

1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family:

A. Garo, Garrow, Mande, Mandi

B. Garo

C. Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Sal, Bodo-Garo-Northern Naga, Bodo-Koch, Bodo-Garo, Garo

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com):

A. grt

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

A. "A glance at the map will show that the home of the tribe is a dense, irregular mass of hills of low elevation, which is traversed from N.W. to S.E. by a main central ridge, known as the Tura range. These hills rarely rise much above 2,000 feet except in the Arbella range, where the elevation reaches 3,200 feet, and in the central ridge, which maintains a fairly even altitude of 4,000 feet. The highest peak, Nokrek, is 4,652 feet high. The official headquarters of the district are at Tura, a little station situated at an elevation of 1,300 feet on a spur running out from the most western end of the main range." (1p5)

1.4 Brief history:

A. "Of the origin of the Garos we have no information of any historical value. Until a very few years ago, little was known of this tribe except by those who suffered from their depredations, and by the officers who undertook the task of pacifying them and changing them into law-abiding subjects. Whence they came originally no one can tell. Col. Dalton, in his "Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal," states on this subject that "the Garos have no tradition of migration; they believe themselves to be autochthonous, and the only people with whom they claim alliance are the Buts and the English." In this respect Col. Dalton appears to have been misinformed. Ifc is probably only a legend, but there does exist among the Garos a very distinct story of their migration from Thibet; of their arrival in the plains at the foot of the Himalayas; of their wanderings eastward up the Brahmaputra valley, and of the subsequent retracing of their steps until they came to the plains which lie between that river and the hills they now inhabit. Here they seem to have settled for a time before making the last move into the mountainous country that now forms the home of the tribe."(1p8)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

A. "The rainfall all over this tract of country is very heavy, particularly along the foot of the central range which forces the moisture-laden winds from the Bay of Bengal to rise to a cooler atmosphere and thus causes condensation of their water vapour. The average rainfall of Tura during the past five years has been 154.39 ins. The rainfall decreases with the elevation of the hills and distance from the central ridge, and is very much less on the borders of the district than it is in Tura. It is, however, sufficiently heavy to cause a very rank and dense undergrowth to spring up, which is in great part responsible for the unenviable reputation that the district possesses of being malarious. The Garo Hills are densely wooded, but owing to the Garo method of cultivation, really large forests and trees have almost disappeared except in deep valleys and where Government has established reserves. These reserves cover an area of 141 square miles out of a total area of the district of 3,140 square miles. They mostly contain sal trees, some of which, especially in the Dambu, Darugiri and Eongreugiri reserves, are very fine. With the above exceptions, the country is covered with trees of smaller size and bamboos, save where patches of land have been cleared for cultivation. The only part of the hills which is open and free from trees or brushwood is the Balpakram plateau, which lies to the east of the Someswari river and borders on the Khasi Hills. This plateau appears to be a mass of limestone rock covered with a thin layer of soil, on which grow only short grass and a few isolated trees. Many streams take their rise in the higher hills, and finding their way down to the plains over narrow and rocky beds, pour their waters into the Brahmaputra and Megna basins. The valleys of these rivers form the main outlets into the plains, for through them run the paths which lead to the markets at which the Garos sell the produce of their fields.

The scenery in many parts of the hills is very fine, the finest being that on the Someswari river, which flows through a very narrow valley between high and precipitous hills. Being thus closely confined, the river rushes along over immense boulders which render navigation impossible for the greater part of its course. During the rains, the river is unfordable and liable to such sudden spates, that ordinary bridges

cannot exist. The Garos have therefore devised a form of suspension bridge high above the water, which affords them a safe passage across the dangerous stream." (1p5-6)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density

A. "The Garos may be roughly divided into Hill Garos and Plains Garos, and both classes inhabit the district which owes its name to the tribe. Plains Garos are also found in the undermentioned districts to the extent noted against each: Mymensingh 34,180, Goalpara 10,842, Kamrup 5,144, Khasi and Jaintia Hills 5,768. In Kuch Behar and as far west as Jalpaiguri in the Duars, small settlements of Garos exist, though their number is insignificant. The above numbers are taken from the Census Report for 1901, in which it was also shown that 964 Garos were then employed as labourers in tea gardens in parts of Assam other than those I have named." (1p4-5)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

A. "By far the most important crop grown in the Garo Hills is the species of rice which is grown in the forest clearings. Certain valleys run into the hills, which are suitable for wet cultivation, but these are mostly in the hands of Eabhas and Koches. Among the northern divisions of the tribe millet is an important crop, and is often planted on newly cleared land in preference to rice ; but in the south, and among the Abengs, this grain is not so much eaten, and rice is planted in the first season. With both millet and rice, in the first year, it is the custom to sow a number of other grains and vegetables, such as maize, Job's tears (*coix lachryma-Jobi*), chillies, melons and pumpkins. The Garos also grow a limited quantity of yams, sweet potatoes, ginger and indigo. In the second year, only rice is grown. In a few villages orange trees have been planted and have yielded excellent crops, but their number is yet too small to prove the suitability of the Garo Hills for orange-growing on an extensive scale. Several attempts have been made to grow potatoes, which succeed so well in the Khasi Hills, but though the plants have always grown well at first, they have never produced satisfactory tubers." (1p45)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

A. "The Garos will eat almost any kind of animal food. In their villages they rear goats, pigs, fowls and ducks, and from the plains people they purchase cattle, for they form the only division of the Bodo group that will eat beef. Besides these, most Hill Garos will readily eat dogs and cats, and every kind of wild animal that they can kill, though they would draw the line at tiger's flesh. At many markets scores of puppies are sold for food, though it should be added that before being eaten, these are generally offered in sacrifice. They do not hesitate to eat some kinds of snakes and lizards, and even flying white ants are not despised as a *bonne bouche*. A very favourite article of food is *nalcam* or dried fish. Of this a certain quantity is prepared by the Garos themselves, but the greater proportion is purchased in the plains. Cartloads of this most evil-smelling article of food are to be seen at all the large markets. Gram or dried venison or beef is also considered a great delicacy." (1p50)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

A. "The principal weapons of the Garos are swords and spears, without one or other of which they are rarely seen. The sword is very quaintly designed, and would be found awkward to use by anybody but a Garo. It varies from 3 to 4 ft. in length; has a straight blade about 2 ins. broad, a blunt, arrow-shaped point, and from hilt to point is made of one piece of iron. The grip is very thin, and instead of being straight, is curved, and ends in a flat, sharp-edged, rounded head. This sharp hilt is supposed to enable the owner to stick his sword into the ground by his side when he halts, so as to have it always ready to his hand. At each end of the cross- bar is attached a bunch of cow's-tail hair, or what is more greatly prized, part of a yak's tail. The sword is always carried naked, and is never placed in a sheath or fastened to march, for with it he can clear jungle which hars his way, split firewood and cut up his food, besides using it for the main purpose of defence. These swords are purchased from the Megams in the Khasi Hills district, and appear to be of Khasi origin. The ordinary weapon can be purchased for two or three rupees, but an heirloom is much prized, and cannot often be bought. A Garo spear is a formidable weapon, for it is provided with an iron head, 1 ft. or 14 ins. long and 2 or 3 ins. broad. It is very sharp, and is fitted into a bamboo shaft about 5 ft. long. The heads are first cemented into their sockets with lac, and then very neatly bound to them with thin withes of cane, which further serve the purpose of preventing the shaft from splitting. "With these spears two or three men will attack a bear, and even tigers are occasionally killed with them.

In the big drives for game which the Garos sometimes organize, spears are invariably used, and numbers of pig are slaughtered with these weapons. The heads are of foreign make and are brought by Bengali traders to the markets at the foot of the hills. The spears are used only for thrusting, and not for casting. Bows and arrows are well known to the Garos, but they are very seldom used; in fact, I have never seen a bow in the Garo Hills. Garo axes, or choppers, vary in shape according to locality and the source from which they are obtained, for they are not made in the hills. In the south, the pattern is that which the Bengali ryot makes use of; in the north, the implements are purchased from, and are of the pattern used by the inhabitants of the western Khasi Hills. The Garos have two kinds of shield. The sepi is made entirely of wood, or of flat lengths of wood bound together and covered with very thin strips of cane or bamboo, while the danil is made of bearskin or cowhide stretched on a wooden frame. Both kinds are of the same shape and size. They are about 3 feet long by 18 inches broad, roughly oblong, but with slightly concave sides, and with a gentle curve backwards over the hand. They are fitted with handles made of cane." (1p30)

2.4 Food storage:

2.5 Sexual division of production:

2.6 Land tenure:

A. "With the exception of the highest slopes of the central range, all lands within the Garo Hills are divided up among widely separated villages, each of which has clearly defined and well-known boundaries. Land is subject to the ordinary laws of inheritance, and really belongs to the wife of the nokma or headman of each village. He, however, is always thought of and spoken of as the proprietor. Land may be, and frequently is, sold by a nokma, but can only be so disposed of with the permission of his wife and her machong or motherhood. All the inhabitants of a village are entitled to cultivate whatever land they require, and may cultivate wherever they choose within the village boundary. A stranger who comes into the village to settle, is also permitted to take up land, but he must give a small present or quit-rent called haivil or a^oMmU, to the nokma. This quit-rent may be levied in two ways, either as a payment in money when a stranger first takes up his residence in a village, or as an annual rent. The first form is usual in the case of single individuals, and the latter when a whole hamlet migrates to a new site on the land of another village, and it is feared that its inhabitants may set up a claim to be an independent village. The quit-rent may also be paid in kind, in the shape of rice, fowls, liquor, etc. Several acts, insignificant in themselves, are looked upon by the Garos as attempts at usurpation, and are deeply resented and actively opposed. One of these is the purchase by a stranger of a kram or big drum. Another is the performance on another nokma's land, and without his permission, of the (/anna or ceremony of assuming jaksils, or elbow rings which are the emblems of a nokma. A third is the offering of sacrifice at the asong or sacrificial stones outside every large village. Such acts quickly lead to litigation, for the nokmas guard most jealously their rights to even the smallest patches of jungle, and are unceasing in their efforts to uphold them. It is the custom for a successful party in litigation to celebrate a victory by giving a feast, to which the opposite party replies with another in defiance. The first party then endeavours to eclipse its opponents in a feast of yet greater magnificence, and this goes on until the entertainments assume great proportions, and prove a ruinous tax on the means of the litigants."(1p73-74)

2.7 Ceramics:

A. "Garo cooking-pots are of ordinary earthenware, but on a journey, when weight is a consideration, these are left behind, and the indispensable bamboo forms a very efficient substitute." (1p50)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

A. On ordinary occasions the Garos are frugal in their diet, though they eat three times a day, and always carry food with them when on the march. It is for the feasts that they reserve their forces. These feasts are not lightly entered upon, for food and liquor must be unstintingly provided. Especially, must the latter be in sufficient quantity, for there must be enough to make every guest drunk." (1p51)

2.9 Food taboos:

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

A. "They practically manufacture nothing but some cloths, a few mats and boats, and some of the most ordinary instruments of iron." (1p56)

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

A. "As a people, the Garos, both men and women, are short, the former averaging 5 ft. 1½ ins. and the latter 4 ft. 10 ins." (1p2)

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

A. "In build they are rather lean and wiry than stoutly made, and a fat man is quite a rarity." (1p2)

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

A. "Better physique among the Atongs is ascribed by some to the fact that among this section of the tribe marriages are contracted when the parties are of more mature age, though among none of them can child-marriage be said to be in vogue." (1p2)

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

A. "Divorce is permitted in the following circumstances. (1) When the husband and wife disagree, and the separation is by mutual consent; (2) when either party is guilty of adultery; (3) when either the husband or the wife refuses to work for the support of the household. The cause of the separation is inquired into by the village elders and the actual divorce accomplished by means of the following ceremony, which is named bolseki dena. Before an assembly of villagers the husband and wife each take some dust in their hands, and swear by Mane, the Earth, to have no dealings with, nor to claim anything from each other in the future. The oath having been administered, the priest takes a sword, chopper, or spear, strikes a tree with it, and calls upon it as a son of the Earth to be a witness to the oath which has just been taken. The weapon used is provided by the man whose marriage is being annulled, and becomes the perquisite of the officiating priest. Although the above is the orthodox manner of consummating a divorce, I am doubtful if it is often resorted to and believe that it is more common nowadays for the injured party to seek redress in court, or to apply to his laskar for compensation as well as dissolution of marriage. Compensation, when divorce is not by mutual consent, is fixed by custom at from sixty to one hundred rupees. In old times the price of a divorce was the value of a dakmanda (a black cloth, in shape like an Assamese mekela) and a rang or brass gong. Those days have long passed away, and a substantial sum of money is now generally claimed. Instead of paying money, the person seeking a divorce may offer a substitute. The husband or wife thus given in exchange must belong to the same clan and motherhood as the person whose place is taken." (1p70-71)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

A. "A man may marry as many wives as he likes, but three is usually the maximum. He may marry two sisters, but he must marry the elder before the younger. Before taking a second wife, it is customary for a man to obtain the permission of the first, and a breach of this rule entitles her to compensation. The second wife may be of a different clan from that of the first, but it is more usual for her to belong to the same sept and "motherhood." The chief wife is called jik-mamungor jik-mongma (the first name means principal wife, and the second elephant-wife) and the others are known as jik-gite, which is equivalent to "concubine." There is not the smallest shame attached to the last name, for all are looked upon as lawfully married, but the jik-mamung takes precedence of the others. When a man marries his uncle's widow, she is always jik-mamung, even though he may have married her daughter before her. A widow may refuse to marry her husband's nephew, but if she does so and marries another man, the nephew may claim compensation from both of them." (1p69)

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?:

A. See 4.30

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

A. "The system which divides the Garo tribe into certain clans and "motherhoods," the members of which trace back their descent to a common ancestress, and which has laid down that descent in the clan shall be through the mother and not through the father, also provides that inheritance shall follow the same course, and shall be restricted to the female line. No man may

possess property, unless he has acquired it by his own exertions. No man can inherit property under any circumstance whatever. The law of inheritance may be briefly stated to be, that property once in a motherhood, cannot pass out of it. A woman's children are all of her machong, and therefore it might at first appear that her son would satisfy the rule ; but he must marry a woman of another clan, and his children would be of their mother's sept, so that, if he inherited his mother's property, it would pass out of her machong in the second generation. The daughter must therefore inherit, and her daughter after her, or, failing issue, another woman of the clan appointed by some of its members. I will give some examples of how this rule works. A woman dies and leaves her property to her daughter; that daughter dies without issue, and before her husband. He cannot inherit his wife's possessions, but his wife's relations must provide him with another wife of the same machong as the deceased woman. The daughter of the second wife would satisfy the rule, and would ensure the possession of the property by the first wife's machong. Should a woman be unfaithful to her husband, and he divorce her, she would not be allowed to retain possession of the family property and her husband would have no right to it. Here, as in the case of a widower, another wife would be chosen for the husband, and through her he would continue to enjoy the use of his first wife's belongings. In spite of the above rule, during the lifetime of a woman's husband, he has full use of her property. He cannot will it away, but otherwise his authority with regard to it is unquestioned. For instance, a nokma is always looked upon as the owner of the lands of his village, and though he must have derived his rights through his wife, she is never considered, unless it is found convenient that her name should be mentioned in litigation. From this, it will be seen that matriarchy in the strict sense of the word does not exist among the Garos. A woman is merely the vehicle by which property descends from one generation to another. Although a man cannot inherit property, his machong assumes a right to control what his wife has brought him. In order that the control shall not die out in the event, for instance, of the husband's death, he has the right to choose a male member of his clan to represent him. This representative is known as his nokrom. He is not an heir, for as a male he cannot inherit, and the person whose nokrom he is has nothing to leave, but he is the channel through which the "motherhood" of the husband maintains its hold on the property of the wife. When possible, this nokrom is the son of the man's sister, and he is expected to marry his uncle's daughter, and the widow also when his uncle dies. In the event of there being no sister's son, a member of the man's machong is adopted as nokrom. This nokrom is looked upon as the support of the family after the death of the senior member. The name itself signifies this, for it is derived from the two words nok, house, and Jrong, post. He marries one of the daughters, takes up his abode with her people, and becomes responsible for his adopted family as soon as its natural protector can no longer provide for it. With the advent of the nokrom, it may be said that a dual control is exercised over all property, the balance being in favour of the wife's machong." (1p72-73)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

A. "In theory, marriage is strictly exogamous among the Garos, and husband and wife must belong to different septs and motherhoods. Thus a Sangma cannot marry a Sangma, a Marak a Marak, or a Momin a Momin. The children invariably belong to the mother's sept and motherhood. Great importance is attached to this rule, and those who break it, and marry within their own clan are considered to have committed a social sin. No particular taboo or ostracism, however, appears to follow such an act, and I am told that many persons are breaking away from the old custom, and that nearly 10 per cent. of marriages, nowadays, are in violation of the rules of exogamous marriage. Some persons even go so far as to marry within their own motherhood, though this breach of the rule is rarer than the first, and is looked upon with proportionate disapproval by the more orthodox." (1p66)

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized?

4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows")

4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)

A. "When a man marries his uncle's widow, she is always jik-mamung, even though he may have married her daughter before her. A widow may refuse to marry her husband's nephew, but if she does so and marries another man, the nephew may claim compensation from both of them. No money is ever paid as the price of the bride or bridegroom, nor does it appear to be the custom to give any presents to either party, except sometimes in the case of the son of a wealthy man or a nokma. Such a person may receive from his parents a sword, shield and spear, and perhaps a cow or a bull. At a man's death, his widow is expected to return to his parents whatever he may have received from them. If the things are lost or worn out, they must be replaced. In addition to this, a widow must give to the parents of her deceased husband a small present, which is fixed by custom at two gongs, two cloths and a sword. These presents represent a kind of thank-offering to the parents of the deceased. There are for instance (1) the chriana, which represents the giving of the bow for the child to play with, and (2) the debra, or the carrying of the child on his father's back; there are further, (3) the ma^oa-ba^oa, or the bearing of the child by his mother; (4) the asimpina, or the black cloth to cover the dead; and (5) the matchu-dena, or the bull sacrificed at the funeral ceremony of the deceased. This act of giving a present after death is called kokam or got by the Akawes, and kaiva or brim by the Abengs." (1p69-70)

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

A. "Among these people there also exists another custom. On the occasion of certain great festivals, it is an unwritten law that the young girls and men may sleep together after the entertainment is over, and the partnership of one night is expected to precede a life-long union. It is not absolutely necessary that they should there- after live as man and wife, and no obloquy is incurred by the girl on account of her lapse from the path of virtue, unless she is found later to be an expectant mother. It must be added that this custom is no longer in favour, and is discountenanced by the more respectable." (1p68)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females

4.22 Evidence for couvades

4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

4.24 Joking relationships?

4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations

A. See 2.6

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

A. "There is very little of a religious nature in Garo marriages. No sacrifices are offered up, nor are any of the usual emblems of religion erected as in ceremonies connected with births and death. The nearest approach to anything of a religious nature is the consulting of omens by the village priest, to ascertain whether the wedded couple will be happy and prosperous or the reverse. Among the Akawes, this ceremony, which is known as do^osia, is performed in the following manner. In the presence of the contracting parties and their friends, the priest takes two fowls, a cock and a hen, holds them so that their heads are close together, and strikes them with a piece of wood. He then drops them to the ground. The fowls struggle a little before dying, and their relative positions after death determine whether the omen is good or bad. If the heads of the birds lie with the beaks pointing towards each other, the omen is good, but if they lie with the beaks apart, it is bad, and it is thought that the marriage will be an unhappy one. Among the Abengs, the manner of performing this ceremony is somewhat different. The Tcamal takes the hen, and, holding it by the legs or the wings, strikes the woman on the back with the bird, and at the same time repeats an incantation, which, translated, runs as follows: " Certain ones have this day con- sulted the omen of the fowls. If they are to be bound to each other like the melon clings to its support, or the setiri, or the badagong (kinds of climbing cane), or the re (another kind of cane), then the hen will look to the man and the cock to the woman." The man is treated in the same manner, he however, being struck on the back with the cock. The priest then holds the two birds together, and with one effort pulls off both heads and throws them on the ground. For the omen to be good the beak of the cock should, as it lies on the ground, point towards the woman, and that of the hen towards the man. The do^o-sia is followed by the do^oblk-nia, which is another form of consulting the omens. An incision is made in the stomach of one of the birds, and

the kamal, introducing his fingers, draws out the larger intestines and holds them out before him. If they hang together, the omen is a good one, but if they are apart, desertion or death is predicted. If the intestines are full of digested food, the couple will be rich, and if empty, they will be poor. There is another form of this same ceremony, which is performed by a nokma in honour of his future son-in-law, in order to ascertain whether he will be a lucky and successful man. A goat or bull is killed, and the gall-bladder of the animal sought. It is washed, and held up for inspection by the priest. Should the bladder be full of liquid, it is believed that the young man will become rich and prosperous. After this ceremony has been performed in his honour, should the nokrom, as he is called, refuse to marry the man's daughter and withdraw from the contract, he becomes liable for the value of the animal. After the marriage, and when the omens have been consulted, there follow the usual feasting, dancing and drinking.” (1p101-102)

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?

A. The majority of the Garos do not observe any ceremony in connection with the naming of children, but among the Abengs one exists, which is not, however, always adhered to. Among them it is permissible to name a child directly after birth, but it is more usually done three weeks or a month later. A sacrifice is offered to Tongrengma, the guardian spirit of all children, and the child's name is uttered by some woman other than the mother, for she may not pronounce it on this occasion. A sacrifice is also sometimes offered to the spirits of the sun and the earth: to the former because it is the watcher over the child, and to the latter because it is the source of all evil and can avert them. The child is nearly always named after an ancestor who has been dead for some years. The name of a living relative, or of one who has recently died, is never given. The reason is that it is unlucky to mention by name those who have lately died, and either of the above contingencies would render the child liable to bear a dead person's name.” (1p100)

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)

A. See 4.12

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?

A. “Except in the case hereafter mentioned, proposals of marriage must always come from the woman and not from the man. The girl does not herself arrange the engagement, but indicates her choice, and enlists the services of her father, uncle, or "brother to bring about the alliance. Among the Abengs and Matabengs, it is the custom for a man to refuse at first to marry the girl who has sought his hand, and to run away and hide himself. A party of friends seek for, and bring him back by force—and apparently very unwilling—to the village, whence he usually escapes. He is captured a second time, but should he run away a third time, it is taken for granted that he really does not wish to marry the girl, and he is allowed to go free. I have known this custom to form the subject of judicial proceedings, for a man appeared in court one day, at Tura, and filed a petition in which he claimed compensation from the father of a girl for having failed to give him his daughter in marriage. The complainant explained that he had been chosen by the girl, but according to custom, he had refused to marry her and had run away. To his disgust, nobody came to seek for him, and the girl chose and married another man who was less strict in his ideas of Garo etiquette. The preliminaries having been arranged, it is the custom among some of the divisions of the tribe for the bride-elect to live in the house of a bridegroom's parents (he himself lives in the nokpanti) for a month or more before the date fixed upon for the marriage. She works for them and they become mutually acquainted. Among the Machis, a different mode of making a proposal is in vogue, which is known as chadila. The girl about to make a proposal, cooks a dish of rice, and sends it to the man of her choice in the nokpante, by his sister or some other female relation. The girl follows close behind, but remains in hiding in order to avoid the mortification of being present should he refuse to eat the food, which he would do if he werenot willing to accept the offer. Should he commence to eat the food, the girl comes forward from her place of concealment and eats with him. If the man refuses to eat, the girl does not necessarily give him up, but having found out where he sleeps, she goes to him late at night, and lies down by his side. If the man is still obdurate, he usually leaves the village for a time, but if he relents, he becomes the girl's husband from that night without further ceremony. It is a point of honour that on such an occasion, the man shall not make the slightest advance of an immoral nature. Among the Atongs, the girl goes to the house of her fiances parents for a term of probation ; she does not present him with a bowl of rice, but on the appointed date goes through the regular ceremony which I shall describe when dealing with the religious aspect of Garo marriage”..... “I have mentioned that there is an exception to the rule

that a girl may choose her husband. This exception occurs when one daughter of a family is given in marriage to the son of her father's sister. Should she not have such a cousin, she must marry a man of her father's "motherhood," who is chosen for a substitute. The daughter's husband then becomes his father-in-law's nokrom, a term which I have fully explained in the chapter on inheritance. When a girl is thus given in marriage to her cousin, the couple take up their abode with the former's parents. At the death of his father-in-law the nokrom marries the widow, thus assuming the anomalous position of husband to both mother and daughter. When there is no nokrom, for a widow to marry, she is governed by the law of akim, which lays down that a widow or widower may not marry again without the permission of the family of the deceased husband or wife, and then, only into their respective motherhoods. The law is especially hard on the women. They are the owners of all property, and the relations of a deceased husband will often keep his widow waiting for years for a mere child. By the time the child is of marriageable age, the woman is already old. In such a case, the young husband is always allowed to marry a young girl as well, so the widow is kept unmarried for years for the sake of her property. (1p67-68)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

Warfare/homicide

4.31 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

4.32 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

A. See 4.33

4.33 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:

A. Very little is known of the state of affairs existing within the Garo Hills before the tract was taken over and administered by Government. Less than half a century ago, the Garos were looked upon as cruel and blood-thirsty savages, who inhabited a tract of hills covered with almost impenetrable jungle, the climate of which was considered so deadly as to make it impossible for a white man to live there. The Garos were notorious as the perpetrators of numerous raids into the plains at the foot of their hills in the districts of Goalpara and Mymensingh. On each occasion a number of defenceless ryots were killed, but it was rarely possible to bring the offenders to book owing to the difficulty experienced in moving troops through such a densely wooded tract of mountainous country..... The first few years of our administration of the Garo Hills furnished ample proof that besides raiding a common foe in the plains, the Garos were also addicted to internal warfare, and that many blood-feuds existed between individuals and villages. The latter, which were much bigger than they now are, were all protected by chevaux ale /rise of sharp pointed bamboo stakes, and the main approaches were carefully guarded. When opportunity offered for a successful raid on an enemy's village, it was quickly taken advantage of and the heads of the victims were borne home in triumph as coveted trophies. The raids made by the Garos on each other and on the plains' people, were not always the outcome of feuds or to avenge a wrong. The death of a nokma often called for a sacrifice, and if a slave was not forthcoming in the village it was often necessary to procure a victim elsewhere, and the chance of capturing a harmless Bengali cultivator who was not able to defend himself, must on such occasions have been a great temptation to them. The return of a successful foraying party to its village was heralded by great rejoicings, in which dancing and drinking were essential features. After an attack on a village, if the distance was not too great, the victim was sometimes carried home to the raiders' village, otherwise, only the head was taken. In the former case it was customary to lay the body on a ganchi or funeral pyre, round which the people danced. The body was then de- capitated, and the hands and feet were cut off. The latter were then taken to the outskirts of the village, and placed in holes in the ground in which mandal trees (*Erithrina suberosa*) were afterwards planted. In some cases, instead of burying the hands, they were fastened to bamboos with the fingers out- spread. These bamboos were then stuck into the ground by the side of the path leading to the next village, as if to warn strangers not to approach. The corpse after having been thus mutilated, was burnt, and the skull was hung up in the latrine of the house of the taker of the trophy. It was not until 1876 that the last trace of the head-hunting proclivities of the Garos disappeared. In the resolution on the annual report for that year I find it stated that the Deputy Commissioner was able while in camp at Eongrengiri, to settle a number of blood-feuds, and no less than 200 skulls, the remains of victims killed in former raids, or murdered in various ways, were surrendered and publicly burnt. If questioned on the subject, Garos deny that head-hunting was common to all of their tribe, and assert that it was confined to the Machi division, but I am convinced that in most village in the

hills skulls were to be found, for it does not seem to be possible that the numerous raids we read of were committed by a small section of the tribe who inhabit the very heart of the country. I have mentioned the strange place in which the Garos chose to exhibit their trophies. It is still the place in which the trophies of the chase and parts of the skulls of sacrificed animals are kept.” (1p76-77)

4.34 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations)

A. See 4.33

4.35 Cannibalism?

A. None Noted

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

A. In former days, Garo villages were of considerable size and used to contain as many as two or three hundred houses. Liability to attack by a neighbouring village made this necessary, and the danger was further guarded against by sowing the approaches with sharp-pointed bamboo stakes called wamisi in Garo, but better known as panjis. These presented a very formidable obstacle to an enemy, and effectually prevented a sudden attack. Nowadays, when every man is at peace with his neighbour, the necessity no longer exists for large collections of houses, and the difficulty of finding sufficient land close to big villages for the support of their inhabitants, has resulted in their being broken up into small hamlets situated perhaps as much as four or five miles apart, which, however, in most cases, retain the name of the parent village. In order to distinguish them there is added to the name of each hamlet the name of its nokma, or headman. Garo villages now occupy the same sites for a much longer time than was formerly the case, and are not moved oftener than once in twenty or thirty years.” (1p40)

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

A. Sedentary

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):

A. “Since the annexation of the Garo Hills by the British Government, a body of men called laskars has been formed, who act as a kind of rural police and also as honorary magistrates. They are empowered to deal with all minor matters and settle unimportant disputes. They do this by calling together meetings of villagers, in which they sit as presidents and give final decisions. Their powers do not exceed those of inflicting fines and awarding compensation to injured parties. This is but an adaptation of the ancient usages of the people, for in former times, the village met in conference to decide any matter in dispute between its members. When in these meetings evidence could not be adduced, recourse was, and is yet had to trial by ordeal. This is of two kinds, the sll-so^oa, or ordeal of hot iron, and the chokela-so^oa, or ordeal of boiling water.” (1p74)

5.4 Post marital residence:

“...it is the custom among some of the divisions of the tribe for the bride-elect to live in the house of a bridegroom's parents (he himself lives in the nokpanti) for a month or more before the date fixed upon for the marriage. She works for them and they become mutually acquainted.” (1p67)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

A. “With the exception of the highest slopes of the central range, all lands within the Garo Hills are divided up among widely separated villages, each of which has clearly defined and well-known boundaries.” (1p73)

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

5.8 Village and house organization:

A. Almost every Garo possesses two houses, one in the village and one in his field. During the cultivating season he lives in the latter so as to be near his crops, to weed them and protect them from the ravages of wild animals. When the crops have been gathered and stored, he returns to the village, and resides there until the next cultivating season.” (1p37)

B. “Unlike other hill tribes, such as the Nagas and the Lushais, who build their villages high up on the slopes of hills, the Garos construct theirs in valleys or in depressions on the hill- sides, close to running water. They attach great importance to pure water, and it is quite the exception for them to live at any distance from a good stream. The sites chosen for the houses are nevertheless generally steep, and the

villages are rarely on flat ground. The entrances to nearly all old villages are through groves of jack trees, for their fruit forms an important article of food, and it is the custom to plant the trees as soon as a village is founded. Beyond the trees, one comes upon the village itself, arranged with some show of order around an irregularly shaped open space called atcla or sara. This is common to all the inhabitants, and in it many of their religious ceremonies are conducted, including even the cremation of the dead. The houses appear to be crowded together, and are, in fact, very close to one another, but as they rarely have windows at the sides, and as there is the atela in front, and the limitless jungle at the back, no inconvenience is felt from the houses being built side by side. In the centre of the square, or at one end, is placed the nokpante or bachelors' quarters, for the young unmarried men are not allowed to live with their parents. All strangers are accommodated here, and in this house are held the meetings of the village elders. In one corner of the village, or if it is a very large one, in two or three places outside the ring of living-houses, there is always a collection of smaller huts, which, from their size and appearance, are clearly not intended for human habitation. These are the village granaries, of which each family possesses one or more. The custom of building all the granaries in one place no doubt has its origin in the fact that the grain is thus in less danger of fire than if it were stored in the living houses." (1p38)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

A. ". In the centre of the square, or at one end, is placed the nokpante or bachelors' quarters, for the young unmarried men are not allowed to live with their parents. All strangers are accommodated here, and in this house are held the meetings of the village elders" (1p38)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:

a. See 4.9

5.12 Trade:

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

A. "The office of priest is not hereditary, nor is it confined to any particular class, for anybody may assume the duties who can commit to memory the necessary string of obscure sentences and incantations, or who is better endowed than his neighbours with the power of divination. The kamal's life has certain drawbacks, for his duties are often both onerous and unpleasant; for instance, when he has to watch by the side of the dead for long hours together, reciting tedious funeral dirges. Very little remuneration is given him, and in no way does the priest enjoy privileges which his fellow- villagers do not share. He must work in the fields and grow his crops like the rest, and the only way in which his lot is different from that of his neighbours, is that he must devote his attention to the requirements of others, even at personal inconvenience. In such circumstances it would be imagined that the post was a difficult one to fill, yet every village has its Immal and he never seems to shirk his duties." (1p98)

6.2 Stimulants:

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):

A. "When a woman is about to be confined, her husband vows to offer up a sacrifice of a bull, a goat, or a fowl, according to his means, if the child is safely born. The vow is fulfilled immediately after the birth, or, if the labour is of long duration, some time after its commencement. The animal or bird is killed outside the house by the kamal, who recites a long incantation to avert the influence of evil spirits. The women who are attending the expectant mother have a like duty to perform. Eice is scattered on the floor of the house round their patient, and a chant kept up, of which the following is a translation: " Go away! go away! evil spirit; in the way of the n°ama, of the na°sa, of the langgni, and of the giljare do not stand watching ; do not prevent it; do not wait for it; do not watch ; do not lick; do not swallow; do not smack your lips; do not let your mouth water." The names above mentioned are those of fish, and they are intended as symbols for the child which is about to enter the world. The spirits are addressed as skal, a word which usually means witch or sorcerer. Should the birth be long deferred, a goat is brought into the house, and its body placed in contact with that of the woman. At the same time the kamal takes a little water in his mouth, blows it in a fine spray over the woman, and utters the word "poisrany," which seems

to be nearly equivalent to "good luck." The above is the custom among the Akawes. Among the Abengs, the goat is brought into the house, some hairs are plucked from its body and burned close to the woman. The goat is then lifted up and promised in sacrifice to the spirit who is afflicting the woman, if he ceases to trouble her. The after-birth is either buried or placed in a gourd and hung up upon a tree. As soon as the navel string on the child has fallen off, the mother and infant are taken down to a stream and bathed. Before starting for the bath, a long bamboo is forced through the roof of the house into the main room, close to the wall of the sleeping apartment, and through the floor to the ground beneath. At the foot of this bamboo, in the house, a sambasia or sacrificial altar, is erected. On the return from the bath, the baby's head is shaved, a little patch only being left untouched on the top. The priest then offers a prayer at the altar for the happiness of the child, after which the child's father climbs up on to the roof of the house, taking with him the sambasia and a fowl. He cuts off the bird's head, and allows its blood to drip down the above-mentioned bamboo, on to the floor beneath. The bamboo is then cut through by the priest, and the father, having hauled it up, 'throws it and the sambasia away. He also throws to the ground the body of the fowl, and where it falls, there must it be cooked and eaten. The father of the child and the priest alone are allowed to partake of it; any friends who may have assembled being treated to liquor only of the baby's head is known as *kni minsu gala*, and the ceremony which follows is called *Tongrengma denpaka* by the Abengs, and *Jankipongtata*, by the Akawes and Machis. I have occasionally seen small figures, made of bamboo or grass, on the roof of a house, above the entrance. These are placed as an offering to the spirit *Tongrengma* when the child of the owners of the house cries a great deal. A fowl is sacrificed, and the ceremony appears to be an invocation to this spirit to drive away the evil spirits who are troubling the child. On the day on which a child is born, nobody in the village will go near the fields, for it is believed that to visit them would result in the crops being blighted. At the time of birth, the omens are often consulted to ascertain whether the infant will be prosperous and happy. A fowl is killed, and its intestines are pulled out. They are divided into two parts, and these the *kamal* or priest holds up before him. That part which is to the right belongs to the child, and that to the left to the spirits. Should the right-hand portion be full of digested food, and a little longer than the other, the omen is good and the child will grow up into a prosperous man or woman. The majority of the Garos do not observe any ceremony in connection with the naming of children, but among the Abengs one exists, which is not, however, always adhered to. Among them it is permissible to name a child directly after birth, but it is more usually done three weeks or a month later. A sacrifice is offered to *Tongrengma*, the guardian spirit of all children, and the child's name is uttered by some woman other than the mother, for she may not pronounce it on this occasion. A sacrifice is also sometimes offered to the spirits of the sun and the earth: to the former because it is the watcher over the child, and to the latter because it is the source of all evil and can avert them. The child is nearly always named after an ancestor who has been dead for some years. The name of a living relative, or of one who has recently died, is never given. The reason is that it is unlucky to mention by name those who have lately died, and either of the above contingencies would render the child liable to bear a dead person's name. It sometimes happens that a child bears a marked resemblance to a deceased relation, and in such a case it is believed that the spirit of the deceased has returned to earth and has entered into the child's body." (1p98-100)

6.4 Other rituals:

6.5 Myths (Creation):

A. "In the beginning, what is now the Earth was a vast watery plain. There was no land, and darkness was over everything. *Tatara-Eabuga* determined to create the Earth, so he sent a lesser spirit, *Nostu-Nopantu*, in the shape of a woman, to carry out his will. There was no dry place for her to set foot on, so she took up her abode in a spider's web which was stretched over the water. *Tatara-Eabuga* gave her for material a handful of sand, but when she set about her task she found that she could not make the particles stick together. So she sent the big crab down under the water to fetch some clay, but it was too deep, and he was obliged to return with his errand unfilled. *Nostu* then sent *Chipongnokma Balponggitel*, the small crab, to do her behest, but he was afraid, and returned without having performed his errand. Last of all, *Nostu* chose *Chiching-Barching*, a beetle, and sent him down, and he returned with a lump of clay, with the aid of which *Nostu-Nopantu* fashioned the Earth. She created the Earth, which was called *Mane-Pilte*, and the big rocks *Mojar*, and the little rocks *Dinjar*, but all was still wet and unfit to walk upon. So *Nostu* prayed *Tatara-Eabuga* to help her, and he placed the sun in the sky, and the moon, and sent wind, and the

three between them dried up and hardened the surface of the Earth. Then Tatara gave the earth a riking or petticoat (the Earth is spoken of as a woman) and a pagri made of clouds, and caused hair to grow on her in the shape of the prap tree (*Ficus Bumphi*), the bolong, the sawe (sago palm), the rejok and re (kinds of cane), and the ampang (thatching grass). Of the animals which Tatara created, the first was the hulock ape, and his mission on earth was to utter loud cries and prevent Mane (the earth) from sleeping and neglecting her work of productiveness. After the hulock, the hanuman and the common brown monkey were created, and then all other beasts.

In the water, the first animal created was the frog, for he was appointed to proclaim the advent of rain to all living things by his loud croak. After the frog, the many fishes of the deep were created. Under the Earth there was much water, but on the surface there was none. Seeing this, the creator made rivers to flow and sent Norechire-Kimrebokre, or the rain, to water the Earth, and he sent a voice (thunder) before the rain to announce its coming. Man had not yet been created, so Tatara called around him the lesser spirits, and declared his intention of placing man on earth. He chose a goddess named Susime, and sent her down to prepare it for its new inhabitants. The first abode of man was Amitong-Asiljong (somewhere in the east), and the first man and woman were Sani and Muni, whose children, Gancheng and Dujong, were the parents of Nord and Mande,* who were the progenitors of the Garo race. The first inhabitants of the Earth had no rice to eat, so they had to satisfy their hunger with roots and fruit which they found in the forest. The first human beings to cultivate the soil were two dwarfs, Bonejasku and his wife Jand-Gando. They cleared the forest as is done at the present day, and Tatara-Eabuga, to whom they made an offering of pumpkins, rewarded their industry by causing rice to grow. The above is a translation of the Garo belief regarding the creation of the world as related to me by an Abeng priest. It represents the belief which exists among the rest of the divisions of the tribe, although details vary in many instances, and the names of the spirits are not always the same. According to one version of the story, Nostu was not alone in her work, but was accompanied by a spirit named Siste or Machi. Nostu spat upon the lilies and grass in the water, and Siste blew, and thus the waters were separated and the dry land appeared. It was a waste, without life or light and unfit for man to live upon, for over the whole earth there hung an immense black pot. Bonepa (the legend calls him a mite or spirit, but says nothing about his arrival) took a pestle for pounding paddy, and with it lifted up the big, black pot so that the sun could shine in. Agpa-Pitrangpa (the sower, probably meant for Tatara-Eabuga) then took big rocks and threw them about in the soft ooze, thus solidifying the earth, separating the waters and enclosing valleys. It will be seen that this latter narrative is very inconsequent in its order of events, for it pre-supposes the existence of many things which in the first story are given their proper place in the order of creation. When Tatara sent Nostu-Nopantu to make the earth, he also sent two other spirits, Brara and his wife Dogni, to make the stars. But Brara was lazy, and instead of doing his allotted task, he wasted his time in flirting with his wife's maid. Brara's wife discovered this intrigue and determined to punish them. She placed the seed of all kinds of skin diseases in a pot of water, which Brara and the maid proposed to take with them on a journey through the skies. The lovers were soon in sore distress. In a chastened mood they returned to Dogni, and Brara, having promised to behave himself in future, they were forgiven and cured of their affliction, and Brara set to work and made the stars. The rising and setting of the sun and moon are explained by the belief that the earth is a thin, flat body, and that Tatara has ordained that the sun shall shine on the upper and lower surfaces in turn, the moon shining above when the turn comes for the lower surface to enjoy the sun's warmth. Although it is believed that the sun and moon were made by command of the supreme deity, Tatara-Eabuga, another tale exists in which they are described as brother and sister, the children of Asima-Dingsima. The sun was called Eengra-Balsa, and the moon Bire-Jitje. The moon was once the brighter and more beautiful of the two, and excited the envy and resentment of her brother. One day, their mother left the two together, and during her absence they began to quarrel. In his rage, the sun took some mud and flung it in his sister's face. Instead of washing herself, the moon waited until her mother's return and showed her what her brother had done. The mother not liking this talebearing, scolded her daughter for not having first washed her face, told her that as a punishment the mud should evermore stick to her face, and since then the moon has been less bright than the sun.

The stars collectively, are given the name Noringro-Nojingjo, and it is believed that they represent spirits who have been placed in the heavens as rulers of the seasons and years. The Garos recognize fourteen stars and constellations by name, most of which are made to figure in the story which is told of the funeral

ceremony of the mother of the moon, Norekbak-Norek- ding, elsewhere called Asima-Dingsima. As is the case with mortals, the mother of Susime (the moon) was cremated when she died, and each star is made to figure in some way in the funeral ceremony” (1p86-88)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

6.8 Missionary effect:

6.9 RCR revival:

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

A. “The Garo beliefs on the subject of death and the life here- after, are the most interesting of their many superstitions, and their funeral ceremonies are both varied and elaborate. It is believed that in the human body there lives a spirit, which, on being released from its mortal covering, wends its way to Mangru-Mangram, the abode of spirits. Several spots are indicated as the place of their residence. The spirits are said to have first taken up their abode at Napak, a place in the north-eastern hills between Damra and Cheran. Later, when their numbers increased, they went to two hills, named Balsiri and Balpakram, and they now wend their way to Chikmang, an isolated peak in the south-east of the Garo Hills, not far from the Someswari river. Mangru-Mangram is a kind of purgatory through which all must pass, the good and the bad alike. As the mortal worked on earth, so the spirit must work at Chikmang. On arrival there he inquires the whereabouts of the relations who have gone before him, builds his house where they built, or lives with them if they have not yet returned to earthly life. Spirit- land is not in any sense a place of joy, and a speedy release, with a happy reincarnation, is hoped for. " The journey to Mangru-Mangram is a long one, and the spirit is provided with a guide, the necessary eatables for the journey, and money for his requirements, exactly as if he were about to set out on a long journey on earth. These requirements are provided by the sacrifice of the necessary animals, and the offering of food and liquor at the shrines which form the last resting-place of the deceased. On their journey, the spirits rest at a pool of water called Memang-Misal Cha°ram or Chidimak-Chikong (i.e. " the place for the ghost to eat the midday meal," or the " ink-water pool"). Here they can refresh themselves and eat the food which has been sent them, after carefully tethering to a loldak tree the bull which every spirit leads away with it. In olden days, when human sacrifices were possible, every endeavour was made that a rich man should have a servant in the far land, and the immolation of slaves and captives was of frequent occurrence; nowadays, a fowl takes the place of a human victim. Some Garos believe that the common night-jar, called by them do°uang, is the guide of the departed soul. Others declare that it is the messenger which gives news to the relatives of the deceased that it has seen his spirit on the way to Chikmang. It is a most inauspicious thing for a night-jar to perch on the roof of a house, and when this happens, the death of one of its inmates is thought to be imminent. If one of them is lying ill

in the house at the time, it is believed that the bird has come to give the message that it is time for the soul of the sick man to start on its long journey. On its way to Chikmang, the spirit is by no means free from danger, for at one place there is the monster Nawang, lying in wait. He accosts each spirit and demands what it has done on earth, and what property it has brought with it. The demon is covetous of brass earrings, and the spirit which is well supplied with these, throws them on the ground and escapes while the monster is engaged in picking them up. This is, in theory, the reason why men and women wear bunches of rings in their ears, though in practice, they are looked upon merely as ornaments, the myth being known to very few. In some cases, the spirit replies to the question, " I have married a thousand wives," hearing which the demon gives a loud guffaw and runs away. The inference is, of course, that Nawang could not be seen in the company of one so depraved, and lets the spirit go. Having arrived at Mangru-Mangram, the spirits reside there for a period of time until the appointed hour arrives for reincarnation. At the birth of every child a spirit is said to leave purgatory. The Garos regard with great dread anybody who remains for a long time in a comatose state before death, for they believe

that Nawang has taken possession of the sick person and is devouring him. So great is their fear on these occasions, that I think it must sometimes happen that a person in such a state is taken to the funeral pyre and burned before he is quite dead. I know of one case in which a man who had been unconscious for a long time was on the point of being cremated while yet alive, and was only saved by the providential interference of a missionary. The man did not die until several days later. It is thought that in some cases the spirit has the power of leaving the body before death and of entering into another body. Certain

ailments are attributed to the fact that the sufferer's spirit cannot make up its mind where to stay, and is therefore restless and uneasy. When this is the case, the person whose soul is afflicted becomes thin and emaciated, and if he dies, it is believed that his spirit has entered into the body of a child which is yet unborn. Should the afflicted person recover, some woman will bear a dead child. Being startled, is thought to be the result of the spirit having left the body through sudden fear. It usually returns at once, but if any ill effects are felt from the shock, a sacrifice becomes necessary to calm the troubled spirit. The length of the term of probation at Chikmang and the manner of the return to earth, appear to depend either on the cause of the person's death, or upon the sins he committed during life-time. For instance, it is believed that the spirit of the person who commits suicide by hanging will be reincarnated in the form of a beetle, which is con- demned to eat nothing but the sap or gum of the plant which provided the fibre from which the rope was made. After death caused by an elephant or a tiger, the spirit goes to Chikmang, but is reincarnated in the form of the animal which caused the death. In neither of the above cases will the spirit again inhabit a human body. The spirit of a murderer is condemned to reside at Chikmang for seven generations before returning to human form. Except in the cases I have cited above, if a man does wrong in this life, he may, as a punishment, be born again in the form of an animal, but this does not preclude the possibility of the spirit returning to human shape after the death of the animal and a second sojourn at Chikmang. It appears from this that the spirits of animals, like the souls of men, are supposed to go to Chikmang, and some of the funeral rites prove that this is the Garo belief." (1p102-105)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

A. See 4.3

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

A. "Teknonymy, the custom according to which a parent takes the name of his or her child, with an affix meaning father or mother, is general among the Garos. Among those with whom he is well acquainted, a man is not usually called by his own name if he is the father of a child. For instance, a man named Jasin, if he had a daughter named Nemji, would not be addressed as Jasin by those who were inti- mate with him, but as Nemjipa, or the father of Nemji. Similarly, Jasin's wife would not be called by her own name, but would be known as Nemjima, or the mother of Nemji. Should there be only one child, and should that child die, the parents would be known for a time as Memangpa and Memangma, the father and mother of a ghost. The head of a village is looked upon as the father of the community, and is spoken of as padot, and his wife as madot." (1p147)

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.)

A. "Like all animistic religions, that of the Garos consists of the belief in a multitude of beneficent and malevolent spirits. To some is attributed the creation of the world, to others the control of natural phenomena; and the destinies of man from birth to death are governed by a host of divinities whose anger must be appeased by sacrifice, and whose good offices must be entreated in like manner. They believe in the existence in man of a spirit which, after death, wends its way to an appointed place, there to dwell for a period of time before being re-incarnated. A certain conception of punishment and reward hereafter is not wanting in their beliefs, for sin in one life affects the form of incarnation in the next. The lowest form of re-incarnation is that in the shape of insects and plants. The next highest is in the shape of animals and birds, and then that in human form. The greatest reward for a virtuous life is to be born into the same motherhood as before." (1p80)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

A. "Tattooing is never seen among the Hill Garos, but is occasionally practised by the Plains Garos of the Mymensingh. District" (1p28)

7.2 Piercings:

7.3 Haircut:

A. "The men rarely have hair on their faces, though some grow apologies for beards. If a moustache is worn, it usually consists of a few hairs on either side of the upper lip, owing to the custom of pulling out the rest. The Garos have no distinctive manner of wearing the hair, which is seldom cut. Men and women wear their hair alike, either simply kept up on the top of the head and off the face by means of a pagri, or tied in a knot behind. Those who have long been in close relationship with foreigners,

imitate their fashion and wear the hair cropped short” (1p2-3)

7.4 Scarification:

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):

A. “The Garos possess very few ornaments, and the few they have, are insignificant both in appearance and value. The men wear brass rings of two kinds in their ears. Those worn in the lobe of the ear, called nadongbi or otonga, are made of thin brass wire and are about one inch in diameter. A man sometimes wears as many as thirty or forty of these in each ear, though between twelve and twenty is the usual number. In the upper part of the ear a nadirong, or very small brass ring, is worn, which though often quite plain, is sometimes ornamented with four small brass discs attached to its outer and lower edge. Occasionally, to it is added a string of beads about four inches long, ending in a semicircular piece of brass, silver or crystal. Silver bangles are worn, but I believe them to be of foreign importation. They have also some massive bronze ornaments, to be worn on the wrists on festival days, but which are not often seen. Necklaces are worn by the men as well as by the women, and are made of long, barrel-shaped beads of cornelian or red glass. The necklaces are purchased from Bengali traders at the various markets. Another ornament which is somewhat rare, is the Tcadistl, a circlet of cloth covered with brass studs and worn round the head on a level with the brow. In former days, this was put on when a man went] on the war-path, but now it is worn only on festive occasions. In the north and east of the hills there exists a peculiar ornament which is worn only by nokmas or village headmen. It is named jaksil, and consists of a heavy ring, usually of iron, but sometimes of brass or silver, which is worn just above the elbow. These jaksils are sometimes flat, one inch in breadth, and sometimes of round metal, half an inch in diameter. Some really old jaksils are very massive, and consist of heavy metal rings like sections of a pipe, and two or three inches in depth. I have tried, but unsuccessfully, to find out what rules regulate the number of rings to be worn. Commonly, only one is worn on each arm, but I have seen as many as four. It is considered to be unlucky to take off both or all rings at once, though the wearer will readily remove one at a time for inspection. The rings are first assumed on the accession of a man to the position of nokma, a title claimed by the head of a village, or in some cases by meii of wealth, with the permission of the headman of the village they reside in. The comparative variety which the women exhibit in their clothing, is also noticeable in their ornaments. Like the men, they wear brass rings in their ears but of a very much larger size. I have seen them as much as four, and seldom are they less than two inches in diameter. These shishas, as they are called, are very heavy. Upwards of fifty may be worn in each ear, so their combined weight is sometimes considerable. The result is that the lobes of the ears first become enormously distended, and at last give way altogether. When this happens, instead of discarding the rings, the woman supports them over her head by a double string which prevents them from shifting from side to side. The tendency nowadays is greatly to reduce their size, and few of the younger women wear very large ones, though what they lack in weight is made up in the number worn. Really old rings measure as much as six inches in diameter; they are rarely seen, but are kept as heirlooms. The modern ornaments are always of brass, but those of more ancient make are of what appears to be bell-metal. Some fashion exists in these rings, for they are by no means of the same pattern all over the hills. The largest are worn by the southern Abengs, while among the Akawes and Chisaks of the north and north-eastern hills, they are of the same size as those worn by the men. The women of the last-named division of the tribe wear a very distinctive ornament in the shape of a necklace consisting of many rows of blue-and-white or red beads, which hang down far over their breasts and must form an appreciably heavy load. When a man dies, it is the custom for his widow to put off

her earrings until the funeral ceremony is over, and she some- times never puts them on again. In former times, one of the punishments for adultery was to tear away the rings of the guilty woman, wounding her dreadfully, and leaving two unsightly remnants of the lobes. Nowadays, when the fidelity of a wife is impugned, her female relatives sometimes lay aside their earrings until the matter has been inquired into and settled. Like the men, the women wear the small ring in the upper part of the ear, and to it they attach a small semicircular piece of metal named natapsi, from the lower end of which a number of small pendants of the same metal hang down by minute chains. This ornament is sometimes made of silver, though more often of baser metal. The Chibok and Euga women of the Bogai valley wear a few small rings, but their own peculiar and distinctive ornament is the penta, a small piece of ivory about one and a half inches long, of the thickness of a pencil, and sharpened to a point, which is stuck in such a way into

the upper part of the ear, that it projects upwards, parallel to the side of the head. This ornament corresponds to one worn by the Eangdaniya Eabha women in the plains of Goalpara, but is considerably shorter. These pentas are also made of silver, but ornaments of the latter make are a sign of mourning, and it is considered 'most unlucky to wear them except after the death of a member of the household. The Ganchings who inhabit the upper Nitai valley wear few rings, and only three or four strings of white beads. I have elsewhere referred to these beads as being used to ornament the loin-cloth of the Garo man and the petticoat of the woman. They are cylindrical in shape, and vary from a quarter of an inch to one inch in length. The material of which they are made appears to be some form of shell, probably conch. The beads are said, by the Garos, to be manufactured by the Megams in the Khasi Hills, but I have not been able to substantiate this statement, and think it more likely that they are purchased in the plains, and brought into the hills for sale. They are sold at from Es. 4 to Es. 5 per thousand. Though the raw material is so cheap, ornaments made of these beads are given very fictitious values, and a necklace or girdle readily fetches any sum up to fifty or sixty rupees, especially if it be old. Another ornament worn by the women is the senki, a kind of waistband which consists of several rows of the above-mentioned beads. The strings of beads are kept apart by means of a piece of carved bamboo through which they pass. When the senki is put on, this bamboo comes opposite to the centre of the waist, in front, and the strings are collected together and fastened at the back. The senki thus forms a convenient girdle for the support of the riking or petticoat. Brass and bronze bracelets, similar to those of the men, are worn by the women, and for the dance they also wear the brow-bands, which I have described. A curious head ornament used in the dance is the pilni or salchak-maldong. It consists of a bamboo comb about 8 ins. in length, to the top of which is attached a strip of indigo-dyed cloth about 6 ins. long, ornamented with rows of the same white beads as are used to decorate the senki. When the comb is stuck into the knot of hair at the back of the head, the cloth hangs down behind like a curtain." (1p28-31)

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

A. "At these dances the men make but little difference in their dress. In the old head-hunting days a dance was inaugurated after a successful raid. At this, the men wore a garment called pandra, which consisted of a black cloth reaching to the waist, wound round the body, under the arms, and laced across with bands of white cotton. This may be seen at some of the present-day dances. When dancing, both men and women wear on their heads circlets of bamboo or stiffened cloth, ornamented with rows of white beads, to which are added cocks' and bhimraj feathers, and sometimes bunches of paddy in ear. Peafowl are found in the Garo Hills, but their feathers are supposed to be unlucky, and are never used. Like the men, the women wear turbans, and some slight differences of fashion are noticeable according to locality. The Abeng women of the south and west wear a turban called odoreka or salchak, which consists of a narrow piece of fairly stiff blue-and-red cotton cloth from two to three feet long. When placed on the head, it is folded so as to form a cap. The Abeng women of the north-western ranges wear a loose blue pagri similar to that of the men, only rather more voluminous. In the neighbourhood of Bajengdoba, the Kochu women (not to be confounded with the Kochs or Atongs, who are also known as Kochu) do not wear a turban at all, but bind a narrow fillet or strap of cotton, about one inch broad, called kokang, round their heads in line with the forehead. In the north-eastern hills, among the Chisaks and Machis, the women wear a pagri called brua, which consists of a cloth about two feet square. This is laid on the head in such a manner that a piece of it hangs down at the back of the neck. The two front corners are then carried round the head in line with the brow and tied in a knot over the curtain which has been left hanging down behind. The top part thus forms a tight cap. It is not, however, absolutely necessary for women to wear a turban, and they are often seen without." (1p27)

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

B. "The dress of the Garo woman, though more ample than that of the man, is by no means hampering to her movements. It consists of a piece of cloth eighteen inches long, and just broad enough to meet round her waist in the form of a petti-coat. It is fastened at the top, on either the right or the left side by two strings of the same material as the garment, which allow it to remain open on the thigh. This garment, known as riking, is universal except among the Christianized Garos and the inhabitants of the plains, who wear clothing similar to that of the Bengalis and Assamese. On their shoulders, the women often, but by no means always, wear a shawl of blue and white cotton. In the hot weather they are usually as innocent of covering for the upper part of the body as the men." (1p26)

7.8 Missionary effect:

A. "The Garos are not noted for their love of washing and leave much to be desired in the way of personal cleanliness; this applies specially to the eastern Garos, who are much dirtier than the western. Col. Dalton gives them a better character in this respect, and describes how both sexes love an open-air bath, but the fact that skin diseases are very prevalent among them is, I think, proof that the Garos are not a clean people. This remark applies to the uncivilized Garos only, for the efforts of the American Baptist Mission have resulted in a higher standard of living among their converts. Christian villages show a considerable improvement, and both men and women have learned to clothe themselves and to take a pride in personal cleanliness." (1p3)

B. "Of late years, a large number of old uniforms and frock-coats have been imported and the Garo's utmost ambition in the way of clothing is attained when he is the proud possessor of one of these lamentable relics. Bengali traders are also introducing cotton sheets and coats, so that on occasion the Garo appears more clothed than was formerly the case." (1p25)

7.9 Types of clothing:

A. "Garo dress is very primitive. The principal garment of the man is the gando, a strip of blue cotton cloth interwoven with lines of red. It is six inches wide, and about six or seven feet long. It passes between the legs, and coming up behind, is wound round the waist, the end being tucked in under the folds at the back. When the garment is put on, allowance is made, so that there shall remain about a foot and a half of cloth which is allowed to hang over, sporran-wise, in front. This gando is usually quite plain, but sometimes the end of the flap is ornamented with several rows of white beads apparently made of conch-shell. On his head the Garo wears a pagri, usually of dark blue cotton, but sometimes white. For important occasions, or when he is a nokma or laskar, he wears a turban of red Assamese silk with an ornamented fringe. The pagri is never allowed to cover the top of the head, but is wound round and round in line with the brow, and often sticks out to a considerable distance.... A cotton cloth or a blanket over his shoulders when it is cold, completes the man's attire; when it is hot, he does without extra covering and goes about in the light costume I have described." (1p24-25)

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

Numbered references

1. Playfair, A. *The Garos*. London: D. Nutt, 1909. *The Hathi Trust*. Web.