Tribesmen described by Ludlow as 'Lobas from the Kashong, Lashow all the the typical features of Miris from the upper Kamla*
The area known to the Kamla tribesmen as Agla Marra and reached by them via route 1, is no doubt the upper Subansiri valley, visited according to Ludlow at least once in twelve years by Tibetan pilgrims, and the fact that it lies on a recognized pilgrim's route lends credence to the information regarding a track along the Subansiri said to be passable for yaks.†

Route 4 leads most probably also to the Kathong La or one of the nearby passes such as the Lha La but exploration of the upper Tribestan side of the extemely hard Himalaya Range provides no clues as to the locality at which route 5 may strike the Tibetan settlements.

The tribesmen on the lower Kamla believe that most of the valuable Tibetan ornaments in possession of Miris and Dafas have come along the Khru but that very little Tibetan cloth reaches them by that route. I have found that the tribesmen in the Sipi valley wear mainly Tibetan clothes and do not weave, and they obtain their material in that in the Mongol Valley and in the Agla Marra area along the upper Subansiri exclusively Tibetan cloth is worn. In the Khru region on the other hand it is possible that anyone else has crossed the trade divide between India and Tibet. Though in Mengo I came perhaps close to the outer limit of predominantly Indian trade influence, no area comparable to the Sipi valley in its extent to which Tibet has there been assimilated.

But we know that the Dafas on the upper Khru and on its tributary the Panyi and even the villages between the upper Khru and the Kamla have a developed weaving industry, and use not only cotton, but also a bark fibre (pud) for their textiles. Both cotton and pud cloth are occasionally sold to villages on the lower Khru and across the watershed between Khru and Panyi to Mengo. It is unlikely that the tribesmen may be Dafas or Miris, on the upper Khru would go to the trouble of spinning bark-fibre or woolen Tibetan cloth if available. It is almost certain that the lower Khru to the Panyi, but their owners treated them as something precious and unusual and there can be no doubt that woolen cloth, though known and valued, is on the Khru, at least in the area up to its confluence with the Panyi, not the predominant type of clothing. It is probable that the tribesmen on the upper Khru obtain only small quantities of Tibetan cloth, while on the Subansiri, Selu and Kamla they can buy at very modest rates sufficient to meet their needs. It seems to be the possibility that here contacts with Tibet are insignificant. The obvious explanation would seem to be that contacts are neither frequent nor extensive enough to affect them. The type of Tibetan goods imported by the Kamla, Subansiri and Dafas tribesmen is suggestive of the broad range of goods in the area of the Loba Valley. Here populations in frequent and fairly intimate touch seem to exchange large quantities of the products of their own labour, the Tibetan sheep-breeders bartering his home spun cheap textiles for the furs of the Miri hunter and trapper, the blacksmith his swords for cane ropes and the vegetable dyes required by other craftsmen. But in the Loba the Khru area seem to reach the Tibetan cloth, instead. Valuable beads, prayer bells, ear-ornaments studied with semi-precious stones and other small and comparatively costly articles are acquired by the tribesmen. In Mengo on the Panyi I heard rumours of Tibetans who lived on this side of the main snow range in large stone houses, and if a monastery proved to exist somewhere in the upper Khru it would not be astonishing if the monks used objects easily brought from Tibet in preference to the supplies of grain and other foodstuffs from the local tribesmen. The passes across the main range may here be difficult and preclude any free exchange of bulky textiles.

But the assumption of the existence of Tibetan settlements in the area of the source of the Khru cannot easily be reconciled with the fact that none of the explorers who travelled along the route from Tawang to Chyphu Dzong in 1937 could find any evidence of a monastery there. We must therefore reckon with the fact that the Dafas speaking Tibetan stone houses were referring to settlements north-west of the main range, where indeed it would not be out of place to find monasteries. Tribesmen living in the high valleys near the source of the Khru may be to some extent assimilated and it is not impossible that while using woolen clothes themselves they trade in prayer bells, beads and other ornaments more profitable than in such commodities as cloth and iron. This would be particularly understandable if they had to carry all the wares purchased from Tibetans over routes more difficult than the yak tracks leading from Tibet into the upper Subansiri valley.

Conclusions.—There must have been a time, although it may lie back many centuries, when the Miris were as dependent on Tibetan resources as on their own. As their population increased and their exact place of origin was at that time a matter for conjecture, but the still prevalent use of bone and bamboo implements for agricultural work tends to indicate that iron was then not as essential for their economy as one would suppose from its place in tribal culture today. The first advanced civilization with which they came into contact seems to have been that of Tibet, and it is safe to assume that they entered into contact with Tibetans through the trade channels from the Tibetan plateau and not by the roads leading eastward through the plains of Assam. The rôle of Tibetan prayer bells, firmly anchored in the ceremonial of friendship ties, the value attached to Tibetan bell-metal plates, the custom of using Tibetan beads as ritual payments at marriages, are all proof of a very ancient connection between Miri culture and the civilization of Tibet. Even today when a good many Assamese products find their way into the hills, they are generally considered as second rate, mere substitutes for or imitations of the “real” Tibetan articles. Thus an Assamese bell-metal plate, intrinsically in no way inferior, is accorded a much lower value than a Tibetan plate of the same size. Assamese beads, even those of such stones as cornelian, fetch only a fraction of the price of Tibetan beads, and Assamese damari, much less prized than Tibetan, sell for much less. This attitude towards Assamese goods is almost comparable to that of the European who buys and uses Japanese wares but regards them as inferior to, say, English, Swiss or Swedish products.

The preference for Tibetan goods is neither entirely irrational nor merely traditional. The Miri has a sound feeling for quality and aesthetic merit, and most Tibetan goods that reach him are the solid and aesthetically well-executed products of the Tibetan workshops. The travelling Merchant has a good eye for their pattern of very attractive colour combinations. The ornaments are heavy, of simples, unsophisticated shape and intrinsically valuable material. None of the goods in the North Lakhimpur bazaar whether they come from Bombay cotton mills or Czechoslovakian glass factories can rival the products of Tibetan craftsmen in the eyes of the tribesmen.

Problems of Administration and Culture-Change in the Subansiri Region

The development of the tribal populations of the Subansiri Region presents the anthropologically minded administrator with unique opportunities. Here, in a tract of largely unmapped country, wedged between the modern, rapidly changing civilization of the Indian plains and the ancient, conservative culture of Tibet, one meets with tribesmen, many of whom entertain no direct contacts with the outside world. But in an era when elements of machine-age civilization penetrate even the last refuge areas of primitive humanity, such isolation is not longer practicable, and the Government of India has recently initiated a programme of exploration and scientific research preparatory to opening up the country and drawing the tribesmen into economic and political relationships of a wider and more scientific nature.

Such a policy will undoubtedly lead to a gradual transformation of tribal culture—a process which calls for much patience and good will if it is to benefit the human. The value of a scientific approach to the problems arising from the impact of advanced civilizations on primitive populations is today widely recognized. Experience in many parts of the world has demonstrated that the anthropologist's knowledge of the realities of indigenous cultures is indispensable for planning the transition to new social and economic systems. Without such detailed knowledge it is impossible to avoid mal-adjustments, mal-adjustments which can easily lead to a rapid disintegration of tribal life. Too often, however, the anthropologist's role has been that of a physician called in to diagnose a disease when it has progressed beyond hope of cure. There are very few instances in the history of territories inhabited by primitive races where scientific investigations of the social and economic order have preceded the establishment of trade, business enterprises and an administration serving the interests of outsiders rather than the tribesmen. As a rule the early administrators, grappling with day-to-day problems long before they had gained an insight into the culture and norms of behaviour of the population they were called upon to control. It was hardly their fault if they ignored or misjudged indigenous institutions and disrupted the social order by an ill-considered and haphazard interference that was guided by principles of friction or widespread distress.

The hill-tracts of Assam have in this respect been more fortunate. Inhabited by tribes far less tractable than the aboriginals of Peninsular India and offering fewer opportunities for business or industrial enterprise and even fewer for farming on a commercial scale, they have been, since 1944—never suffered from encroachment and exploitation by outsiders. The policy of the Government of India vis-a-vis hillmen such as Nagas, Abors and Daflas was for long primarily precautionary, i.e., it was aimed at preventing the tribesmen from raiding and molesting the Assamese peasantry of the plains. In some areas a first superficial control developed gradually into full-scale administration; the stages were slow and there were no violent tests to displace them. In the admittance of the outside the westward progress was gradual, even in such areas as the Naga Hills, which are today considered a model district, wrong assessment of the tribesmen's temper has in the past resulted in occasional clashes. While today we have an extensive literature on the habits and customs of the various Naga tribes, the early administrators lacked reliable information on tribal affairs and were forced to rely largely on their own intuition.

In the Subansiri the position is different. No attempt has yet been made to establish administrative control over the hill tribes across the provincial boundary of Assam. It is only since 1944 that the country beyond the so-called 'Inner Line' has been opened up and a steady political influence has been brought to bear on such hitherto independent tribes as Daflas and Apa Tanis.

The problems facing us here are consequently fundamentally different from those in other backward areas. Here we have not to deal with the results of modern culture contact or economic penetration; the vast majority of the tribesmen have in fact isolated from the outside world. Tribal culture is still in its pristine stage, and the field is open for any type of policy the Government of India may see fit to adopt in relation to the tribal population. There is no legacy of error and neither loyalty nor hostility is supported by tradition. Except in a very few places the officer entering this tribal territory finds it a virgin soil, where the very pace of culture-change was generally too rapid to allow of a righting of earlier mistakes. As for the scientific investigator, his advice was seldom sought until mal-adjustments threatened to culminate in friction or widespread distress.

Moreover the problem of how to co-ordinate the interests of the tribesmen with those of a resident non-tribal population does not arise, for there can be no intention to deprive the tribesmen of part of their territory for the benefit of new settlers. The crucial question since the inauguration of political and economic penetration, is how best to organize tribal society and tribal economy in such a way as to create a stable basis for these intensified contacts with the outside world. Sudden and uncontrolled contact with advanced civilizations has often spelled the doom of primitive races. But to assume that the Dafla or Apa Tani tribesmen can derive no benefit from the accumulated experience of the rest of humanity would amount to a negation of modern civilization. In the fields of medicine, agriculture, cattle-breeding and various techniques he can obviously utilize the knowledge and benefit by the skill of more advanced nations and the establishment of a stable peace (if it is not the peace of the grave-yard of his national character) has many advantages over an eternal sequence of feuds.

Indeed it is the obvious drawbacks of unrestricted tribal warfare, slave-raiding and other 'savage' institutions which might tempt the administrator, armed with superior force and allowed in the use of that force a good deal of political and military discretion, to establish a social and economic model which appear incompatible with a more civilized existence. Therein lies a danger. A new set of values cannot suddenly be imposed on a people without disorganizing their whole social structure, and the enforcement of principles which are incomprehensible to the tribesmen is likely to meet with opposition.

All plans for the development of a tribal area under the guidance of an outside agency must therefore reckon with all political and economic character and potentiality of the tribesmen, and above all, the resources in personnel and material which will be available for development in any given area. So far the point sought to be clarified first, for the tempo of development and the extent of economic and political penetration must obviously depend on the machinery with which Government intends to operate. To make it more developed period in any tribal area an influence which cannot be maintained may, by disruption, prove more harmful than beneficial.
In the Subansiri Region there would, for instance, be no point in embarking on schemes of the realization of which would necessitate the employment of an army of administrators and Specialists and the expenditure of crores of rupees. India suffers from a shortage of trained personnel even for ordinary rural reconstruction work, and the tribal areas are so poor in taxable resources that for many years to come the cost of the administration and of any measures for the education and economic advancement of the tribes will have to be met from the revenue of other parts of the country.

It can be taken as axiomatic that the existence of a contented, prosperous and friendly tribal population on one of India's vital frontiers is in the highest interest of the country, and that Government's policy in the tribal areas must aim at creating the basic conditions for prosperity and a stable peace. But financial considerations are so all-pervading that all plans for the administration of the Subansiri Region, to the opening up of the country by a network of roads, to the establishment of schools and medical services, and to the development of the tribesmen's economy from subsistence agriculture to production for outside markets.

COMMUNICATIONS

The condition sine qua non for any closer contact with the tribesmen of the Subansiri Region (be it in the form of administrative control or economic penetration) is the all-weather maintenance of essential lines of communications. At present most of the paths linking the Apa Tani country as well as many of the Dalla and Mri villages with the plains of Assam are impassable during the rains, and even village-to-village traffic is often interrupted by flooded streams. The tribesmen do not now use the pack-animals and indeed none of the existing routes could be negotiated by mule or pony. All loads have to be transported on the backs of porters, and even in good weather the steep gradients and general difficulty of the terrain place a heavy strain on porters. The foot-hills are sparsely inhabited, and porters proceeding from the plains into the interior have to carry their own rations, which means that for every two men carrying loads on a six days' journey another man must carry provisions.

The cost of constructing roads suitable for wheeled traffic would be excessively high. If even the Ledo Road had to be abandoned soon after completion because the cost of maintenance would have vastly exceeded its economic value in peace-time, there is no likelihood that the limited commercial intercourse of a small tribal population can justify the expenditure on main-roads of a nature that would be needed to handle the extremely difficult mountain countries in the world. Bridge-paths such as have been built in the Naga and Abor Hills, on the other hand, though they too would involve considerable initial expenditure, would present needs and could be maintained by the tribesmen themselves.

Bridges are essential on all-weather tracks, and in most places suspension bridges of cane would suffice. Important rivers in the region have a series of iron ropes (which could be dropped by air) that make it possible to build bridges on the main roads strong enough to allow of the passage of pack-animals. Some rivers, such as the lower course of the Kamla can be crossed by ferry, and the construction of rafts or boats big enough to take one pony or mule at a time should not meet with any great difficulties. Such ferries could, of course, be used only when the rivers are not in flood and when porters are not in such large numbers on the bank before the onset of the monsoon, when light cane-bridges would serve the purpose. Some rivers, such as the lower course of the Kamla can be crossed by ferry, and the construction of rafts or boats big enough to take one pony or mule at a time should not meet with any great difficulties. Such ferries could, of course, be used only when the rivers are not in flood and when porters are not in such large numbers on the bank before the onset of the monsoon, when light cane-bridges would serve the purpose.

As in other sparsely inhabited countries—such as Central New Guinea—where the cost of road-building in mountainous tracts is out of all proportion to their economic value, air-communications might solve some of the transport problems. Planes could probably land in the Apa Tani valley, and a strenuous trek of six days would lead to Tanis. But potential landing-grounds are few, and I doubt whether any exist between the Kamla and the Great Himalayan Range. Air-droppings, however, would be very useful in supplying isolated outposts for official parties proceeding on foot. But the difficulty of the terrain would seem to exclude the use of air-transport for the economic development of the country.

Security.—With the improvement of communications will arise the question of security for travellers using such roads. Bridges and suspensions and canoes might be built as a bridge-paths. At present no tribesman feels safe outside the territory of his own village or group of allied villages except in those areas where he has friends influential enough to protect him, or, at least, to effect his release in case of capture. Even the Apa Tanis, who are accustomed to taking risks in the interest of trade gains, confer their trading trips to areas where they have traditional ties of friendship. They never believe the territority in which the Apa Tanis have lived and would not have ventured to pass through the land of villages where they do not believe in the possibility of hope for definite protection. Before 1944, for instance, when I opened the route through the Dalla villages of Selsemhi, Potin and Mai, all Apa Tanis going to and returning from the plains used a far more difficult track over mountains more than 7,000 feet high which was impassable throughout the rains. They were not at war with Potin or Selsemhi, but they did not trust them, and so they avoided them. But potential landing-grounds are few, and I doubt whether any exist between the Kamla and the Great Himalayan Range. Air-droppings, however, would be very useful in supplying isolated outposts for official parties proceeding on foot. But the difficulty of the terrain would seem to exclude the use of air-transport for the economic development of the country.

While we can assume that the construction of bridge-paths and their use by officers of Government will make for safety, we cannot, at the moment, be sure that such officers will be able to prevent tribal feuds from automatically stopping short of the new traffic, and that there will be occasions when tribesmen will be ambushed and captured on paths built by Government. Unless and until Government establishes complete administrative control over an area the possibility of such incidents cannot be completely excluded, but it may be practicable to warn the tribesmen that any attacks on travellers using a Government path must be considered an act against Government irrespective of the quarrel or feud which may have preceded the act of violence. The consequences of such an 'unfriendly act' must depend on the resources of the Administration which at this stage cannot assume all the function of a police. But the principle of considering any capture or assault on a 'Government path' as an act against Government will be ideal understanding by the tribesmen who, for themselves and their country, will have no difficulty in the necessary revenge, an attack on visitors to their village or territory, though they may remain indifferent if the same persons are captured or killed outside the area under their immediate influence; thus a Government path along which all may travel in peace and safety would soon become a recognized institution. Difficulties may, however, arise if escaping slaves or run-away wives try to profit from the new road. Perhaps until the problem of slavery is solved as a whole, it would be either wise nor practicable to burden an institution which is to serve commerce and peaceful
travel with the function of an asylum for escaped slaves or for offenders against tribal custom. Any attempt to ban the recapture of slaves travelling on Government paths would almost certainly be disregarded, and would be considered contrary to tribal law which prescribes that anyone sheltering a slave must compensate his master by paying him the full market value.

**METHODS OF GOVERNMENT**

The avowed aim of the political control over the Balipara Frontier Tract, which includes the Subansiri Region leaving its northern border undefined, was to stop, until recently the protection of the plains of Assam against the more occasional raids of Political Officers with armed escorts into the foot-hills have served to convince the tribesmen of Government’s ability to move freely in tribal country and, if the need should arise, take action against a village guilty of raiding the plains. Beyond the provincial border of Assam, however, no attempt was made to establish any kind of administration or to interfere in disputes between individuals or villages in the tribal area.

With the establishment of closer relations with some of the tribes and the maintenance of an out-post and the Apa Tanis control, during the open seasons of 1944 and 1945 this attitude has changed, and the influence of Government has become a factor in tribal politics even in areas which previous to 1944 had never been visited by officers or other outsiders. Such influence must not be confused with effective control. So far the tribesmen have only learnt that it is wise to interfere with Government parties, and that if Government office-s adjustment to take sides in a dispute they can exert considerable pressure on one or both of the opposing parties in order too achieve a settlement. The methods which Government has employed resemble those familiar to the tribesmen; an arrest in their eyes hardly distinguishable from capture, and the punitive burning of a village is to the Dafis only a variation of a raid. It did not take the tribesmen long to realize, however, that while Government’s intervention in tribal affairs cannot be openly resisted, its effects can be largely countered by a policy of procrastination, elusion and temporary withdrawal from the threatened area. The superiority of arms of the Assam Rifles, that furnish, when necessary, escorts for Political Officers, is recognized and incidentally vastly overrated *, but the tribesmen’s awe of fire-arms is largely offset by the realization that Government parties cannot move fast, that they cannot maintain themselves for long in the forward areas without receiving regular supplies on lines of communications which are dependent on the recruitment of tribal porters, and that it is consequently easy to elude them without risking more than the loss of a few wood and bamboo houses and some temporary inconvenience. It is only the Apa Tanis, the most civilized and settled of the Subansui tribes whose attitude towards Government cannot be guided by such considerations. Dwelling in large permanent villages and dependent on independent cultivation of their small, caretaking country, the land, they must come to a modus vivendi with any power which establishes itself for any length of time in their country. Peaceful cultivators and resourceful traders the Apa Tanis can but profit from a policy of pacification and a clash of interests might occur only if there was any attempt at economic exploitation by outsiders or interference with their customary law and the established social order.

The Dafas, on the other hand, shifting-cultivators without attachment to permanent village-sites or ancestral land, warlike, independent, and scattered in small groups over a vast mountain-country that is stashed by precipitous, pathless gorges, will offer limited resistance to Government. The superiority of arms of the Assam Rifles, that furnish, when necessary, escorts for Political Officers, is recognized and incidentally vastly overrated *, but the tribesmen’s awe of fire-arms is largely offset by the realization that Government parties cannot move fast, that they cannot maintain themselves for long in the forward areas without receiving regular supplies on lines of communications which are dependent on the recruitment of tribal porters, and that it is consequently easy to elude them without risking more than the loss of a few wood and bamboo houses and some temporary inconvenience. It is only the Apa Tanis, the most civilized and settled of the Subansui tribes whose attitude towards Government cannot be guided by such considerations. Dwelling in large permanent villages and dependent on independent cultivation of their small, caretaking country, the land, they must come to a modus vivendi with any power which establishes itself for any length of time in their country. Peaceful cultivators and resourceful traders the Apa Tanis can but profit from a policy of pacification and a clash of interests might occur only if there was any attempt at economic exploitation by outsiders or interference with their customary law and the established social order.

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A system of Indirect Rule is, therefore, the obvious method of exerting political influence on the tribes and of opening the door to trade-relations and the advantages of civilization without undertaking the responsibilities of day-to-day administration. Indirect Rule, as a system of Government, based on indigenous institutions and the existing tribal authorities has proved its worth in many parts of Africa, not only in places where the native ruler has been ended by modern intervention, but even in those parts where tribal institutions have long been disregarded and have had to be essentially newly investing with powers the old legitimate rulers. “The motives,” to quote from Malinowski’s posthumous work†, “move a European administration to introduce Indirect Rule are partly those of expediency and efficiency and partly enlightened liberalism. It is cheap, it is practical, and it promises to produce a minimum of disturbance, and involves the least possible friction for it is not generally recognized by the tribesman that his country is under foreign government, and the maintenance of as much as possible of the Native authority instead of its destruction.”

While similar principles will be to the credit of any administration in the Tribal Areas of Assam, there are several features which distinguish conditions in these borderlands from those of Africa. Here we have to reckon neither with non-tribal populations nor business interests and there is no indigenous system on which to build a chieftainship. If it has been said of Africa that the meaning of Indirect Rule cannot be summed up in the phrase, “Find the Chief”, this is doubly true of Assam where most of the hill-tribes have no chiefs in the strict sense of the word. Authority may, as among the Apa Tanis, be vested in a plurality of clan representatives or as among the Dafas the joint-family may for all practical purposes be an independent political unit. No hard-and-fast rules can be laid down as to whose authority should be exercised in any particular case. To vote to village and even the principle that every de facto power must be built into a system of tribal self-government will not free the man on the spot from many a doubt as to where the de facto authority lies.

Let us first consider the Apa Tanis. In my notes on Village Organization and Tribal Justice among the Apa Tanis, I have described the system of buliang, representatives of all important clans, including “clan” clans, who direct the affairs of the tribe through informal village-councils. Though the exact powers of these buliang are not laid down in any code of law, they are not capable of maintaining internal peace and tribal solidarity. Minor disputes may be allowed to run their course, but ultimately it is the buliang’s responsibility to restore the social harmony $.

A system which saves from internecine strife a community of over 20,000 tribesmen who live crowded together in a valley of hardly 20 square miles, obviously fulfils a very valuable function in tribal life: the ability not just to maintain but to strengthen in this behalf and to avoid any course of action which might detract from the influence and authority of the buliang. As at the same time it would not be practical for the ruling power to deal with the Apa Tanis only through the senior buliang, recognizing each one of them as a kind of “village-headman” authorized to represent the community. Theoretically all akha buliang have the same position and enjoy equal privileges, but in practice it is usually two or three akha or yapa buliang who wield

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* Many tribesmen believe that a ride-shot will find the intended victim even though he may be within sight of the man facing the rule.

† Brensiew Malinowski, The Dynamics of Culture Change, New Haven, 1945, p. 198.

‡ For the respective duties of akha buliang, yapa buliang and yng buliang, see the above notes.
the influence in a village. And administrative arrangements must be based on the de facto position and not on the fiction of the equal authority of all senior buliang. Many of these ak'a buliang are very old men who, though consulted in important matters, no longer take an active part in the day-to-day administration of the village. It is rather the middle-aged men of more than usual wealth or particular strength of character who sway public opinion and can, therefore, speak at least to some extent for the village-community. The office of Government Commissioner or District Judge of Government, which is the red mantle of office so popular among the village-elders of the Naga Hills, would mean to create a valuable liaison between the officers of Government and the mass of the tribemen.

There is, however, the danger that once a man has thus been recognized as representative of a clan or village, Government officers will attribute to him an authority and influence which he does not possess. Even the most prominent buliang cannot give orders to his co-villagers; however much we may try to increase his prestige he will never become a chief. To force him into such a role, for which there is no precedent in Apa Tani tradition, would only overburden and thereby ruin an implement which judiciously employed can become a valuable factor in Government's relations with the tribe.

The realization that there is no individual chief nor any tribal council of manageable size which exerts authority over all Apa Tans and which can be invested with the responsibility of carrying out a certain policy, may be unpleasant for the administrator, but nothing can be gained by ignoring the fact that among the Apa Tans law and order is maintained by complex, yet efficient, well balanced system of social forces, which cannot easily be harnessed to an administrative machinery ruled by concepts of individual authority and responsibility.

The old system has proved perfectly adequate to the task of maintaining internal peace and justice. But the Apa Tans' helplessness in the face of the attacks of numerically smaller groups of Dafsa demonstrates its main weakness—the lack of effective leadership—and contact with the forces of the civilized world will no doubt show up other defects. Indeed the establishment of this contact with all its consequences has already created a situation to which, as the Apa Tans themselves realize, the old system has no effective answer. The mechanism to deal with this new situation cannot be imposed on the tribe; it must be evolved from within by gradual adaptation to changed conditions. Such a development, if understood and closely watched, especially speeded up by the possibility that those buliang who in view of their personal qualifications are invested with the symbols of Government's trust and friendship will grow in importance and form in years to come a kind of council of action, which at first will deal mainly with results problems resulting from the Apa Tans' political and economic contacts with Government and the plains of Assam. And this may ultimately become the nucleus of a fully fledged tribal council recruited from among the most influential and estimable tribesmen with a view to supplementing and eventually replacing the mechanisms of the old system.

Even today the buliang represent most sections of the population. Besides the buliang of patrician class, who are in the majority, there are also buliang belonging to mura clans, and though these men of 'slave'-descendants cannot speak for the domestic slaves who are under the control of their masters, they do to some extent represent the large class of freed slaves and descendants of slaves.

With the many new problems created by the contact with outside forces and the intensified trade relations with tribal neighbours the responsibilities of the buliang will increase. As the leaders of the tribe they will have to play a more important role in settling their old functioning. And their influence will probably be so great that many of them will be able to adapt themselves to new conditions. Leadership among the Apa Tans is not a petrified institution based only on hereditary privilege, but is a flexible system under which personality and talent have full scope to assert themselves.

The Apa Tahis with their quick eye for economic advantage can be relied upon to enter in good faith into partnership with the Government of the plains people—and to do their bit to make it a success. But being justly proud of the prosperity and peaceful order which they have established in a valley surrounded by restless, warring tribes, they are extremely sensitive to any interference in their internal affairs. Any suspicion that the people of the plains might try to assume the role of 'masters' would arouse violent resentment. They are determined to run their own affairs, and while every officer camping in a Dafla village is inundated by people complaining in a language which neither they nor anyone else can understand, the Apa Tahis are not to be moved. Nor will they allow an officer—to intervene in any of their internal disputes. Only in the course of their feud with the Dafla village of Lichi did they solicit the help of Government, but even then they had merely the idea of gaining a powerful ally, not of relinquishing their independence by placing themselves under the protection of Government.

I do not think that at this stage anything can be gained by interfering with the Apa Tans' administration of justice. With the gradual growth of collaboration and increased contacts with the outside world the Apa Tans themselves may feel the need for a more regular procedure, and they may then be persuaded to form a court consisting of selected councillors from all the seven villages, which would try all cases of serious crime.

Government, in the role of senior partner and protecting power, could supply a useful function by establishing and supervising a machinery for the arbitration of disputes between Apa Tans and other tribes. To-day such disputes often lead to raiding and prolonged warfare, and it would be very much in the interest of all parties concerned if in such cases Government could use its prestige to initiate negotiations on neutral ground, with a Government representative as arbiter and adviser.

This brings us to the problem of Government's policy in vis-a-vis the tribemen commonly known as Dafsa, a limited area on the Kamla River, as Hill Miris. Their position is fundamentally different from that of the Apa Tans. While the latter are a closely knit community with a pronounced feeling of tribal solidarity, the Dafsa are split into innumerable independent groups which do not follow any common line of action and are often at war with each other. To appreciate the difficulty of establishing contact with such groups, one must remember that the Dafsa inhabitant realizes that if he is the house-hold rather than the village which forms the principal social and political unit. Though as many as thirty joint families, each containing anything from three to twelve hearths, may stand on one village-site, the inhabitants do not necessarily constitute a political unit with common interests and a joint system of defence. Each family has its own network of friendships and alliances, and is often indistinguishable to the rest of the tribe's families. It is no unusual occurrence for one or two houses of a village to be attacked and burnt by a hostile raiding-party, while the other villagers make no attempt to come to their assistance. Similarly there are cases of the men of one household raiding a co-villager's house perhaps a few furlongs away and capturing the inhabitants with a view to obtaining satisfaction of an economic claim.

The clan is no more a political unit than the village. I have come across numerous feuds between members of the same clan, and it seems that the capture or killing of a clansman is considered in no way different from a similar act of violence directed against a member of another clan.
In the absence of chiefs or any authority comparable to the Apa Tansi's butsinq the Dafá is used to take the law into his own hands and to press any claim if needs be by force. Many a Dafá is captured and kept for months imprisoned in his captor's intimacy. His captor may have no personal grievance against him, but uses his power for his own benefit. Sometimes there is surprisingly little ill-feeling between captor and captive, and it is not uncommon for marriage-alliances to result from the intimacy developed during such periods of captivity.

Warlike as the Dafás are, unlike Nagas they do not raid for the sake of gaining the glory of a head-hunter, nor in order to obtain for their village the soul-force of the slain. The lure of loot and the hope for riches and power in a raiding expedition, while a good many Dafás raid merely in order to obtain compensation for real or imagined damage, and there are few quarrels that cannot be settled by negotiation and the payment of indemnities. Men who have raided and slain each others' kinsmen will discuss a settlement in quite an amicable fashion, and once losses have been made good by suitable payments, they may become the best of friends.

The process of pacification involves the sacrifice of a mithan accompanies the conclusion of a friendship-pact (pakhe) between former enemies, and just as individuals conclude pakhé pact, so villages establish peace-treaties, called dapo which at least in theory are binding on all inhabitants of a village. Indeed the observance of dapo-treaties is one of the few outward manifestations of a certain germinal village-solidarity.

This usage of the Dafá to terminate even the most serious feud through negotiation and the amicable conclusion of friendship-pacts suggests the means of bringing about a restriction of raiding and ultimately perhaps the pacification of the whole area. To encourage and facilitate the conclusion of pakhe and dapo-pacts between as many individuals and villages as possible is the surest way to the consolidation of peace; here too we must realize that the absence among both Dafás and Mirís of any recognized authority makes the establishment of a type of Indirect Rule or even of a stable system of partnership and economic influence extremely difficult, true, some powerful and wealthy Dafás command a certain following even outside their own homesteads, and the influence which Government exerts at present in a limited area is mainly based on good relations with such prominent men. To extend and consolidate this influence it will be necessary to study and map the network of alliances and ceremonial friendships which habitually link the different tribal areas. For this purpose Mirís of recognized standing will set up personal alliances between individual householders, alliances which are established and periodically strengthened by elaborate exchanges of valuables, mithan and daughters given in marriage.

The strong man, wealthy enough to surround himself with a circle of business friends and relations-in-law (some Dafás have as many as seven or eight wives) may attain in this way a certain measure of security, and the claims and threats of litigants by a rule of law under which even the smallest hamlet can enjoy the maintenance of tribal harmony, and by encouraging such institutions Government may be able to accelerate the process of pacification.

The Dafás' most effective mechanism for re-establishing friendly relations between hostile parties is the mél or tribal council, an informal gathering attended by the two disputing parties and a number of mediators and spectators. Usually such mél are held with the object of settling one specific dispute and are preceded by the long drawn out negotiations of go-betweenes; but it should be possible to promote a greater and wider feeling of the community by setting up mechanisms by which groups of Government can meet regularly to discuss current affairs and such disputes as may have occurred in their area. Not every dispute brought before such a regional council will necessarily be settled, but the opportunity of personal contact, in an atmosphere of temporary security, may help many opponents to come to terms.

At first it may be expedient for Government to confine its part to guaranteeing freedom of passage to all those attending the council's meeting. It would be impracticable to reserve to the Dafás the privilege of sending a mél as observers a right of veto, and even more so to commit Government to enforcing the decisions of any tribal council. The recording of cases and decisions will be invaluable for any future codification of the Dafás' customary law, but at this stage direct intervention in tribal quarrels is inadvisable for more than one reason. It must often remain ineffective owing to the immobility of the small forces at the disposal of officers, it is likely that any encouragement given to the chances of compromise, and last, but not least, at a time when little is as yet known of Dafá custom it would be difficult to be sure of assessing the right and wrong of every case.

For the prestige and ultimate influence of the 'Senior Partner' it is far better to allow a tribal council to take a wrong decision than to associate Government with any course of action which runs counter to its ideas. The Dafás a sense of joint responsibility, and this can be achieved only by allowing the tribal councils to decide according to their own lights. The initiative for the establishment of tribal councils or periodical mél must, however, come from Government. What then shall be the area from which the members of each council are to be selected? In view of the Dafás' political tendencies this area cannot be large and individual settlements or river-valleys or parts thereof suggest themselves. The members of the Kiyi Valley meet in one council, people from the lower Panbar Valley in another, and representatives of the Dafás of the Par Valley in a third. In case of disputes between members of two such areas mediation may be attempted by inviting senior members of both councils to a joint meeting. We should not assume, however, that a rule of law, consultation in place of direct action, a feeling of tribal unity in place of violent individualism, a spirit of compromise in place of the spirit of greed and greed can be created by a stroke of the pen. Many will be the tribal councils that break up in disagreement, many times will individual households or even whole villages flaunt all talk of peace and yield to the lure of war and adventure.

In extreme cases when groups of outstanding warriors attempt to terrorize weaker neighbours, restraining action by Government forces may be the only means of re-establishing peace. But any such action must remain an exception, for at this early stage Government cannot possibly shoulder the
gigantic task of policing the whole roadless and largely unexplored mountain country between the foothills and the Great Himalayan Range. Even the limited influence which Government can wield through the organization of tribal councils must, for the present, be confined to the explored country south of the Kamla and Lower Khru. In this zone Government will do well to institute the system of paid tribal interpreters and to invest prominent men with the red mantles of official recognition.* Nearly all the Hill Miris and Dafas who receive posa-payments live in this area and they can be relied upon at least not openly to oppose Government's policy. Beyond lies a zone which can be visited only occasionally and at considerable cost, and where friendly relations with individual prominent men, strengthened by intercourse, may be an immediate aim. But this zone does not extend further than the outermost Lahore hills, and beyond lies unexplored regions where a little more than a vague rumour. Consolidation in the first zone is essential before friendships with individual prominent men in the middle zone can be developed into concrete influence; without secure lines of communications, dependent on such influence, penetration into the unexplored country on the upper course of Khru, Kamla and S.Bansiri will be hazardous for small parties and impossible for large expeditions.

Whatever methods Government may adopt to extend its influence over the Subansiri Region penetration can thus be achieved only by stages. Just as the Naga Hills were for long divided into the fully administered Naga Hills District, a 'controlled' zone and the completely independent tribal country along the Patkoi Range, so will the Subansiri Region fall naturally into several zones in each of which Government influence will be of varying degree.

Whereas in the foothills it may be possible to put a stop to inter-village warfare within the next five years, much time will elapse before Government can exert any effective check on tribal feuds in the regions of the Upper Khru and Upper Kamla. And the principle of progress by slow stages will apply not only to the area to be controlled, but equally to the intensity of that control. Prevention of full scale raiding may be achieved long before it is possible to banish the use of force from all tribal affairs. The practice of all—national law is payable by the person of the victim—which is the practice in the lower part of the Naga Hills will continue for a long time. There is no impartial tribunal which will confirm a man's legitimate claim and which commands the means of enforcing sanction against those disregarding its verdict. 

Any outside power establishing itself in the role of such a tribunal will only foster the Dafa's tendency to litigiousness. Institutions destined to pave the way to organised self-government must be anchored in tribal tradition and embody tribal conceptions of right and wrong; they must be worked by the tribesmen themselves and give their sanction from a public opinion gradually adjusting itself to modern conditions.

How are we to translate this principle into practical policy? The first task of the administrative officer must be to organize manageable units consisting of a very limited number of villages which stand already in close economic and social relations. Within each such unit of perhaps four or five villages men must be selected to fulfil the tasks of interpreters, village-representatives and porter-foremen. The interpreter must be literate with the duty of communicating important decisions to Government. In this first stage they can be no more than a recognized link between Government and the tribesmen, but the outward symbol of their position is likely to create a spirit of fraternity between all red-cloth holders, so that gradually a community of interests grows up amongst the most prominent men of several villages and develops into a stabilizing influence. The red-cloth holders will ipso facto be recognized as the regional council of the territory. The position of Government interpreter will of necessity be that of "Secretaries"—albeit at first illiterate—with the duty of communicating important decisions to Government. Finally there are in the zone so far covered by exploratory expeditions young men of intelligence and efficiency, who have proved capable of managing gangs of porters. Where tribal porters were employed over longer periods, these men became automatically the gang-leaders (sirdar); they showed a considerable sense of responsibility and a desire to achieve a position of command. To such men Government is not an abstraction but the concrete power standing behind the officer with whom he comes in contact. The nature of this power is judged by no other criteria than by the officer's behaviour and attitude, and Government will, therefore, be considered a friendly power only if the officer succeeds in evoking sentiments of friendship and mutual trust in the hearts of the tribesmen.

SLAVERY

Successful co-operation between Government and the tribesmen depends on a measure of agreement on certain basic principles and aims. In the economic field such agreement is easily reached because Government and tribesmen are both engaged in a more or less regular trade and their communications are fairly consistent. Government's and Apa Tani's wish to increase his wealth and improve his standard of living. Similarly the organization of tribal councils and the gradual substitution of arbitration for force in the settlement of disputes meet the individual householder's desire for security of person and property, and there are indeed few Dafas and even fewer Apa Taws who regard traditional law with hostility. Differences between Government and tribal opinion relates in these spheres rather to method and detail than to principle. But in the attitude to slavery an institution deeply anchored both in Dafa and Apa Tani Society, there is from the very outset a deep cleavage between Government's and the tribesmen's point of view. To the tribesman

*In the Naga and Abor Hills village headmen and interpreters are given cloaks of red cloth as symbols of office.
slavery is one of the foundations of personal wealth, an institution hallowed by tradition and supported even by eschatological beliefs, whereas to Government it is a custom contradictory to the elementary rights of man and banned by a number of inter-national agreements. But while in territory not under the direct control of the Government of India, the provisions of the Geneva Convention may be only of academic interest, the welfare of the many Dafla and Apa Tani slaves cannot remain a matter of indifference to the officials of Government in the rest of the country. The problem is then how their interests can best be offered protection. Government has, of course, in the past acted without alienating tribal opinion and jeopardizing the good relations with Daflas, Miris and Apa Tani that have been built up during the last few years.

It has for long been the accepted practice that any slave who crosses the boundary between the Tribal Area and the Province of Assam and invokes the protection of Government as a matter of course automatically gains his freedom and is allowed to settle in one of the better parts of the plains. The tribesmen though at first resentful, have reconciled themselves to the existence of such an asylum for slaves; they recognize the overwhelming material power of Government in the plains, and regard an escaped slave under the protection of Government in the same way as a slave who finds refuge in the house of a Dafna neighbour strong enough to resist the original master's demands for compensation.

But despite the existence of this safe asylum in the plains, hundreds of Apa Tani and Dafla slaves annually visit the bazaars of Assam and the plains revealing themselves the opportunity of gaining their freedom. All but an insignificant fraction are content to return with their purchases and earnings to the hills and their masters. This alone seems to suggest that a slave's position in tribal society is on the whole not as unenviable as might be assumed. Among the Daflas and Miris a slave can rise to the status of a fully privileged member of his former master's clan, while many Apa Tani slaves enjoy complete economic independence with nothing reminding them of their one-time servitude. Even these slaves who live in the houses of their masters are often hardly distinguishable from the free members of the family.

It is the fate of prisoners of war or casual captives, torn from their familiar surroundings and fettered for long months to prevent escape only to be sold as slaves to distant villages, which on purely humanitarian grounds calls for the suppression of slave-raiding. This can again be achieved only by stages together with the general pacification of the country.

But what attitude should Government take vis-a-vis existing slaves? A realistic approach, free of sentimentality born of an entirely different social background, is essential for a practicable solution of this problem. It is obvious to any one familiar with the Subansiri Region that slavery cannot be abolished merely by a decree of Government. There is no machinery to force the tribals to renounce an institution which they regard as their birthright. Any attempt to free slaves in a limited number of villages, say of the foothills, would have the most unfortunate results on the slaves in other areas. For there can be no doubt that the abolition of slavery in the foothills would prompt many slave-owners of the villages further in the interior to forestall Government's action by selling their domestic slaves to tribesmen in distant areas. Perhaps on the uppers Assam and Kamla outside the range of Government's influence. This is what happened when slavery was abolished in the administered parts of the Naga Hills, and little imagination is required to visualize the sufferings of such slaves suddenly torn from an environment familiar to them since childhood and dragged, probably by a sequence of purchasers and sellers, to far off villages of different custom and language.

Thus any drastic action which may benefit a few slaves in villages close to the plains would almost certainly be prejudicial to the welfare of slaves in other areas. Restraint on the part of Government will, therefore, be in the interest of the slave-population as well as of Government's relations with the upper strata of Dafla and Apa Tani society. With the opening up of the country and closer contact with the outside world slavery will gradually die a natural death. We have seen how in recent years Apa Tanis of slave-class bettered their economic status by wage-earning and trade in the plains, and their opportunities for earning cash will multiply if Government consolidates its influence in the hills. The maintenance of trade depots and communications, the building of tracks and bridges, and the transport of the loads of Government officers will all depend on local labour, and it has been the general experience that slaves are the first to enlist as porters or labourers. Though sometimes they have to hand over their earnings to their masters, they are as a rule allowed to use their wages to buy goods for trade or for their own use.

It might be possible to introduce a system whereby slaves can purchase their freedom by handing over to their masters part of their wages or trade-gains until their original price has been refunded and their masters grant them the status of free members of their clan. But even without such a system the position of slaves earning wages is bound to improve, and I have little doubt that within a generation slavery will in many areas have assumed the character of domestic service. It is probable that rather than fend for themselves many Dafla slaves will prefer to remain under the protection of powerful and wealthy masters. Among the Apa Tanis the social distinction between patricians and the dependants of slaves will long persist, but the economic differences between the two classes will gradually be levelled.

**LAND TENURE AND AGRICULTURE**

Experience in other parts of India inhabited by tribal populations has amply demonstrated that a clarification of the rights of land-tenure should be undertaken as early as possible. In the most Indian provinces land-allienation Acts have come too late to protect the aboriginals from dispossession by outsiders, and the reservation of forests (however necessary in the wider national interest) has reduced rough-shod over the older rights of jungle-tribes. In the interest of the frontier tribes' future it is, therefore, essential that their indigenous rights on their homelands are recognized and secured by laws that leave no loophole for the inhibition of outsiders or encroachers. For the pacific action of the tribemen will deprive them of their natural defence against adventurers and land-grabbing settlers, and preventative legislation must replace the weapons of tribal warfare. The development of the hills of the North-East Frontier must be for the benefit of the local population, which ought never to share the fate of so many other primitive folks and be reduced to the position of landless labourers on the soil which was their fathers' and forefathers'.

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Among the Apa Tanis the ownership of land is seldom subject to doubt. There is a clear distinction between pasture-land and hunting grounds owned communally by clan or village, and the privately owned gardens and rice or millet-fields. The preparation and regular maintenance of a record-of-rights would meet with no great difficulties, and the usual methods of surveying and registering cultivated land would be applicable, except for minor adjustments. The Dafas on the other hand, who are mainly "jhum" cultivators, do not as a rule recognize permanent individual rights in land. Whoever sows a piece of jungle gains by virtue of his initial effort the right to cultivate the cleared land for the next period of cultivation, which extends rarely to more than two or three years. When the land reverts to jungle this right lapses, and there exist consequently no permanent proprietary rights in land except in those villages which have obviously been inspired by the latter bands, have managed to cultivate on carefully constructed terraces. These terraces are cultivated permanently and are the property of individuals.

The main issue is how to safeguard in perpetuity the Dafas' title to land which they are accustomed to cultivate in irregular rotation without themselves recognizing any permanent rights of individual families. There is the generally accepted belief that by inhabiting a tract of land a clan or group of clans establishes a title to the territory, and the boundaries of such tracts are known to all neighboring groups. A people knowing the exact extent of its land, and adding to it by claim a right to the land by virtue of conquest, but if a clan abandons its land voluntarily new-comers settling on the vacant land are expected to pay the former inhabitants a nominal fee and thereby they acquire rights of occupation. This, however, does not apply to families joining existing villages; as soon as they are accepted and allowed to settle they automatically gain the right to cultivate on the village-land.

The most obvious solution might be, therefore, to vest titles to the soil in the village-communities as a whole, but there arises at once the difficulty that, unlike Apa Tani or Naga villages, Dafas' villages are not stable units. Sites are changed every generation or so and the composition of villages changes almost year by year. Another obstacle in the way of vesting permanent communal rights in the village is the fact that whilst the land can immediately become subject to custom and administration, the land itself is unclaimed as theirs. Either local conditions of soil and climate do not permit a system of shifting-cultivation whereby the fertility of the soil is retained through regulated periods of fallow, or the Dafas are less skilful than Nagas in judging when a particular piece of land may again be cleared of forest-growth and taken under cultivation. Without a very careful study of soil-conditions it is impossible to discover the causes for the different success of shifting cultivation in the Dafas' country and, for instance, in the Konyak Naga Hills. But the fact remains that the land around many Dafas villages is almost completely exhausted and denuded of forest-growth, and that the many recent movements and migrations of Dafas clans have obviously been motivated by the necessity of finding new cultivable land. Large areas, such as the tract round Talo and Jerum have already been cleared and land unsuitable for cultivation, and in the Upper Panier Valley, virgin forest has receded to the steepest slopes along the crests of the hills. The large forest-areas in the foothills, where villages are as yet only small enclaves in unbroken stretches of virgin forest, still offer opportunities for the settlement of colonists from the interior; but periodical movements of tribal groups in search of land do not make for economic and political stability, and that a point may come when deforestation and deterioration of soil will endanger the very foundations of Dafa economics.

No greater service could be rendered to the Dafas than to instruct them in methods of cultivation where by soil-fertility could be preserved. Terracing, with or without irrigation, would seem the most obvious way of preventing erosion and impoverishment of the soil, and the example of the Dafas' villages in touch with Apa Tanis shows that Dafas' are capable of learning new methods of agriculture even if they involve strenuous labour of a novel type. Within the system of jhum-cultivation there are also ways of minimizing the dangers of erosion, permanent soil-destruction and soil-exhaustion. Narrow belts of trees left standing between individual blocks of cleared land establish an immeasurably greater buffer between the land under cultivation and the forest, and it is very probable that scientifically guided rotation of crops, perhaps accompanied by a variation of the Burmese taungya system of planting trees together with the last crop, would be helpful in retaining permanently the fertility of the soil.

The use of animal-traction and ploughs, on the other hand, which in most countries has revolutionized agriculture, has little future in an area where it is often difficult to find within a radius of several miles any level space big enough even to pitch a tent. Dafas' rice terraces are mainly built on hill-slopes where hoe and digging-stick cannot be replaced by the plough. But the types of implements wielded by hand can, of course, be improved; spades made of the shoulder-blades of mithan will in time give way to iron tools.

Conditions in the Apa Tani valley are very different. There a most highly developed system of agriculture is already in being, and I doubt whether there are many places in India where so much care and labour is expended per acre of cultivated land.

This does not mean, however, that there is no scope for improvement. Improved varieties of rice, for instance, may yield even richer crops or at least a grain of superior flavour. But whether such newly introduced types would thrive as peripherals like some varieties of Apa Tani rice is a question which only experiment can solve. New vegetables and larger fruiting potatoes, tomatoes and fruits will almost certainly benefit the Apa Tani and my experience in 1945 when I distributed large quantities of vegetable seed has shown that they are keen on trying out new varieties.

A more difficult problem is the advisability of introducing the plough into the Apa Tani country. While on the comparatively small and irregularly shaped rice terraces the use of the plough would not necessarily increase efficiency, on the open stretches of dry land it would no doubt save a great deal of human labour. The cultivation of these dry lands where now many a poor man can raise a crop without any planting, and after the first spade, would thus become more profitable and there is the danger that the rich men, who would be the first to have plough cattle, would try to monopolize these lands and thus close one of the last openings for the independent enterprise of the poor. Moreover, the introduction of the plough would throw out of employment many poor men and women, who now make a living by working for men with large holdings. Since not labour but land is limited, the rich men in possession of ploughs could not increase production to any great extent by enlarging the area under cultivation, but they could cut down the cost of production, and, no longer obliged to feed and pay large numbers of labourers, could raise their sales of more cheaply produced rice to Dafas and thereby increase their wealth in mithan. It is obvious that this would upset the distribution of the food-supply within the Apa Tani community and lead to an increase in the rich man's rice exports at the expense of the landless poor.
It may be that, now the Apa Tanis' isolation has been broken and wealthy men who were never used to go to the plains are now coming in contact with plains Daflas and other outsiders familiar with ploughing, the plough will, with or without Government encouragement, find its way into the Apa Tani country. Such an innovation may, however, gravely disturb the harmony of Apa Tani society unless it is preceded either by an enlargement of the area under cultivation or by the establishment of new industries and village-crafts capable of absorbing the displaced labour.

In the Apa Tani valley there is little scope for any large scale expansion of cultivation, but with the pacification of the country and the exclusion of danger from raids, it might be possible to encourage colonists from the Apa Tani country to settle in adjacent valleys. There are opportunities for such colonization in the swampy dales between the south end of the valley and the Pangun River, and in the Pecin Valley, six miles to the north of the Apa Tani country, there is enough flat land suitable for plough cultivation and irrigation to support a considerable population. Some of the surrounding slopes are used for jhuming by a small Dafla community, but the flat bottom of the valley lies fallow and Apa Tanis, if given security, might be able to create here and elsewhere islands of civilization on a smaller scale, of course, than in their nearby homeland, but based on a similar type of cultivation. Far from harming the few Dafla families whose houses and cultivation are on the hilltop above the valley bottom, the example of the Apa Tanis may ultimately encourage the Daflas to similar efforts as it has so successfully done in such villages as Mai.

So superior is the Apa Tanis' agricultural technique compared with the crude ways of Dafsa tillage that a planned economic development of the Subansiri Region should offer the Apa Tani an ample scope for employment as agricultural instructors. Just as now some of the poorer Apa Tanis supplement their income by working every year for several weeks in the plains, so they would no doubt be prepared to demonstrate superior methods of tillage to their Dafla and Mee neighbours provided that Government remunerated them and guaranteed their safety while on 'foreign' soil.

TRADE AND LOCAL INDUSTRIES

Even with the present primitive methods of cultivation the Subansiri Region is practically a self-sufficient unit in regard to food supplies. There is a good deal of interchange of foodstuffs between Apa Tanis and the neighbouring Daflas who barter grain for sacrificial animals, but apart from their regular purchases of salt the tribesmen do not rely on any appreciable extent on the imports of food from the plains.

This self-sufficiency does not however extend to all spheres of life. Besides salt, the tribesmen of today stand in greater or lesser need of two commodities: iron implements and cotton cloth. The main sources of supply and the centres of distribution for these two imports are, as they are for salt, the plains of Assam for the Southern tribesmen who sell their labour to gain the necessary purchasing power, and the highlands of South-East Tibet for the northern tribesmen who barter the wild products of their hills and forests against their needs; a subsidiary centre of distribution is the Apa Tani country where a type of black salt is reduced from vegetable ash, iron implements are manufactured on a commercial basis from iron procured from the plains and cloth is woven from cotton grown by local Daflas. The divide between the two major spheres of trade influence runs in a north-easterly direction, roughly midway through the Subansiri area.

In the contact zones of Tribal and Assamese and Tribal and Tibetan culture the tribesmen have grown to regard imported salt, iron implements and cloth, cotton and silk in the south and woollen in the north, as essentials. But the peoples inhabiting the country to either side of the trade divide are pitifully short in supply of salt, use bone and bamboo agricultural implements and in some areas dress for the most part in skins, fibre fabrics and grass skirts.

While it would seem that the extent of Tibetan infiltration has remained static for several decades, the intensification of trade in Assamese products due to the expansion of wage-earning possibilities in the plains and the added stimuli of the last two seasons' earnings on Government's works in the hills has resulted in a deepening penetration of Assamese goods. It would not be practical politics to try to revert to total self-sufficiency tribal life, for the acquisition of modern implements and more effective techniques are the surest way of raising the standard of living. Nor is there any necessity to resort to any new crops which rest on the secure foundation of agriculture and animal husbandry. Seasonal wage-earning in the plains, though it exposes the tribesmen to diseases against which he has no resistance and to fluctuations of the Assamese labour market over which he has no control, serves as a healthy corrective of extreme dependency on 'foreign' goods. Rather should it be Government's policy to direct the tribesmen's labour potential into the hills for the development of his own homeland, to ensure the supply of those products which will help him to raise his standard of living without allowing him to exhaust his purchasing power on tawdry goods and to encourage the production of goods for export so that the tribesmen's trading transactions need not for all time be based on the one-sided purchase of commodities but will gradually develop into a two-way exchange of goods.

Let us first consider the avenues open to the Daflas and Mee who economic status and level of culture are very similar. South of the Panior and Lower Karnla the tribesmen obtain practically all cloth from bazaars in the plains; weaving is here not practised, and used to cheap machine made bazaar cloth, the tribesmen have largely lost the appreciations of the durable and aesthetically far superior Dafla cloth. Only a slump in the labour market and consequent difficulties of earning cash might induce them to consider a revival of their own weaving industry. Yet encouragement of the cultivation of an improved type of cotton and of weaving on an experimental scale in selected villages might be worthwhile, particularly if the scheme were started in villages where there are several women who come from areas where weaving is still practised as a tribal craft. Likewise an increased supply of iron would automatically encourage the local blacksmiths to greater effort, would stimulate inter-tribal trade and make available to a wider circle the improved tools necessary for a larger crop output.

The introduction of new vegetables and certain cash crops, such as cardamoms, in the hills would almost certainly mean an increase in prosperity. Oranges and other citrus fruit, which grow well in the Mee Hills south of the Karnla and are to be found wild on the slopes of the Upper Panior and on the hills below the Par Valley, might become market crops if the climate were suitable. The tribesmen might also raise vegetables which are grown at an altitude of 3,000 or 4,300 feet, might have certain advantages over the vegetables grown in the plains.
An entirely new industry could perhaps be created by instructing the Daflas in the curing of hides. The skins of wild animals trapped and shot, and of the even more attractive reflector, enable them to profit most from the skins of wild animals trapped and shot, and of the even more attractive reflector, enable them to profit most from the output of the Apa Tani country; the rolling valley though likely to provide pasture is perhaps too damp, but if the Daflas to the south took to sheep breeding Apa Tani could buy the wool for rice and their women might be taught to spin woolen yarn and weave light woolen cloth which would rival the Assamese silk cloths now valued for their softness and warmth, but which only the rich could afford.

At this stage, when the closer contact with outsiders offers the Apa Tani the opportunity of obtaining without great effort a wide range of novel articles, it may be difficult, however, to persuade the Apa Tani to embark on the learning of a new craft. Their year is meticulously divided into periods of specific activities and additions to their programme of work may not altogether appeal to them. When in 1944 and 1945 hundreds of Assamese had worked for the tribes as porters and earned thereby five to six rupees in cash, they were greatly anxious to purchase white machine-made cotton cloth, not because they preferred it to the loom-made cloth but because it could be obtained with comparatively little effort: by working for ten days a man could purchase four cloths while a woman takes hardly less than a week to weave the same quantity of cloth. From its greater aesthetic value, however, Apa Tani cloth is at least four times as durable as cheap mill-cloth and in the long run it will pay the Apa Tani to maintain their own weaving industry. Government would only do them a disservice by encouraging the purchase of goods which are likely to displace the products of the local craftsmen, products which have served the Apa Tani well in the past, and which will still serve them in years when they may have no opportunity of earning cash by work for Government or private traders. In the meanwhile it might be as well to make available at a reasonable price satisfactory cotton yarn rather than bazaar cloth, for at present it is the scarcity of cotton which limits the output of the Apa Tani weaving industry. Likewise the shortage of iron prevents the Apa Tani blacksmiths, whose wares are in demand right up to the Assam-Tibet trade-divide, from increasing his output of implements, and a steady supply of iron would greatly help in developing the Apa Tani country as a tribal manufacturing centre of the first order.

Good craftsmen, hard workers, and daring traders the Apa Tani seem predestined to play a leading role in the economic advancement of the whole Subansiri Region and by stimulating their industries and trade Government can help to better the conditions of populations beyond the range of its direct influence.

Finally we may ask ourselves how the closer economic relations of Apa Tani, South Kamla Miris and the Daflas of the Par and Panier Regions with Government and the population of the Assamese plains are likely to react on the tribesmen in the areas which are at present under the influence of Tibetan trade. With larger quantities of Assamese goods such as iron and salt available in the hills south of the Khru and Kamla, and the impetus thereby lent to the activities of Apa Tani traders, increasing supplies of salt as well as swords, axe, knives and hoes will reach the tribesmen to either side of the old trade-divide, where they may eventually displace some of the articles of Tibetan origin. But in view of the difficulties of transport and the uncertainty of communications it is for many years to come unlikely that the trade-divide will recede northwards by more than fifteen or at the most twenty-five miles. Even less probable is it that Assamese or Apa Tani cloth will within any measurable time be able to compete with the warm, durable and expensive Tibetan woollen cloth, which is universally worn in such areas as the Upper Kamla and the Mungo valleys. Cotton cloth is unsuitable for these attitudes and any woollen cloth coming from India would be prohibitively expensive. Even if sheep-breeding is introduced among those Daflas now in contact with Assam the output of wool will for a long time to come meet only local requirements. But there is a yet more cogent reason why the trade of the tribes on the Upper Khru, and the Upper Kamla, will not be seriously affected by the Upper Subansiri is not likely to be diverted from Tibet. The exchange-goods which these tribesmen have to offer—vegetable dyes, cane ropes, roughly cured skins and various jungle produce—are highly prized by the Tibetans but have no or little market value among Apa Tani and Southern Daflas and could never be disposed of in the plains of Assam. Indeed Apa Tani and South Kamla Miris will only be interested in cheap Tibetan woollen cloth if this is the only trade-divide which is universal worn in such areas as the Upper Kamla and the Mungo valleys. If through the tribesmen of that area they can obtain more of those Tibetan goods valued for their aesthetic qualities and traditional associations. Thus the expansion of trade in the zone under Indian influence, which will provide such tribes as the Apa Tani and Hill Miris with a supply of exchange-goods for trade with the tribes further to the north, will not replace, but rather stimulate trade with Tibet by encouraging the tribesmen along the trade-divide to acquire more Tibetan goods with which to barter articles obtainable only from Assam. If thereby the scarcity belt, where at present people do not obtain sufficient quantities of salt and iron either from India or from Tibet, can be gradually narrowed and perhaps ultimately eliminated, economic penetration in the Subansiri Region will have brought concrete benefits to a very considerable population to both sides of the present Indo-Tibetan trade-divide.
EDUCATION

If the tribesmen of the Subansiri Region are to adapt themselves and their style of living to closer contacts with the outside world, a measure of education is indispensable to make this process a success. Only literacy and a knowledge of Assamese enable the Dafas or the Apa Tanis to maintain their dignity and to deal in terms with the people of the plains. Ignorance of written Assamese is a blight to their economic relations with the outside world, on the tutelage of Government. And though Government as the ‘senior partner’ will for many years have to continue to protect the hillmen as far as possible from economic exploitation, it is in the interests of both parties that the tribesmen shall be educated to attain as soon as possible a reasonable degree of self-reliance, not only in the administration of their own affairs, but also in their relations with other populations.

But what type of education is most likely to give to the Dafas and Apa Tani self-reliance and equip him for the manifold contacts with outsiders which the opening up of the country will inevitably involve? There can be no reasonable doubt that acquisition of a working knowledge of colloquial Assamese must be the first aim of any educational effort. Relations with officers of Government as well as with the population of the plains would at once become easier and smoother if a number of prominent tribesmen were able to converse in Assamese. At present it is mainly men of low status and little schooling who have picked up a smattering of Assamese while working for wages in the plains. The prominent men, on whose judgment the opinion of whole villages depends, have, as a rule, no knowledge of Assamese. When I first visited the Apa Tani country the relations between this important tribe of 20,000 and Government depended almost entirely on one Dafa interpreter, Kop Temi, who was the only person familiar with both Assamese and Apa Tani.

The presence of a Government party in the Apa Tani country in 1944 and again in 1945 enabled several young Apa Tanis of good status to pick up a little Assamese, but even at the end of the second season none of them could interpret or even understand a simple conversation. Among the Dafas of the Par Valley and the South Kamla Miria one meets individual men and women who through frequent visits to the plains have acquired a certain fluency in Assamese, but as one moves northwards through the Kivi Valley into the Kheru Region or along the Kamla river Assamese soon loses its usefulness as a medium of intercourse, none of the tribesmen knowing even a few words of the language.

Where even mutual understanding with adults is still difficult, education and particularly education of children cannot follow orthodox lines. At the present stage it would be futile to open schools for Apa Tani or Dafa children. Neither parents nor children would comprehend the usefulness of such schooling and the teachers who would have to be imported would have no means of communicating with their pupils.

The initial approach will have to be different. Small groups of selected young men should be taught colloquial Assamese in an informal way and this would create at least a nucleus of people who realize the advantages of learning a foreign language. At first the teaching should be purely vocal, and only when the students have understood that to every word in their tribal dialect corresponds a word in Assamese, should they be taught the link between the phonetic sound and a written symbol. An adaptation of Laubach’s Method of Adult Education will probably be the most successful, but the difficulty is at present that no one capable of reducing a tonal language to writing has as yet a sufficient knowledge of Assamese. The printing of charts and books will, therefore, have to wait, but specially chosen teachers from other hill tribes, e.g., Nagas under the guidance of an officer experienced in, and original education could start experimental teaching straightforward. There can be no two views as to the script which should be used in writing the tribal dialects. Assamese is the obvious choice, for Assamese is the language through which the tribesmen will have to communicate with the outside world.

Once the idea of the written word—today utterly foreign to the majority of tribesmen—has gained ground and a few adults are able to put their knowledge of writing to practical use it will be time to begin with the education of children. By then the teachers who have worked among adults should have learnt enough of the tribal dialects to use them as media of instruction and with their help educationalists should be able to compose simple primers in the tribal languages.

While for adults the acquisition of a second language and the ability to read and write it will be an extraordinary achievement and indeed as much as adult education can be expected to impart in the circumstances, child education cannot be divorced from the question of values. The Assamese school-books which are likely to be used are based on certain cultural values, and if these—as may well happen—run counter to those accepted in tribal society, there arises the danger of a conflict of ideas. Any discrepancy between the values taught in school and those assimilated by the child at home and in the village must lead to mal-adjustment and disharmony. I am not at all sure whether detribalized Nagas or Khasis working as teachers among Apa Tanis and Dafas can always be relied to have the general teaching of the social and ethical values of the tribesmen. Close supervision and guidance by an expert is here indispensable. That schools can achieve similar results elsewhere. The school and the school-books must stand in close relation to the actualities of the tribesmen, and children must be imbued with respect for the tribal institutions which sustain the social existence of the community. Instruction in improved agricultural methods and useful arts and crafts is of course, also desirable, but even more important is the general orientation of school education. It must not lead away from the tribe, to a world where a clerkship in an office, control of an educated man’s career; it must lead into the heart of tribal life with ambition directed towards service on village and regional councils, in schools, trade-unions and the other local institutions. It will be difficult however, to inculcate such a spirit in the school-boys until young men of the tribe have been trained as teachers. The primary aim of any educational system should, therefore, be the training of intelligent tribesmen for the post of teachers in the first village-schools. Progress will no doubt be slower than among the Gonds, who, though without a written language of their own, were fully alive to the advantages of literacy. But the ultimate fate of Apa Tanis and Dafas too will depend on their ability to assimilate the techniques indispensable to present-day civilization, and the attainment of literacy will be an important stepping-stone to an organized tribal self-government based on traditional values but utilising the modern requisites of an ordered administration.
CONCLUSIONS

these notes I have attempted no more than a statement of problems, an assessment of the
utilites of culture-contacts in the Subansiri Region, and a rough outline of a course of action which
led to a satisfactory and mutually beneficial co-operation between the populations of the plains and
independent tribesmen of the hills. The policy which will govern their relations in the years to come
will not be formulated and until a decision has been reached on matters of principle, it is impossible
to detail plans or foretell future developments. The anthropologist familiar with the tribesmen’s
consciousness of the great and vital values in their culture, can only hope that Government’s policy will
be based on respect for the tribesmen’s undeniable right on their country and its resources, and
determination to develop and improve, but never to destroy tribal institutions and a social order
which has stood the test of time. The tragic mistakes committed by the representatives of advanced
nations in the treatment of the primitives of the South Sea Islands and North America must
be avoided in the Eastern Himalayas. We can learn both from those mistakes and from the more
successful policies which aim at remedying some of their results. A pronouncement of John Collier, Commis-
Sioner of Indian Affairs in United States, which aptly characterizes the present American attitude
of the remnants of the Red Indian race, could be applied almost verbatim to the policy which should
 Govern India’s relations with the primitive tribal folks on her north-eastern borders; “On the purely
outside, only sheen fanaticism would decide on further destruction of (Red) Indian languages, crafts,
music, ritual, philosophy, and religion. These possessions have a significance and beauty which
can be comprehended only patiently through endless generations of a people immersed in the life of nature, filled with imaginative
insight into the life of being. To destroy them would be comparable to destroying the rich
Cultural heritage of the Aryan races—its music and poetry, its religion and philosophy, its temples and
monuments...........The new Indian policy seeks to preserve these unique cultural values through the Indian
nation and otherwise........But while protecting the Indian culture from violent up-rooting, the new
policies seek also to give the (Red) Indians the full advantage of modern education and of science, and thus
aim for modern life”.

A. G. F. (Advisor, No. 59-36-6-1947.)