'barbed dart' lying to the right of the bird is itself regarded as a dart-thrower or spear-thrower, while the bird is rather a decoy; in that case the otherwise unexplained crosspiece near the butt end of the 'dart' would provide the grip of the thrower, as in many such implements among modern primitives. It might also follow that the artist did not intend to represent the supine figure as wearing a mask; the schematization seems in any case somewhat careless. But no doubt other interpretations of the scene are equally possible, and the Hon. Editor would welcome discussion of the matter in MAN; it is one in which, by skilful—or lucky—research, 'reconstructed history,' even of 30,000 years ago, might be taken beyond the bounds of mere conjecture. Perhaps the representations used in the transmission of tribal lore to initiates among many African and other peoples may not be irrelevant to the discussion.—ED.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES ON THE KUKI OF THE CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS, PAKISTAN

by

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284 The following observations were made in the Kuki village of Dralaukhanpara and the hamlet of Saibulsipara, about five miles distant from it. It is one of the 16 Kuki villages located south of the left bank of the Karnafully river. The main purpose of my visit to the Chittagong Hill tribes, which took place in early September, 1950, was to make a preliminary exploration of fieldwork facilities among the Mog.[1] As opportunity offered I tried to gather wider information on the kinship systems prevailing in the area.[2] The remaining observations (which are highly fragmentary since the information was not collected purposefully, but was obtained incidentally during a rapid survey made with a wholly different outlook) have been gathered in the present paper. It will be sufficient to recall that the Chittagong Kuki number 5,000 and are closely related, both linguistically and culturally, to the neighbouring Lushai farther north and east, though they seem to avoid intermarriage with them. The village where I spent a few nights had about 60 inhabitants and was situated on a hilltop (access to which was made extremely difficult by the rains, which were at their peak) about 10 miles south-east of Subilong, a small bazaar on the left bank of the Karnafully river, five to seven miles upstream from Rangamati.

A Kuki House

The house in which I lived was rectangular, about 18 metres long by 7 metres wide. It was built on a slope, so that while the front part was elevated on piles about 1 metre from the ground the height of the piles in the rear was not far from 3 metres. The walls and the floor were made of split and flattened bamboo poles plaited in checkwork. The Kuki names are as follows: house, *in*; post, *ind'tung*; floor, *suang*; ceiling, *sungta*; roof, *pal*. The house consisted of four main parts:

(1) The veranda (*sampuk*). This was open on the front and both sides and about 2 metres deep. Access was by a ladder (*lailak*) made from a notched tree trunk. When one faced the house, the right corner of the veranda was (as in all the other houses) occupied by a huge pile of firewood reaching up to the roof and so covered with dust and spiders' webs that it had obviously never been drawn upon. We were told that this display was done mostly for prestige, in order to show that the womenfolk of the house were active and industrious. Thus, the woodpile was the females' counterpart of the hundreds of skulls (monkey, deer, boar, panther, hornbill, etc.) which completely covered the back wall of the veranda, the small skulls impaled in groups on long sticks, the larger ones set in individual frames of basketry.[3] By the woodpile was the mortar (*rasum*), a big wooden block about 1 metre wide with a small cavity in the centre, and a pair of pestles (*sandre*), almost as high as a man, which are always used alternately by two girls pounding paddy in the same mortar. On the left side of the veranda the poultry were kept, either free or in numerous cage baskets. The pig trough (*vok sak-rəkuong*) was situated outside near the ladder. A water jar by the door of the main room was intended for washing the feet, a constant precaution of the Kuki before walking on the beautifully polished bamboo floor inside.

(2) The main room (*insumg*). This was about 11 metres long, divided by a double row of pillars (11 on the left and five on the right) into three aisles: the left aisle intended for guests and the mens' gatherings, and implements (for instance pellet bows, *sairu*, were hanging on that side), a central alley, and the right aisle. The latter was occupied first by the clay hearth (*dərsap*), surrounded by a square framework of bamboo for storing the kitchen utensils; then a free space (about $7 \times 2{\cdot}5$ metres), the place for the women and their work, spinning and weaving apparatus being kept by the back wall;[4] and then two sleeping rooms (*inkhumg*) or rather cubicles raised on higher posts about 30 centimetres above the floor level and surrounded with matting screens. The first and larger one (about $3 \times 2{\cdot}5$ metres) was occupied by the man of the house, his wife and his two unmarried daughters; the second ($2 \times 2{\cdot}5$ metres) by his son and his wife and baby. In the recess between the last cubicle and the back wall was set up a display of five or six superposed buffalo skulls (*səlu kaetar*) from the sacrifices. These were commemorated outside the houses by a few forked posts (*songg*) with button-shaped ends and carved wider at the fork. However, all the 25 buffaloes owned by the villagers had died a few years before from rinderpest, and the pitiful economic situation of the natives, their *jhums* invaded by *sunn*-grass, the paddy crop below subsistence level and their orange trees dying out, did not permit them to be replaced.

(3) The paddy house or granary (*s'et*). This square room opened on the left aisle and was an adjacent building. It was almost entirely occupied by three cylindrical basketry grain bins (*pang*), the larger one about $1{\cdot}5$ metres wide and 2 metres

high. In the other houses the grain bins were located in the main room.[5]

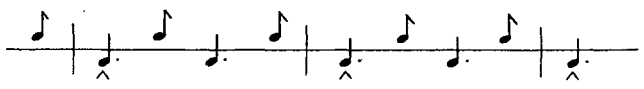
(4) The platform (*inkar*). This was in fact the continuation of the veranda and main room. However, it was erected on taller and more slender piles made of bamboo canes instead of tree trunks, and the floor also consisted of slender bamboo canes coarsely split along their full length and cross-laid, rather than plaited, in three or four layers. It was surrounded by a kind of matting fence about 1 metre high so as to hide the inmates of the house from passers-by when taking their bath or urinating, the terrace being used mainly for these purposes.

A Kuki Dance

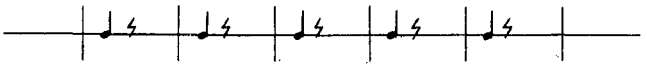
On the night of our arrival a feast was given to greet us. Two boys about 15 years old, wearing the loincloth (*pung*), the sash (*sunlak pung*), necklaces of red glass beads (*masi*) or of ribbon form, made of the yellow bark of some vine (*nem*), and a headdress made of the last material and consisting of a ring extended in two double prongs on both sides of the head (*lo-kim*) and surmounted by a bunch of slender feathers, started to gather bottles of distilled rice spirit (*ragzu*) and to prepare fresh rice beer (*zupui*) in a large earthen pot, where they mixed it with the leaves of the Jack tree, the beverage being filtered through a bent bamboo (*bulu*) leading to a smaller pot. The beer was brought to the guests in ordinary glass cups and in oxen or buffalo horns. The young people, who were the only ones to perform, consumed during the night an incredible amount of it without apparently suffering any inconvenience. Only the unmarried girls and boys, occasionally joined by the younger married men, could take part in the dance (*lam*). There were eight boys and men dancing, not including the drummer, and three girls. They formed themselves into a semicircle all facing the central alley with their backs to the wall of the 'women's space,' in the following order (from left to right as seen by a spectator): boy — boy — girl — boy — girl — boy — girl — boy — boy — boy — boy. Each was holding hands behind his or her back with a partner once removed. Thus, the three girls were holding each other's hands except for the first one's right and the last one's left hands, which were held by boys.

In the centre of the semicircle stood a boy beating a two-tone drum (*kuang*).[6] Apart from a big gong (*darkuang*), about 1·5 metres in diameter, which was brought from the headman's bedroom in the late evening, it was the only accompaniment to the song. The drummer either stood without moving or jumped forward and backward before the dancing row while uttering a shrilling sound—'trrrrr . . . . .'—by vibrating the tongue against the upper gums.

The drum beat was as follows:

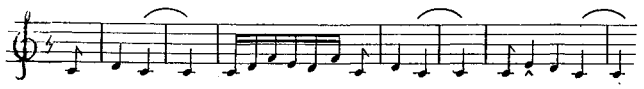


From the rhythm as well as from the steps of the dancers, who distinguished clearly between the first and third beat, it was obvious that the dance was a four-beat affair. Therefore it is striking that, when the gong was brought in, a long discussion started between two would-be performers as to whether the gong should be beaten regularly one out of two or one out of four beats. The latter rhythm was tried first, but it did not work, as the performer was losing two beats about every three bars. He was replaced by a new man who tried a two-beat measure, but it did not work; then he tried something else:

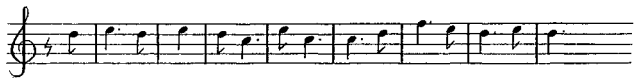


to settle at last on a four-beat measure with a regular stroke at the beginning of each bar and occasionally two additional strokes following the initial one.

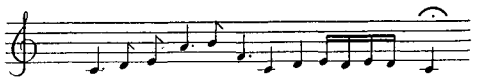
Songs were extremely monotonous; it was not possible to record the words. The tune was approximately as follows:



with an occasional shift to:



At the same time and without any reference to the main performance, a solitary flute-player, using an end-flute with bevelled upper edge and three square open stops, from time to time played the following tune:



The steps were of two types, the dancers in both cases remaining on the same spot. In the first type, each dancer shifted the weight of the body to the heels by raising the soles, then replaced the soles on the ground and bent the knees. This bending was much accentuated on the first drum beat and only slightly marked on the third. The general relation between the dance and the drum beat being as shown in the first example.

The second step was a lateral shift of the position of the foot instead of an elevation. On the first beat the left foot was raised on its toes, then replaced obliquely on the sole with the heel pointing toward the left. The same movement was performed with the right foot on the third and fourth beats, thus both feet were parallel to each other at the end of the bar. At the first beat of the next bar, the right foot started the same movement toward the right and was followed by the left on the third beat. Therefore both feet were always parallel at the end of each bar, the heels pointing alternately to the right and to the left and

obliquely in relation to the median plane of the body. As in the first step there was a bending of the knees each time the soles were replaced on the ground.

The natives call the first step (heel and sole raised) *anso*, and the second (toes and sole stamped) *ansai*. The low tone of the drum is called *pu-i*, and the high one *sal*. However, it seems that these metaphorical equivalences are somewhat inverted for the Kuki and that our 'dark' tone may be the stronger one and our 'clear' tone the weaker.

The girls were wearing a short skirt reaching to the knees, a breastcloth and a kind of bolero; they were heavily loaded with several rows of copper tubes (*ruiseng*) round the hips, silver jewellery of local origin, amber necklaces (*sana*) traded on the Burmese border and necklaces made of discs carved from the shells of river snails (*sanko*). They also wore large earplugs (*labe*) made of horn, bone or ivory, and the borders of their breastcloths were ornamented with the green-gold wings of some kind of beetle (*t'arsumser*).

Older women were squatting and watching the show, smoking their waterpipes (*dumbel*), one of them holding her baby who was showing a typical Mongoloid spot (Kuki: *abom*; Ṣakma: *kalodak*).

Kuki Games

Once, about 4 p.m., the young people started playing games. Each boy seems to own a top of his own fabrication. This is made of a large, flat, round seed of a creeper (*Entada pursoetha*) pierced by a thin pointed stick, and resembles a primitive spindle. To make the top spin, a piece of string is rolled round the stem and the end of it is drawn through a square hole cut in the middle of the wider part of a crude triangular bamboo lath. This piece is held in the left hand, the first finger holding the top against it in a crosswise direction, the whorl upward. Then, by a sudden drawing of the string through the hole with the right hand while pushing the top forward with the left hand, the top is set in motion; in fact, it jumps down to the ground where it starts spinning with a fierce hum. The game called *lamsir* consists of trying, as soon as the first player releases his top, to 'kill' it with the remaining tops, quickly but carefully aimed at it by the other players.

Another game, called *konyon* by the Ṣakma, *poienka* by the Kuki, has often been described; it seems to be widespread in south-eastern Asia.[7] However, the Kuki have elaborate ways of playing it. At first, boys and girls play separately. Each player in turn sets up on the ground a row of four to six seeds of the kind described above, and the other players try to knock down as many as possible by throwing another seed at them. The interesting point is that the ways of throwing the 'ball' seem to vary indefinitely and are not the same for boys as for girls. With the boys, the first method consisted in holding the 'ball' in the right hand and the right foot in the left hand; then, after hopping five or six times on the left foot to gain impetus, the player threw his projectile from under the bent right knee. After all the players had performed that way, a new method was introduced which consisted in holding the ball between the ankles and trying to throw it with a forward jump after a few preliminary leaps; a third method was about the same except that the seed was held against the inner part of the right leg by the sole of the left foot. Then, returning to a simpler method, the players decided to throw the seed by hand, rolling it along the ground, etc.

The girls' methods can be quite as sophisticated: they hop on the left foot, the right foot raised above the ground with the seed lying flat on the instep; or they put it in their mouth and after taking a short run they try to spit it at their aim; or they hop on one foot with the seed on the top of their head and try to throw it with a sharp nod. Many other methods were noticed: the seed thrown backward and between the legs, or backward and over the head, or forward between the legs, etc. After the game has been going on for some time, the girls' team and the boys' team become mutually excited with their shouts and laughter; then they join and try each other's techniques; these often unsuccessful attempts add to the general merriment.

Notes

[1] See my forthcoming article 'Le Syncrétisme religieux d'un village mog du Territoire de Chittagong.'

[2] These will be dealt with in another paper, 'Kinship Systems of three Chittagong Hill Tribes,' to be published elsewhere.

[3] Exactly similar to those published 65 years ago by E. Riebeck, *The Chittagong Hill Tribes, Results of a Journey made in the Year* 1882, London (1885), Plate 8.

[4] These women's utensils included: ginning press (*namot*), carding bow (*ləka*), spinning wheel, with horizontal polygonal spindle (*muitir*), and distaff (*loson*), yarn (*lomui*), some of it black (*mlalum*), raw cotton (*məlakung*), and weaving looms (terms not recorded).

[5] The Kuki cultivate wet and dry rice, sesame, mustard, tea, bananas, oranges and maize. The last, called *minsai*, produces small cobs set with large irregularly polygonal kernels. It includes several varieties: white (*anomi*); purple (*polmi*); variegated (*tielmi*).

[6] *Cf.* Riebeck, *op. cit.*, Plate 15, figs. 5, 7.

[7] *Cf.* Shway Yoe, *The Burman*, 2 vols. (1896), p. 373f.; E. Porée Maspero, 'Cérémonies des douze mois; fêtes annuelles cambodgiennes,' *Commission des Mœurs et Coutumes du Cambodge* (1950), p. 24.

SHORTER NOTES

The First International Congress of Peruvianists, 1951. *A report by Dr. G. H. S. Bushnell, Curator, Cambridge University Museum of Archæology and Ethnology*

285 A series of congresses have been held this year in Lima in connexion with the fourth centenary of the foundation of the University of San Marcos. The First International Congress of Peruvianists, which took place in the latter half of August, was the latest of these, and its success amply satisfied the aims of its promoters. One of the resolutions passed at the end of the Congress was that similar ones be held at five-yearly intervals. It is much to be hoped that this will be possible, since it should do much to stimulate research, particularly on Colonial history. The Organizing Committee invited a number of foreign delegates, of whom I had the honour to be one, and, with great generosity,