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a Gujerat village may, today, be associated with the complex of mother-godlings in the village and the fieldworker will not learn from his informants that such stones have a long historical association with the royal and warlike. But having learnt this from the student of Sanskrit he may, starting with the question of why the grandfathers of the present generation thought it worthwhile to erect such stones, make profitable observations upon the process of caste today.

Short of studying the original texts, such accounts as are provided by Professor Ghurye, particularly in his chapters on Indo-Aryan culture, are in many ways more useful than the accepted translations of such works by scholars whose main interest is philological. Ghurye's sociological interest gives him an eye for significance and relevance and since the number of Sanskrit scholars who have that qualification is few, one hopes that he will continue to further this integration of past with present in our understanding of Indian society.

D. F. POCKOCK

The Santal: A Study in Culture Change. By Nabendu Datta-Majumder, with a foreword by Melville J. Herskovits. *Department of Anthropology, Government of India, Memoir No. 2*, 1955. Delhi, 1956. Pp. 129, 19 plates, bibliography, maps. Price Rs. 6 or 9s.

The author defines his aim as follows: 'The present study is an attempt to investigate the forms and processes of cultural change among the Santal, a Munda-speaking aboriginal people inhabiting the forest-covered upland regions of the provinces of Bihar, Orissa and Bengal in India, as a result of their continuous contact with alien cultures represented by the Hindus, British Government and Christian missionaries. Only a section of the Santal, who form the second largest aboriginal group in the country, has been selected for investigation.'

The fact that the manuscript was completed in 1947 explains why there is no more than a cursory reference to recent changes. Pre-British Santal culture is adopted as a 'cultural base-line.' As the writer points out, this was the result of integration between Santal and Hindu cultures. In discussing the *ojha*, the Santal medicine man, he tries to disentangle the processes of interaction between the two. He speaks as if the institution of *ojha* training described previously by Bodding is alive today. Evidence on this point, based on fieldwork, would have been welcome. He notes the fact that the Santals have 'rejected' the doctrine of *karma* but does not discuss it.

When considering the impact of the British Government, it seems strange that no reference is made to McAlpin's *Report to the Bengal Government* (1909), especially as the report deals with Birbhum, one of the author's chosen areas. And I confess to being surprised by the statement that Christians use the term *Cando* for God. As a result of early agreement between the missions the Sanskrit terms (in their Santali forms) *Isor* and *Probbu* were adopted.

The book is to be commended for its scientific approach. The writer has no axe to grind.

W. J. CULSHAW

Sinhalese Social Organization: The Kandyan Period. By Ralph Pieris. Colombo (Ceylon U.P.), 1956. Pp. xii, 311. Price Rs. 10

Dr. Pieris must be bewitched by footnotes. He appears to find it difficult even to insert a subordinate clause without directing the reader to the bottom of the page where always learned, but frequently pedantic and unnecessary notes await him. As a result the book reads dryly as if addressed to a panel of hostile demons all waiting for openings to throw the work into the flames. In fact, this is a useful account, with much material from primary sources, of the laws and customs of the Kandyan kingdom.

The claim to originality of the work lies in the use of hitherto unpublished historical materials. When the Kandyan districts capitulated to the British in 1815, a Board of Commissioners was set up to investigate local usages and make recommendations to all agents and other government organs charged with the administration of the new territories. There is much of interest in their records which describe actual disputes and state the reasons for their recommendations.

Dr. Pieris has consulted this material, but his readers will be

disappointed with the use he makes of it. It spreads thinly on the outlines—excellent so far as they go—of the constitution, laws and customs of the kingdom provided by the already well-known and available authorities, like D'Oyly, Davy, Sawers, Hayley and the *Niti Nighantuva*. Their picture is confirmed, but not enlarged: we gain no insights into the workings of this interesting state. It is to be hoped that in the second volume promised, the author will have the occasion to edit much of this unpublished material and utilize it much more directly than he has done for this work.

In the chapters concerned with the constitution of the kingdom, a subject on which one would have expected the author to have much to say, the analysis leaves much to be desired. The kingdom has always been described as being centrally organized: as D'Oyly says, 'The power of the King is supreme and absolute.' Yet, as the author observes, even a province like the Four Korales appears to have been fairly autonomous; 'and if the loyalty of this neighbouring province could not be taken for granted, the sovereign's control over the remoter districts must have been weak indeed' (p. 233). And if that is so, how is it to be reconciled with the suggestion that there was a tradition of strong central government, and the claim that 'the kingdom was in fact "united under one canopy"' (p. 126) or with the other remarks on government—in particular, the powers of the King's ministers (p. 19) and provincial governors (p. 23)? What are we to make of the chapters on 'Revenue and Service'—how were these elaborate taxes collected?—or of the very limited discussion of conscription, or of the chapters on 'The Legal System'? On all these questions, we are no wiser than before.

Even though the material does have its limitations, it has been, nevertheless, unwise of Dr. Pieris to submit to the temptation to illustrate his points with quotations from almost any relevant authority without regard to his period or reliability: thus, Knox, the prisoner in Kandy, writing in 1680, and Ribeiro and Queyroz (1685, 1687), and D'Oyly (1820) and Ievers (1899), Kapuruhami (c. 1910), and Hayley (1923), all have their say, pell-mell, together, as if they were referring to the eternal verities which never change. In fact, from all accounts, much must have changed during the period when the Dutch were on the island.

It is unfortunate that the author has chosen to include some chapters on kinship and marriage in which he is quite out of his depth: there is an analysis of the 'Sinhalese Kinship System' (pp. 212ff.) which certainly gives the impression of having been put together from present-day contemporary evidence, complete with 'male mothers' (p. 219), and 'father right' (p. 222), the analysis of which appears, at least to the reviewer, to be quite fanciful.

When we turn to Part Seven, we find that all the material is collected from late nineteenth-century sources, mainly Ievers (1899), as well as a manuscript, *Simhala Sirit Sangharaya*, 'submitted by candidates in a competition,' dated 1932. By this stage, it becomes difficult to accept the original portentous claim in the Prolegomena that 'The unit of investigation is the social life of a specific region during a given period of time,' or that 'This study, then, presents a "model" of the complex social relations which constituted social structure as elements of a functioning social system' (pp. 5, 6). When sociologists turn to history or anthropology, they ought to learn the rules of the game.

Nevertheless, when all is said and done, the fact remains that this volume is welcome: particularly those interested in South India and Ceylon will find that the author has brought together a great deal of material, from diverse and often unattainable sources, all of which is intrinsically exceedingly interesting. Though he may complain that the periods are confused, and that the analysis is weak, yet the reviewer does intend to have the book on his shelves. The bibliography is excellent.

NUR YALMAN

Traditional Sinhalese Culture: A Symposium. Edited by Ralph Pieris. Ceylon University Conference on Traditional Cultures. Peradeniya, 1956. Pp. 113. Price Rs. 4.50

'One of the effects of colonialism in Ceylon was the creation of a new upper class who adopted the English language as its home language, took English names, and followed English manners to as nice a degree of perfection as they were capable of, and in every possible way tried not to identify themselves with the