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Understanding the world around them: The upbringing of Tharu children

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ABSTRACT

The present paper has been prepared after a two-week study of the Tharu of Chandan Chowki. The aim has been to observe and find out through interviewing both parents and children, and the way Tharu children learn various things. The paper focuses on the amount of particular training given to them at a particular age and the process through which children grow up to be active and hard working agriculturists. The paper has been divided into two main parts. The first part deals with the setting, the adult world in which a Tharu child is born, and the second deals with the child-training itself.

Keywords: Socialization, training, relationship, clothing, adornment, toys, division of labour

In every human society, human infants are born helpless and relatively undeveloped! Dependent upon adult nurture and adult transmission of the great body of culture - beliefs, practices and skills which make it possible for any human group in particular, to function as human beings (Mead, 1964)

This process, whereby the child acquires the value, attitudes or behaviours of his community and family and become a normal adult member of his community, is socialization. This is a process of transformation of the child, whom Ammar calls, "relatively peripheral," Into the "adult; who is central link in village social life." (Mead,1964) Fortes considers this transition as one "from an economically passive burden into a producer, from a biological unit into a social personality, irretrievably cast in the habits, disposition, and notions characteristic of his culture," And thus a child is transformed into the adult, into the "complicated individual version of his city and century".

The study of this process is most fascinating for the social scientist. Whether one wants to trace various ways of this transformation or to predict the future of some child or to direct a school, the same questions continually confront the student. How much of the equipment the child brings with it at birth and how much of its development depends upon regular laws and upon its early training. Is it possible to rewrite the conflict between youth and age so that

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it is less acute or more fertile for good results, asks Margaret Mead in her *Growing up in New Guinea* (1930).

The primitive child is of interest to social science, chiefly because it provides an excellent subject for experiments in social psychology and psychiatry from whose impetus to child studies has come to anthropology. The homogeneous social groups depending entirely upon their local oral traditions and with variables reduced to a minimum provide a useful laboratory for such studies.

Assuming that the primitive child and the civilized child both start life with same innate capacities, the "startling differences in habit, emotional development, and mental outlook between primitive and civilized man must be laid at the door of a difference in social environment" (Mead, 1933). Through the studios of this type social scientists have come to realize their own behaviour, once thought to be universal, as exceedingly Patterned and local. We perceive that culture can provide extraordinarily different settings for the growth Processes as puberty etc. Beatrice Whiting points out to the same general concept of the relation of personality to culture in *Six cultures* (1963). She also points out that ecology of the area determines the maintenance systems like 'basic economy and the most elementary variables of social structure.' Thus presence or absence of hewing, fishing, nature of terrain, rainfall etc., determine in part the arrangement of people in space, household composition. These in turn set the parameters for child rearing practices. Differences in all these lead to differences in child training leading to different in the personality of children and of adults ultimately. Nevertheless, there are physiological regularities that can be discriminated even when cultural differences are most sharply contracting, those who care for him, make demands on them and walk and talk, and develop proper behaviour toward individuals around him. During of this long learning there is a great deal in common between childhood among the unclothed nomadics of Australia and childhood in a community of England or India. "Every where children learn to walk within close age limits. They walk in the world where adults are taller and they are like pygmies among giants and wordless among the articulate. "To the adults, children everywhere represent something weak and helpless, in need of protection, supervision, training, models, skills, beliefs, "character" (Mead, 1954).

Anthropologists have found that children learn different things in many different ways into different cultures. The basic assumptions as made by Mead and Mcgregor In *growth and Culture* (1951) are : First, that overall growth process will be the same for all human children, Second, that wide variations will occur among individual children in the details of the process, Third that individuals may be grouped in developmental types, Fourth the culture will differ from each other in the collaboration of growth process and learning, the more the process of growth is seen as having its own regularities, the greater the significance of the difference between cultures.

To take various stages of a child's growth and development we can start from its birth and infancy. Infants and young children in various societies are submitted to varieties of care while sedentary people may develop great physical self-reliance in young children migratory people may have to carry children most of the time until they are several years old.

The way a child is carried tells a lot about his future habits If, for example, Balinese children are swaddled on the back in a sling with their heads often unsupported, and sleep while their nurses wals, run and talk, the result is that the Balinese sleep anywhere and in any posture.

How an old child is prepared for the arrival of a younger sibling helps one predict the child's feelings for his younger sibling. Whether a child is ceremonially reconciled to the intrusion as among the Koffir's or is deliberately made jealous of the intruder as in Silwa, an Egyptian village with a belief that jealousy and rivalry are important for a child's growth depends upon the culture. Mead pointed out that the "knee-baby" may be jealous of the "lap baby" and the "yard baby" may be jealous of the knee baby.

Sleeping habits are also important as has been exemplified by Balinese children. The Balinese can sleep even in great disturbance with the result they cannot be awakened easily and when they are awakened they are miserable and dazed for a long time.

The attitude of adults towards children is varied and very significant too. Child-adult relationship decides much of the character of the person since this behaviour carries the greatest communication weight upon it.

Aggression training and training the fighting, standards and aims concerning aggression in children and means of controlling both physical and verbal aggression, and treatment of disobedience and temper tantrums are important. This study of these things explains how in one society children grow up to be brave or cruel, fighters, defiant and disobedient as the Manus of admiralty Islands or obedient and docile as the Saraoans. The Tharu children are allowed to show outbursts of anger by crying loudly and abusing all around him, while elders only laugh at it and give him something to eat. When this is over the child recovers completely from all feelings of resentment and anger.

Training to develop independence and self-reliance, and culturally prescribed age levels for achievement of independence and readiness to assume responsibility is directly related to the attitude towards work. It varies from culture to culture. One tribe may give awards to little children, in another, girls will postpone attaining efficiency which marks the ending of happy childhood freedom (Mead, 1928).

The Tharu children have to learn most of adult jobs by the time they pass puberty and are of marriageable age, a year or two after puberty.

In studying how a child learns the norms of his society, one has to keep in mind that as an individual is born in a family and spends some of his most plastic and impressionable years in family, the study of a family with its interpersonal relations within it are very revealing

Parsons and Dales give a very appropriate simile in (Family) Socialization and Interaction Process, 1955). They say that a pebble dropped in a pool produces ripples around it. These ripples widen as they reach the periphery but at the same time lose their depth. Same is the case of an infant. The infant is torn to its mother with whom its relations are most intimate and deep* As it grows his circle of acquaintances widens and in the end he comes in contact with whole of its society and intimacy on the social level is not so deep as it is wide. A student of socialization, therefore, should study a child's relations with his family and its play-group within which the child spends most of its time and learns to behave and cooperate through play and instructions.

Besides his age group the individual learns and acquires technical knowledge through a sort of apprenticeship to his father and other relatives in farms or on the sea. This learning is gradual and is according to Fortes actually a part or "a by-product of cultural routine."

Studies done on primitive Childhood

Looking at the studies in which child has been the centre of interest in a historical view, first came descriptive and ethnographic observations scattered in monographs providing an impressive account proving the human child will flourish and absorb in tradition under most diverse and contradictory methods of treatment,

A further approach has been that the field worker not only records what he finds but proceeds to theorize upon the basis of his own material. Radcliffe-Brown in his study of the functions of puberty ceremonial in the life of Andamanes youth foreshadows this approach but Malinowski has been the first to employ it completely although not primarily concerned with children. In his 'Sex and Repression in Savage Society' he compares the matrilineal complex of the Trobriand Islanders with the so called Oedipus complex of European patrilineal society. He concludes that situations of conflict such as that between European father and son are not inherent in human nature nor yet in the biological family as such, but man-made conditions such as rules of residence and laws of inheritance etc.

The next step in the study of primitive children is for the investigator to specialize upon some definite problems in the field. Mead in her study of Samoan adolescents has tried to disprove the theory that adolescence is sure to be accompanied by strains and unrest.

Next comes, cross-cultural study programmes in which the attempt is to study several different cultures with common point of departure. "Six Cultures" edited by Beatrice Whiting is one of the results of such studies.

By studying the socialization in a primitive community we get a picture of the life of the community, its social organization, its world view, attitude toward the super-natural, the interpersonal relationship, in a miniature, "A complex process which we are accustomed to think of as written upon too large a canvas to be taken at a glance, can be taken as through a painter's diminishing glass" (Mead.) Above all the study enables us to predict the characters of the persons under study and explains the presence of certain complexes in the personality of the people. It also helps solving some of the problems facing the parents, teachers and psychoanalysts of modern civilization.

For such studies various methods have been employed, reservation and particular participant observation along with interview is the best method. Besides psychological techniques like ink-blot test, T. A.T, and doll-play etc, have also become very popular methods in this field.

The Problem

Socialization of children among the Tharu, was selected with a desire to have an insight into the way the Tharu children learn Tharu way of life, and the way they are treated by the adults. The study enables us to know the degree to which children learn, in their first years, proper behaviour, perception of world, religion and code of ethics according to their culture. Implicit in the research design is the general concept that there is a definite close relationship between an individual and his culture.

To check the validity of information supplied by respondents I had ample opportunity, I was able to check it by asking other villagers and to some extent observing and asking questions to the children themselves. The most important thing in an interview situation is that the interviewer gains the confidence of, and develops some intimacy with his respondents so as to face minimum resistance from them in supplying information.

The difficulty of making the villagers at ease in presence of strangers was not so great with us because they had been visited by other people of the department in the previous years. Some villagers were nevertheless, very suspicious at first of our intentions and did not show much hospitality. But slowly by giving lots of small gifts we were able to win their confidence. Small necklaces, earrings, combs and whistles made me quite a desirable person for the Tharu children, who are generally very shy in presence of strangers. The presentation softened even relatively more inhospitable parents and I was able to gain information and responses from them too.

Tea ideas, talking about one's children, paying attention to them, showing concern to their health and giving some allopathic tablets for an ailing child, always have desirable effects on the parents as well as other relatives of the children. This helped me a lot in establishing rapport.

The sight of a camera always made them conscious. They do not very much appreciate the idea of giving snaps of their children to strangers because children are very susceptible to an evil eye. But some of the Tharu knew better and their cooperation in the task was great. The intimacy between us had reached such a stage within the two-weeks that they were eager to give us their keep-sakes and to keep ours with them, and one of the old women whom we used to call (kabji aunt) cried at our departure.

In the first few days the information was collected on demography. This not only acquainted us with the village history, villager's problems, their hopes and sorrows but also with their kinship alliances and kinship terms. We used some of their terms of address. Thus we always called an old woman 'Kaki' (aunt) and an old man, 'Kaka (uncle), some were addressed as 'Bhaiya' (brother) and 'bhaujee (brother's wife). This brought us nearer and we were welcome to the Tharu village where the Tharu started expecting us from the morning eager to know about us and to tell us about them.

The Area

The district of Kheri comes under Lucknow Division. It lies between parallels of 27° 41' and 28° 42' north latitude and 82° 2. and 81° 19. east longitude It is bounded on the east by the district of Bahraich, on the south by Sitapur and Hardoi on the west by Rohilkhand district and on the north by the territory of Nepal divided by River Mohan.

The district is a vast alluvial plan covered with wide stretches of forests and numberless rivers and watercourses. At Dudhwa the elevation is 585 feet from the sea-level while the general, slope of the country is from North West to south-west. The soil in this district is capable of great variation sandy in the more elevated portions and along high river banks, Matiar or Clay in the depressions especially near palia-kalan along Shahjahanpur border,

The forests of Kheri contain superior timber. The total forest area is about 563 square miles of which 113 square miles are private property and the rest is government forest. The forest is roughly divided into two parts-the high alluvial land under sal and the low levels under miscellaneous species and grass.

The wild animals of Kheri comprise an unusual variety of species. These forests have carnivorous animals, wild sts and wild cattle. They include Tigers, Leopards, wolf, Cheetal, Sambhar, Dsers, Neelgal, Boar Kandar, Jackal, Hyena, Fox, Pigs, Stags, Antelopes, Bat,

The Tharu : Origin

Various authors trace the origin of the Tharus variously according to etymological sources. Thus Oudh Gazetteer of 1887 derives the word tharu from 'Tahre meaning 'halted' after their alleged flight into the tarai forests while in Worth Western Provinces census Report 1867 from 'tarhuwa meaning 'became wet alluding to the swampy region in which they, live. There are many more interpretations quoted by S.K. Srivastava in his book 'The Tharus : A Study in Culture Dynamics' (1958),

According to R,R, Newill, when invaders defeated the kings to whose family the tharu came their descent on the female side, queens fled into the jungles with salses and charaars. From these sprang the two indigenous people, the Buksas and Tharu respectively. The origin of the Tharu, however, is clouded in history except that they themselves claim to have descended from Rajputs of western India. They posses, more or less, oblique eyes, mostly brown or yellow brown complexion, scanty and straight hair on the body and the face, thin nose of medium size; w'ile in other features they resemble Nepalese castes and tribes.

Regularity and uniformity is found in the shape of huts and cattle sheds and water sheds. There is always a cattle shed or two near the living hut or facing it across the wide open space (the courtyard). Besides a living hut most of the well off villagers have one hut in which they cook their food, and which the outsiders cannot enter. There is a place adjoining the hut or cattle shed or in the want of sufficient space in the thatched 'porch itself, for a wooden pounding mill, the Dhoki't There are three handpumps and two wells in the village, The wells are typical in their shape. They do'nt have to dig very deep to get water surface,

the circumference too is not very big. It is about feet at the most and a hollowed out tree trunk is inserted in the mouth of the well, the round being formed by the trunk. In the second well a drum is inserted instead of a tree trunk. There is no protection against children falling into them.

To an outsider coming to the village for the first time, the village seems to have no pattern in the placement of hut. These are very broad open courtyards in front of the huts and one has to go across these courtyards from one house to the other, only occassionally does one find a narrow lane which is very small and ends into some other courtyard just after three or four yards. These lanes are bordered by walls of one or two huts or long cattle shed. The whole village is surrounded by fields and the other village of Chandan Chawki is separated from each other by a vast stretch of fields with only one or two trees here and there,

From outside, the huts appear to be single roomed with thick mud walls and some thatched porch in the front. Seen from within, one finds that the huts have small dark rooms separated from each other by low walla with no doors. There is a kitchen in a corner surrounded on three sides with an entrance without any doors.

Only seldom does a hut have a door, otherwise the hut is open to all. They, however, do not allow outsiders to enter the hut in which lies their kitchen. The other hut is open to all and has one or two rooms. Huts open into a open and very broad courtyard. Most of the household activities go on in the sunny open courtyard.

The principal article of furniture is a string and wood cot. This is an all purpose article used for sleeping, sitting or baby parking In form of a swing suspended with slings from the thatch beams, and for drying grain and vegetable. Besides, they have very big grain containers of bamboo strips and mud, baskets, utensils, fishing nets, winnowing basket, wooden implements for agriculture (plough etc.) and the bullock eart. The floor is surfaced

with a mixture of water, cow dund, mud and straw, renewed from time to time. This is very suitable when dried up. It forms a hard, dustless, water-absorbent surface.

The rooms have no windows and hut has only one opening. Ventilators are in the form of small circular wholes in the walls which are hardly big enough to let in sufficient light and air inside the rooms. The village has no drains. Utensils and dishes are washed by the water from either the handpipe or the well. They hollow-out a tree trunk of considerable thickness, longitudinally just in the fashion of a dugout canoe. This is filled with water and utensils are washed in the water filled in it. This is set in the ground near a small shed where two of three pitchers full of water are kept on a wooden stool or bench near the handpipe. The water in it is used for several days.

Agriculture forms the main part of Tharu economic life. Besides, they do fishing, stock-raising and to some extent collection of fruits and hunting. They make their own ropes, maps, baskets, furniture, carts and agricultural implements. Division of labour is present according to sex and age. Men are responsible for ploughing, sowing and reaping for bringing wood from the jungles and for supply of forced, unpaid labour for the forest authorities.

Women cannot touch the plough but help in reaping, guarding the crop, and then preparing grain for use. Women also make baskets, cook food, and look after the children. Fishing is done by both sexes.

In preparing grain men help by guiding the bullocks on the pile of harvest for threshing it. Women winnow the grain with the help of a winnowing basket. The process is hastened by wind. The grain is pounded under Dheki by women, again winnowed and sifted. Heady for use it is stored in large grain containers. Paddy, mustard and maize are main crops along with wheat 'Masoor' grain and other grains in fewer amounts. Kitchen warden they grow tobacco, radish, chilli and other vegetable. Big cattle is the responsibility of men while goats, sheep and poultry is the domain of women.

The Tharu are divided into three endogamous tribes, namely Bana Tharu, Dangauara Tharu, and Katharla Tharu. The Rana Tharu whom we studied is divided into several clans which they call 'Kun'. They themselves cannot count as to how many clans they have. Within the clan they have lineages, which they call Kurraa in which they include agnotes related to each other through a common ancestor of not a remote past. They are not endogamous. Rana Tharu considers themselves higher than others. They consider themselves as descendents of Rana Pratap and do not intermarry. Village endogamy is not practised in ordinary circumstances though they do not have any idea of blood relations among members of one village.

Within the Kurma they have several families. A Tharu family consists of a man, his wife, his married sons, their wives, unmarried daughters and grand children. They are patriarchal and patrilineal. Single families too are found which are in fact starting points for the joint family households. Even after separation members of same original family act in cooperation. They worship same deities and may help each other in necessity, lit social organization the Tharu family as a whole and not an individual is considered as a unit. The head, of the household 'Mukhiya' is obeyed. It is the eldest male of the family who assigns work to the male members and his wives assign work to the ladies who should not disobey the head couple. All members of a joint family hold the agricultural land in common ownership and brothers may seek partition. It must however, be kept in mind that ownership of land is not a complete one and so they have to apply for any change to the forest authorities.

Beliefs and Ceremonies Connected with Children

Pregnancy

The Tharu know the biological reason though not the physiology of conception. The role of paternity is clearly known to them. When the woman is sure about her pregnancy she refrains herself from doing certain things. A pregnant woman does not go out of the village in the dark. She does not touch earthen pitcher, a plough or a worship place as the Tharu say. She would never enter a temple in a town if she happened to be visiting the town during pregnancy. She fears passing through dark places believing them to be the preferential haunts of evil-spirit which may harass her or cause bad luck and ill health to her and to the unborn infant.

Barrenness is attributed to evil spirits. In such a case Bharra, the medicine man through recitation of **'mantras'** drives them away. Same is done if a woman's children die in their early age. For precaution and general wellbeing the Bhurra gives charms to the woman to wear black strings. She avoids liquor but does all routine work as usual though she is careful not to strain herself.

Child Birth

Just before the childbirth the Bharra gives some enchanted water for the well being of delivery. This water is kept beside the woman for six days and it protects her along with the newly born child from all ill expectancies which might come otherwise.

The midwife is generally an old woman from the village. They say that any old woman who is experienced can officiate as dai' (midwife). For delivery the woman is given a separate room. Only husband and 'dai' go into the room and touch her, Dai cuts the umbilical cord. The after birth is buried, over which is kept fire by the husband. This is a protection against evil spirit and evil eye and black magic. Dai gives bath to the infant. The woman is considered impure, She is given hot water to drink, A special gruel 'Harira' prepared with dry fruits, dried ginger and Ghee which is rich in nutrition. For five days after delivery fire, in her room is **let glowing** She **cannot** come out of the room nor **can** she touch other things. **Dei** comes to bathe the child and to massage mustard oil **on** both the woman and infants' body. The **dai** is given some grain and garment for her services. 'Chhati' or Purification Ceremony

This ceremony is held on the sixth day of the child birth. On this day, the mother is given liquor and fish. Rice and pulses are prepared and villagers are invited to partake the meal. The villagers eat it and give some money to the child in turn. Bhurra prepares charm and gives it to the mother for the child. No chicken or goat should be sacrificed on this day.

'Dai' is the main figure in this ceremony. She takes 'Laung', 'Jayfal', clarified butter ('Ghee') in a dish and takes it to the family's worship place, The mother along with the child follows her. After this ceremony both are considered pure. The room is plastered with cowdung and mud. Her impure clothes are washed.

From this day the woman is given both the meals and lots of liquor to restore strength. 'Sonth' (dried ginger) should be taken by her for at least fifteen days because it is **very** nutritive and useful for the mother, **After** the ceremony the woman is pure enough to resume her duties. This depends upon the presence or absence of other **ladies** in the family to replace her in domestic duties. If there are other ladies, she is allowed to rest as long as is needed to restore strength.

The name giving is not an important ceremony though sometimes it expresses the feelings of the family, thus, in one family where a son was born after a very long time; they named it 'Harl' which besides being the name of a Hindu God means one who wins the heart of others,

Another ceremony connected with childbirth is held in dark fortnight of the month of 'Magh' corresponding to English month February, Seven 'chulhe' (portable hearths) of mud are made by women if a son is born. In case of a daughter they make 5 hearths. Seven persons lift these and keep them in the Kitchen and are given a good quantity of grain. Women prepare special dish of 'Urda'. The next day they cook a pig which is eaten by the members of the family.

After that, 3 hearths are retained in the Kitchen. The rest are kept outside the kitchen or even hut for water etc. This ceremony is performed once a year and only in Magh in respect of the month in which a child is born.

Teething

If a child loses teeth in its upper jaw first it is considered abnormal. A new dish 'thali' is brought, sweet rice 'Mlsaula' is cooked. The child's mother's brother feeds the child with the help of a coin which he uses as a spoon.

Hair Cutting Ceremony: Mundan and Bauli

Dr. S.K. Srivastava's contention is that the hair cutting ceremony has been borrowed by the Tharu from the Hindus. The ceremony however, is now present among the Tharu, This is performed for boys only. There are two names for the ceremony, one is 'Mundan' and the other is 'Bauli'. The Tharu distinguishes between the two. The proper age for the ceremony varies from 3-5 years,

Mundan is performed without much elaboration. The hair of the boy is shaved off by any of the Tharu. If a 'Nau' a person belonging to a Hindu caste is engaged for the purpose he is given one meal. Being a Tharu he is given 'dajtu' (liquor). Hair is thrown in some river, and then the family takes special food cooked by women,

Bauli is performed in families where they do not have Mundan, and where they worship a Godling known as 'Bauli Devta'. In this, a child's maternal uncle cuts the hair and receives in turn a gift of 20 annas. The hair is kept in the child's father's sister's 'Aanchal', the loose end of her scarf ('Uniya'). She is presented with 20 annas and 'Dhoti' which is converted later into a skirt. Hair is said to be thrown in Shivganga river, (There is no river with this name). It seems that they have learnt the sacredness of 'Gangs' river from the Hindu and use such names for ceremonial purposes while they use any river for the ceremonies. The hair cutting may be performed in the village or on a river bank. A hen or a goat is sacrificed, brought back, cooked and eaten up in the hut.

Infant Death

The funeral ceremonies performed at the premature death of a child are not so elaborate as those performed for the death of an adult. While two funeral feasts are necessary if an adult person dies, for a child only one feast is given after the child is buried. Sacrifice of a goat or a cock is necessary for finishing pollution. Infantile death is attributed to evil spirit.

The Tharu are constantly conscious, of the evil spirits and 'evil eye'. They have several observances to protect a child from this danger. They do not take an infant out of the village until it is one year old. Nor do they take it out of their huts, to the neighborhood especially in the dark. The charms and amulets are tied to child's person. 'Kajal' (the black soot) is applied

to the child's eyebrows in thick layers, so also in its eyes. This is said to protect the child against the evil eye.

Another practice for the same purpose is that a mother spits on the child when it is asleep and covered fully by a piece of cloth,

If a child is crying constantly or is having loose motions it is said to have been harmed by some one's evil eye. In such a case the Bhurra or the mother herself takes some 'Rai' chillies and salt, moves it around the child and burns it in the fire. This is said to nullify the effects of the evil caused to the child.

Betrothal

After a child reaches 5 or 6 years of age and moves about freely, there are no ceremonies connected with it until its marriage. Mention must, however, be made to one more ceremony which is held during the childhood of Tharu. It is the betrothal of a child which is **made** when **the** child (both boy and girl) is between 3 to 5 years of age.

The ceremonies clearly indicate that the Tharu are constantly concerned about the health of their **children until** they complete five or six years. Though a casual observer cannot notice this concern since women leave their children in the courtyard with small nurses to play with. They remain occupied with their work and only occasionally do they turn to their children to feed them or to respond to their crying.

Though the Tharu do not admit their preference of a son to a daughter, all the ceremonies show the importance of a male child whose birth and other ceremonies are celebrated with greater elaboration than those of daughter. An illegitimate child is accepted by its mother's affines once a Panchayat has been held and the fine paid. There are no great differences in ceremonies though such a child provokes less love from other relations than its own mother naturally.

Infancy (Upto 2 years of Age)

Once the birth ceremonies are over the women return to regular household duties. The little baby causes little or no further disturbance to the actual pattern of living. Babies sleep with their mother for, several years until there is the next one, then the older one goes over to its grand-mother.

During the day, when the infant is not in need of food or some other attention it is placed on a cot suspended from the thatch with the help of ropes forming a swing with a quilt or small sheet entirely covering it. No one pays attention to the baby unless it starts crying to express its demands or when it is sick.

When a baby cries any older person picks it up. The mother feeds it whenever the baby cries and she can easily leave her work. But if the mother is in the kitchen, she generally does not come out until the ladies have taken their meal. In that case, any other person in the house, the father, father's mother, uncle's wife, an elder sister or cousin, even an elder brother picks it up and tries to pacify it.

Small Nurses

When a baby becomes a little older and cannot lie on the cot quietly, the baby is turned over to an older girl of the family. This girl is generally an elder sister or cousin or small sister of the baby's father (if the baby has no sister of its own). The girl lifts the baby up and talks along making all sorts of sounds in a sing song my to pacify the baby.

These girls are given this work as soon as they are strong enough to lift a baby. Even smaller girls of two start stowing an interest in amusing an infant by moving the 'Dola' (swing) in which the infant lies. She imitates her mother and singe simple *songs* like her. These small nurses are required only to lift the child and take it a little away from the busy **mother**. They play with other girls **of** their age in their courtyard or in the neighborhood leaving the child on the ground nearby. They pay little attention to the cild If it sits and plays quietly.

When the baby is big enough to walk with sweet sound of anklets, these nurses have to be a little more cautions and careful to see that it does not go away to some risky place like a well, or a thorny bush. Usually a child hovers near its nurse and partakes in the fun mads by the girls.

The role of the men in the care of Infants is also quite considerable, **very** old men, too feeble for farm work or social gatherings are given the task of rope. making and baby-tending. Such men sit in their courtyard and the baby plays near him on the ground. It is picked up when It shows any intention to cry.

Baby's Food

The baby is given only mothers' milk which is given to the child until the child itself strops asking for it or there is a second baby, or until the child becomes more interested in rice, than in milk. Goats' milk or a cow's milk, though ample, la not given to the babies. It is used as an alternative only when a mothers' milk fails, or she is ill or dead.

Supplementary milk is given from glass bottles and rubber nipples made for the same purpose and sold in the market of Palia.

Weaning

The age at which supplementary feeding is started varies from six months to one year. Thw women reported that when a child, sitting in its mother's lap, throws its hands in the direction of the dish, from which she is eating, it U given pinch of rice in its mouth. This is the beginning of solid food.

No rule is adhered to regarding the age of weaning a child. It can be given a breast whenever it asks for it upto even two years. But regular solid food mainly rice) is given to the child after one year. Even the smallest child is given rice in a separate dish. The one years old sits near an elder one or all by itself and puts some of the rice in its mouth, sprinkles the rest on the floor, spoils its hands, mouth and clothes If any Is on Its body. The mother leaves It to play with the dish and the handful of rice. She attends to it when she is free from her **work**, takes the dish back for washing It, Cleansing of the child's hands and mouth is done by stroke of a wet hand.

Clothing and Adornment

Infants are draped in a **short shirt which is not** necessary during the summer, and very elaborately embroidered cap (topa) **on** their heads during winter and rainy **season**. The baby is wrapped in a small sheet when laid **on the** cot. It may not be wrapped when someone is holding it **they** wear no-thing around, the lower half of the **body**. There is clear cut difference between the dress of a boy **and** that of a girl. The two may be left naked in want of clothes but whenever they are draped **in clothes**, a boy **is given the male dress** of a shirt or waistcoat **and** a **girl is wrapped** in a **shirt** around her waist and a black scarf for trailing **from** her **head**. There is no difference between adults clothes **and** those **for** babies. On its ankles the baby wears krinklets **known** as 'Painsura'. This produces sweet sound when the baby moves its **foot** and is learn to walk but all the others said **it was** for **sweet** sound. Lampblack

soot is applied in the infants eyes and eyebrows to beautify it and to protect it against an evil eye.

Hygiene

Infants urine and excrement are not disgusting for elders. When the baby eliminates it is washed at once. Even a very small girl around may be asked to bring an earthen pot with water. The lady attending the baby washes the baby. She cleans the excrement with hand dipping it with water and again cleaning the ground and clothes which the baby has soiled dips the hand in the water. This water is thrown away in the kitchen garden or in the fields adjacent to the hut. For the ground, she brings a pinchful of mud, and plasters the dirty floor which absorbs water and is dried up under the hot sun looking neatly plastered. A 1½ year old is sometimes asked to run to the kitchen garden or a field behind the hut for urination if it foretells it but is never scolded if it does otherwise.

Bathing

Babies are bathed by the women who has cut their umbilical cord and not by their mother up to at least one year. Bathing, however, is not a daily practice neither adults nor children have to wash daily. It is sufficient if babies are washed once a week or once in a fortnight. Soap is never used by the Tharu. The only thing to provide extra cleansing is mud applied to hair by women. The small piece of a broken earthen ware ('Sikta') and used to rub the body is *not* used for infants whose body may be rubbed only with palms. Babies cry violently while being washed.

Social Circle

Gradually, as the baby is weaned and handed over to an elder sibling, it enters into a new social circle at the age of about 11 to 12 months. It is, however, not a full change of responsibility from one to another. Mother is still somewhere near the baby as the baby and its little nurse play in their own courtyard. There other older girls from neighborhood with their little charges may gather to play. Among the Tharu, women live with other ladies in the same families. They have seen and even tended children even before their marriage* There are more experienced ladies to help her. So, child is not an object of anxiety or a nuisance. She continues with her usual routine, attends to her baby's needs in a casual way, but does not hover over it, unless of course, it is ill. The child learns to play near its older siblings and cousins and to make its demands on them. At the same time, it is sure that its mother will come to it, as soon as it starts crying.

The elder males who sometimes care for babies may 'play' with or amuse the baby, but not for long. They have to go to the fields or to the jungle for wood or to the market on business. Neither the women nor the girls spend much time interacting with the child. Girls go on with their activities with the child on their hip. The babies receive attention only when it cries. It is given a toy or food or snacks when it cries and is left to itself as soon as it keeps quiet.

The anklets tied to children's ankles are useful here as the little girl howsoever absorbed in her play is able to know whenever a baby is going away and the direction to which it is going.

Toys

There are very few toys for Tharu babies. Some infants had been provided with plastic dolls brought from a travelling merchant or from the market. But generally they are given handmade small cloth mud dolls birds and cattle made of wood or mud. Sometimes, a devoted grandfather makes a toy bullock cart of wood with a string attached to it to enable the child to drag it.

Tuntuna is another common toy given to babies 1 or 2 years old; This is a sort of rattle made of several small sticks of reed which are joined to two crossing reeds by peeling of some portion of their skins and inserting the crossing reeds through it. Another loose piece of reed is used as a drum stick when this stick is beaten against the thin skins of the reeds which are left joint at both the ends and which work as stretched wires they produced a soft and sweet musical voice sometimes.

The young ones of goats, cats and dogs are good toys for them, the other things used as toys are implements like a small winnowing baskets, a tortoise back used as a winnowing implement. As the child constantly finds the elders busy in one or the other work it may crawl to the place, where its another is winnowing paddy and play with the grain itself or its implement lying near her.

Mothers are conscious of the fact that the babies want to act like them and provide the child with such toys and higher implements which enable the babies to do so. Most common of the model implements used by infants was the winnowing implement made of tin*. One mother had bought a tortoise to eat and had retained its back for her baby. Whenever she was busy winnowing and shifting grain the child used to follow exactly the same procedure unconscious of the significance of the whole activity. An important thing to note here is that in the case cited above the child was a small boy of about 12 months, He was imitating an activity which is one of the women's duties. At this stage there is no difference between a boy and a girl's play, Both are equally treated. Both equally play near their mother or near a group of older children, Sometimes a boy of or 2 years of age is taken by its father to the fields nearby.

There, too, the child remains an observer attempting sometimes to do as its father do. A small child of one along with its older cousin of 3 was one day busy uprooting stalks of grass grown in the field while its father and servants were harvesting mustard by uprooting the plants.

Another boy of years was very fond of taking small bundles of harvest, beating them on the ground so that the dried ears of grain drop on the ground and then after the bundles were heaped up, the boy used to take a small sickle and cut the twisted bands used for binding the bundles. All this was a copy of the process of preparing ears of harvest for threshing,

Training in Responsibility

Small babies running from one place to another are often given small tasks like chasing chicken from drying grain or carrying things from one adult to another and even accompanying the older boys and girls in herding sheep and goat, A two year old may be asked to move the swinging cot to and fro so that a new born baby lying in it does not cry. These tasks are given to children of this age more out of fun, as elders sometimes enjoy the sight of a small child doing odd job, than out of a feeling to teach the child.

But these things are the beginning of a responsibility training which is intensified in later age. The child does a work or just ignores it to run away to some other person weaving a fishing net or to a grandmother who is busy detaching maize to be converted into popcorn. An infant may play with the mud which its mother is crushing and preparing for the wall-plaster or for making hearths.

This is the beginning of a child's Interest in the world around, and this is the beginning of a child's learning and getting used to the environment through imitation of adult activity.

Toilet Training

It starts during Infancy though parents are not very particular about childrens strict adherence to the instructions. Elders laugh and appreciate the child if it does some work and the mother is proud of her child is appreciated. But she is extremely cautions of an evil eye. Protective charms and amulets are always applied. One of the latest dangers to child's health has been felf from cameramen. They know what is meant by taking a snap. Most of them especially women do not want people to have a snap of their child which according to them harms the child. One woman became very annoyed when one of us took a photograph of her baby. Later she told that one of her baby died after one of the previous party took a snap of it. As soon as a women has slightest danger or suspicion she lifts the baby and takes it into her hut,

Dependence

The child too at the slightest inconvenience starts crying and turns to its mother, nurse or some other relative around it. The baby spends his first two years as a 'passive observer of the busy courtyard life'. His first months are spent in sleeping on a cot, from there it moves to the lap of a small girl in the same courtyard. The child nurse often takes it to the neighborhood or a field lying **just** at the back of the hut. After this the child learns to sit and play by itself, too if it is given some toys or if it finds something of its interest near one of the women or men in the courtyard.

To sum up, the general picture of child emerging from infancy is that of a dependent fearful, and unaggressive child which is capable of making its demands, ready to cry in presence of strangers and inconvenience and easely placated as soon as attended to, Leaving isolated mother company child advances towards a wider circle to interact.

Early Childhood (Upto 5 years of Age)

This is the stage in which a child is considered able to respond to directions but still he is not punished if he falls in following them. Systematic demands are made on the child until he can walk and talk a little. Even after the child is able to do both by the time he is 3 | he is not expected to help the elders around. But still, as the child is constantly present in the courtyard of his house or that of the adjacent hut a mother may make casual remarks, give an instruction here and another there. That is all for a 3 or 4 years old. It is believed by the Tharu that young children learn through observation and imitation rather than instruction. The years from infancy to childhood and then to adolescence define a transitional period during which a child moves from observer to participant in the life of the village. This transition is a gradual one with no clear signposts to mark its beginning or its end. (Hitchcock,1963). The small child of two to four is still a baby. It keeps on sleeping with its mother until the arrival of a younger sibling. During the day children do not sleep. They play whole day round between meals and small excursions to the fields with older siblings or fathers and uncles.

Toilet Training

One the systematic demands made on the child is that it eliminates in some appropriate place, As soon as the child is able to anticipate and tell of a bowel movement it is asked to run to the field or a kitchen garden. But a child is never punished if it eliminates on "the courtyard or in the hut unless of course it is 4 or 5 and then the child seldom commits this mistake. The mother cleans it up and may scold the child mildly for having done something undesirable,

Bath

Children are usually bathed by adults until they are 4, After that they start pouring water on themselves, and thus, fulfilling the formality of a bath. But during the winter they have to be washed by force and whenever they are washed properly with lots of rubbing and application of mud they cry. Bathing is not regular. Children go about playing or even eating while their nasal discharges are only rarely removed. Most children at this stage are seen with running noses and dirty smelling clothes and body.

Clothing and Odornment

A child between 2 to 5 years is provided with one or two sets of clothes. But still a boy often wears nothing below his waist, A short shirt is sufficient and a coat in a Jacket ('Fhatuee') in the winter. The lower half remains bare even during the winter and a small boy with 'dhoti' a cloth around the waist is a rare sight, For girls the case is reverse. But is the lower half of the body only which is clothed In a girl, A small skirt hangs from her waist the upper part of body is left bare during the summer During winter she may be given a jacket to wear without the blouse which demands labour of embroidering and stitching.

The children are not very conscious about their clothes, Sense of Shame in exposure is absent at this stage though a girl will try to sit like an older woman, arranging the skirt properly, Sometimes when a guest or an outsider is around, a woman may ask her to sit with her skirt in proper style. But it is not paid much attention,

Hair Style

Hair cutting ceremony takes place during this period. After it boys wear the short close cut hair with one lock left to grow on the back of the head (a sign of Hinduism). Girls have to wear their hair long. The hair is not very long at this age so, generally it is left loose. But a small girl knows that it has to be tied into a bun one day, like her elder sister. She is often seen twisting and rolling which ever lock is long enough to be caught and twisted with small hands. She can often be seen twisting the hair of a grandmother or that of even her father trying to make a roller bun of it. She may be asked by her mother to clean her comb and take the hair out of it. In this way a girl is interested in the hair style even before she has her own hair long enough to be arranged in a coiffeur.

Adornment

Lamp black soot is not applied to eyes except only on special occasions otherwise the mother has no time to adorn a child A fond and ambitious grandfather or father may buy a shoe for his son from the market but it is generally not used except on special outings. Women don't wear shoes or sandals nor do the girls. But a small child may be seen slipping his foot in the wooden sandal of his grandfather and dragging it, walking with difficulty.

In ornamentation for boys, several black springs are joined together ending in a button loop at one side and in a coin utilized as a button on the other. This is worn on neck, ankles, wrists and waist.

Girls wear glass bangles in wrists, occasionally an armlet of coins and a chain of artificial pearls in their neck.

Food Habits

We have seen that children are given some rice even before they are weaned. They slowly adjust to taking solid and semi-solid food in the form of rice, vegetables and pulses. For children there are no special preparations. They are given some rice in a dish with some

vegetable. They quickly learn to accept the adult diet and eat it along with other children of various ages (each in a separate dish). Elders do not come to help a child in eating nor are they supervised in taking the food properly.

Imitation is the only method of learning here. It is interesting to see even the smallest child leaving some rice in the dish for the dog. It is an act which all the adult leaving some food in the dish, pushing the dish towards the dog who is expectantly sitting by and allow it to lick the rice up after which the women would come to collect and wash the dish. Exactly the same is done by children in a most natural and automatic way as it were. In cleansing of hands and mouth of a child the mothers are not very particular especially before the meal, A child can be given liquor on cold and special evenings.

Social Circle

A child of 3 to five years is left to play with other boys and girls. Sex segregation is absent at this stage, A five or four year old is often seen holding a younger sibling on her hip, bending on one side, moving from one hut to another looking at others at play. They may put the child on the ground and participate in the game. Thus the child's circle during the day between the two meals is formed by small children from the neighborhood. This sociability is encouraged by elders who do not have much time to indulge in the child themselves. Among the play this child is generally junior in age and experience. Older children guide it in the games, may even scold or curse it and just exclude it from their fun. In such a case the timid child lingers as a passive observer.

Among the relatives and members of the family some of the elders are not allowed by tradition to beat or scold the child. These are father's younger brother's wife and one's brother's children even if they are older in age. They cannot beat a child because it is said to be objectionable act bringing about curse on the elders. This suits patrilineal and patriarchal arrangement. A child's mother, father, father's sisters, father's mother, mother's brother and older siblings can punish a child if needs be. All elders, however, can resort to mild scolding if a child behaves and its mother is not around. Men are not supposed to beat a girl though an out raged father sometimes gives a slap or fire to a girl.

The child in its play group

Usually the children of this age do not venture more than half a mile from their homes. The 3 or four year old are frequently seen standing on the outskirts of a game of older children or waiting to be obliged by an older child by giving him the fruits he is plucking, or following an elder brother or sister to the pond or to the field, doing as the elders do,

As the child grows older, it starts participating in the games, and activities. They move easily from one courtyard to another uninterrupted by their mother in their choice of friends. The adults pay little attention to the activities of children unless they notice an objectionable activity related to sex. In such a case the elders scold the child uttering a curse of two. Otherwise they are free to go on with their activities.

Games and Toys

Taylor's description of games as largely "only sportive imitations of the serious business of life" fits tharu games too, to a large extent. A great deal of the play of younger children consists of almost random activity. They chase each other, climb on a vacant cart, or play with small implements of the adults like a sickle, axe or a small fishing net, a toy cart of wood or mud, made by the grandfather, a brother wooden frame of the fishing net. The toys which family possesses are never objects 'diart'. They are small models of useful things. Girls persuade an older sister or cousin or a neighbor to make for them rag dolls, toy utensils, or

may help others in making mud houses. But they seldom play with these things, Their toys are model pounding mill a toy grinder, a toy winnowing basket. The boys and girls together play 'house' or other fantasy plays modeled on adult life like celebrating marriage of dolls, cooking imaginary food with all elaborate activities like crushing spices with stones, making breads of mud, giving imaginary feasts and eating imaginary food. These games are started by & older children and small child joins out of fun and curiosity hardly understanding the full meaning of the whole procedure.

A girl was often seen after the harvest, winnowing grain with the help of a tin toy like mother's winnowing basket. She dropped grain from a considerable height, then fanned the grain so that the straw is sifted, A girl may be seen pounding grain under a toy pounding mill (Dheki) made by her grandfather. Another girl may be seen dramatizing fishing with a small fishing net felling it with straw and hay in place of water and fish. Often they accompany their mothers to the pond holding the smaller fishing net which women use for taking-out fish from larger nets. They splash water, dip the net in water playfully and feel pleased at the sight of a fish entangled in it by chance.

Most of the toys of the small children are made by others for them. A toy drum or a wooden board used for writing by school going children, are a child's possession. A wooden bird placed on a very long bamboo to represent the aeroplane is made by some adult on his leisure to amuse a child by telling it that it will ride this and fly in the sky like city people. All this clearly shows that while adults are not able to devote much time to children, they are always interested in children's play and provide them with appropriate, simple toys.

The Chores Assigned to Small Children

If a Tharu is asked about the work which is expected of a small child below five, he will reply that the child is very small, it does not do any work, and only plays. In fact such small children are not expected of performing any regular task but they are asked to do this or that according to their ability. A small child can put some potato or grain (esp. maize) in the hot ashes of the fire burning in the hut for warmth. The child roasts the potato or pops the corn with the help of some iron tongs (phimta) and eats it. I saw a small girl of about 3 cutting small pieces of radish (Cmooli) with a sickle held under the food as elders do for cutting vegetables. These things, however, are more out of fun and of an interest in eating the things. A child ventures to do such a thing in the company of other children. It is asked to accompany sheep and goats to the field for grazing. A woman who does not have other women in her family to help her asks a 4 or 5 year old to help her in pounding grain. While the mother operates the 'Dheki' (mill) the child is asked to sweep the scattered grain constantly under the pounding mill.

If an infant is obstructing the mother's work she will ask the four year old even a younger one to swing the baby in the cot (Dola) or take it away for a diversion. The girl helps the mother in the kitchen by bringing water or utensils which does not appear to be real task.

Only rarely will a case be found where a child when scolded or asked to do a particular work would say 'no' or disobey. At the most the child would delay in carrying on the instruction for a few minutes. But generally, the child sets itself in motion as soon as it is told to do something. Only once I saw a girl of four or even less being asked by her busy mother to take care of a small crying baby. The girl shouted in half weeping tone that she would not. The mother did not repeat the order again nor did she look at the crying baby on the ground. The girl came after five minutes, lifted the baby, sat in the swinging cot and started rocking the child in a sing song way. What she was uttering was a sentence in prose asking as to who has

beaten her brother but the tune was a true copy of the tune sung by women in their dance songs.

Though the tharu do not insist upon a child's doing a particular work but they appreciate it very much if a child can do such small and meaningful tasks, often a girl of 4 or 5 would be coaxed to do something by calling her as a 'queen' or other words of affection. No prizes however, are given for good work except verbal praises in rare cases.

As adjudged from their verbal reports, the mother's place primary emphasis on every day activities of farming and processing grain, and for a girl an interest in embroidery. Their notion of a good boy or girl is that a child is good if it shows interest in household and field activities and if instead of nagging its mother it is busy playing by itself or with other children.

Self reliance training is scanty as the training in responsibility at this stage. If a child wants something or has some problem it goes to its mother or elder sister instead of solving it itself. The child, however, learns during this period to determine the proper sources of various kinds of help. Thus a child knows that it goes to the neighborhood just for play and when it is hungry it must go to its own mother or sister. Children usually seek help from adults rather than outsiders. If they had to get a whistle or balloon from us they never asked us directly and nagged their mother instead,

Training in the Inhibition of Emotion

This does not start at this time though if a child starts crying nonstop it is lifted in arms by an adult and is given something to eat to pacify it. If a child is very angry and expresses its anger by crying, and cursing others it is allowed to do it. Adults laugh at the child when it is thus fussing. After sometime the child stops if something diverts it. Out break of anger and aggressive behaviour is seldom found and if it is there it is not discouraged. They are used to having a hearty and very loud laughter in which a child is not discouraged, be it a boy or a girl.

Quarrels among children are usually ignored. They do not take serious shape, I saw a small girl being hit by an older girl from neighbourhood. The smaller girl returned it just to get another blow from the senior one. But no one of them made a fuss, they looked at each other for a hot reckless moment and then looked away at something more interesting. Elders seldom quarrel over children. The custom of not beating a husband's brother's child makes it easier and smoother arrangement. Sibling rivalry is conspicuous by its absence. The reason under by is that no child is given special attention beyond its physical needs and none is deprived of too much care if another child is born to share mother's attention.

Extended family provides more than one caretakers. Any women can come to replace the mother or father. Thirdly, in an extended family no child is the object of very great curiosity and attention and never a first born child with none between it and the adults. There is always a child older by some years. If it is not in one's own generation it may be a child of one's grand-mother. As it grows there are other children born to its mother or aunt or the wife or its elder brother. The child is often to look after it which means love and tenderness and never jealousy.

In these circumstances a child is always a secure member of a group but never an important individual. His needs are cared for but he never monopolises his mother's time. Besides 'Mundan' or 'Bauli' the hair cutting ceremony there is another ceremony in the course of one's

early childhood. This is one's engagement ceremony. Boys and girls are betrothed at this small age though marriage is performed only after the boys and girls are past puberty.

Thus a Tharu In his early childhood is relatively extensively social. It meets other in the neighborhood, goes frequently to the field or market with its father is very active and curious, ready to learn and imitate whatever is going around. It starts initiative in some tasks but mostly it clings to an older person for support. It tells about its needs to the adults of its family. Toilet training, food habits start taking form. Training in responsibility and self reliance and scanty. Aggression training too is almost scanty as the child is left to do as it pleases. The child spends most of its time in Playing and observing the busy scene around him sending to schools is a new and rare practice and most of the children are sent to the teacher after five but once or twice. I found children of 3 or 4 too sitting in the row of little pupils near the teacher.

Late Childhood (Between 5-12 years of age. before puberty)

The transition from early childhood to late childhood is a gradual one. There are no ceremonies to mark the transition from one stage to another, nor is exact age of children of any interest to the parents. No linguistic terms to differentiate age grades are used except that after puberty boys and girls are known as 'Sayana' and 'Sayani' (i.e. expert) respectively.

Dress has always been different for the two sexes but now they are more particular to dress the child fully. Girls who could up to five years remain only in skirts with no 'Aangi' (blouse) should put on both as they grow up. Boys should wrap 'Photi' from their waists though they move about without the shirt during the summer. Smaller boys often wear small loin cloth instead of a 'Dhoti' which requires more expenses. During the winter a girl up to eight may not be given an 'Aangi' for daily use and may wear a jacket instead 'uniya', the big black cotton scarf for covering the head is necessary for a girl because to move about without it is considered shameful.

Sense of Shame

Sense of shame in being without proper clothing is inculcated in children by casually asking them to arrange their garments properly. Elders start telling others that the child feels shy or ashamed in this or that so that the child learns to feel so even before it clearly knows the meaning of all this.

Adornment

Boys wear black thread ornaments with coins in them. Their jackets have buttons of colts which form the major part of the 'materai' used by women too for ornaments. Girls lay be given more and more ornaments as they grow. They know that the more they will contribute in making the ornaments the more they will be able to secure for themselves. They start showing interest in preparing various ornaments. They wear besides glass bangles, armlets of coins and coloured wool, wristlets, necklaces and a hard flat ornament in their ankles invariably. On special occasions such as a marriage or 'Holl' festival they wear as many ornaments as their mother can give them.

Earlobes are pierced at the age of about 4 to 6 after which paper or vegetable roots are inserted in them in order to broaden the holes. Another painful yet pleasant provision for adornment is tattooing of forehead, lower arms and dorsal sides of the hands. A girl of about 10 or 12 is ready to bear the pain of tattooing for improving her looks.

Hair style

There is no difference in boys hair style throughout but a girl's hair must be made into a tight bun just at the top of the head as soon her hair are long enough to be rolled and tied. It is made by the mothers and is so tight that it won't need daily combing. This remains untouched for several day until the mother gets time to make it afresh. A girl of 9 starts trying to do it for herself and is quite expert by the time she completes 10.

Bathing

A child of 6 is big enough to take its own bath and rub its body with the 'Sikta' (earthen ware). This the child, especially the girl, learns through first assisting someone else in scratching and rubbing her back with 'Gikta' and by being helped by others in the same way. They do not have enclosed places for baths. Girls too have to take their baths in the open near a hand pipe. Small girls are helped by elder ones in washing hair with mud.

Games

Gradually sex segregation becomes more and more marked both in play and in work. The nature of work assigned to boys and girls in their childhood is such as to make them have same sex association and the play group Includes either boys and girls though not very rigidly so. A group of boys playing in front of their huts may allow a girl to participate and the girls may include a boy but there are certain games which suits boys while some suit the girls. Several competitive games are popular at this age specially with the boys but no one seems to take winning seriously. The games end in high spirit. All boys laugh together. The loser is not punished or ridiculed nor is the winner given any trophy. Among vigorous and competitive games giving way to energy are in which boys throw sticks farther and farther testing as to who can throw sticks with greater force.

Lobat Danda: This game provides ample opportunity to boys to learn and practise climbing a tree. In this game a 'Chor' tries to catch boys when they come down a tree while their Endeavour is to run quickly and limb the tree before he can catch him.

Langdi Tangdi: It is a hooping race in which boys catch one leg with a hand and run hopping on one foot with lots of laughing.

There are many more games which require vigour. Games like Kabaddi, Hurda, Gola (circle) all require lots of running and chasing generally played by boys of 6 to 11 years of age in the fields where they take their cattle for grazing. There are other games in which there is a dramatization of adult activities or that of habit and nature of birds and animals. Thus they may imitate a cock's crowing in a game called 'Murga-murga' (cock-cock) or lift some older child or arms or on back of a stranger boy enacting a ride in the bullock cart. Often they play games in which one party asks various questions regarding food and animals and the other party gives replies. They act as if they were guards or as if they were sowing seeds, or giving feast to the guests.

Goti and Kuncha:

They make small circular shells for themselves of mud (Goti). They toss 'Goti' the mud shells in the air, catch them sometimes on the back of their hands or between two fingers. This requires manual dexterity and both boys and girls play this game though they may form separate parties Kuncha, the plastic homemade shell or glass shell brought from the market are thrown in a small pit in the ground and boys hit one of the opponent's shell which has to be forfeited if hit. These games are less vigorous but require dexterity and correct aiming, there are other games too for bigger children of 10 to 12. They have been introduced to the Tharu

either by the travelling merchants or by the teachers in their villages. They play with playing cards or with two swords rotating them round their shoulder. They draw a complicated pattern on the ground and play by moving small shells on various lines. The game is known as Tiwra. Sometimes even older men participate in it or take Interest in these games while their hands are busy in weaving fishing net. During the Holi festival these games become more popular. In another game taught by a Mohammedan teacher, two boys take a long strong stick and a cloth-and-leEither shield and enact a mock fight In good yet vigorous spirit.

Besides small plastic glass and mud shells, sticks, musical instruments like small drums and flute, playing cards they have one small toy known as Gulel. This is made of a small bifurcated branch of a tree, the two ends of bifurcated branches holding a strip of rubber tied to them. This toy is not allowed to be handled by smaller boys. Boys above twelve can handle it because it is used, to hurl small mud balls and shells to kill birds and may prove dangerous to man if the aim is missed. Smaller boys play with balls made of cloth or mud. Rubber balls too may be bought from the market though very rarely. They make small mud houses or models of animals and birds for themselves and for younger siblings.

Small girls participate in some of these games if these are being played in the courtyard. But as they grow older they are asked to remain near their mothers and have to look to baby tending if they are not away with sheep and goats. The few games played exclusively by girls include doll playing mainly. At this stage girls try to make dolls from rag and are able to make dolls representing bride and bridegroom without difficulty because the dolls are not elaborate in their details and only barely represent human form.

Chores

Although recreational activities become more organised and varied as the children grow older, they have less time to devote to play since a portion of their day is allotted to work and sometimes though rarely to school. The two major tasks that a girl is expected to do as she is six ape (1) baby tending and (5) taking out sheep and goat for grazing. For bullocks and cows the girls and women never go. This is the domain of male members. They have to wash the dish in which she eats. Cooking is not expected of a small girl but the lesson in cooking starts for a girl of eight. If there is a guest for whom the meal is to be prepared, the girl will be asked to cook rice in a lighter and smaller pot. The mother will toll her amount of water and the time upto which it should be cooked and with proper guidance though without great feeling of responsibility the girl is able to cook something or the other. There is no hurry in these matters. A girl is allowed to have her time and through help and assistance she is able to learn the staple art of cooking.

A girl may be asked to accompany a neighbour to the pond and fetch mud for wall plaster. She helps her mother in plastering the wall or the floor sometimes. Kabroidery and stitching is an essential thing to learn. A small girl of 6 is given a needle with thread and some rags to sew a long narrow strip string used for tying the skirt to the waist, while the mother is busy stitching the skirt itself. All female garments have to be stitched by them and take several days because a lot of embroidery is done on sleeves of the blouse and broad back belt of the skirt, Small girls of eight are taught simple patterns of embroidery. They take this to the fields where they have left the goats to graze and stitch the garments while besides guarding the cattle. The greatest incentive to learn this is the fact that the more they stitch the more clothes they have for themselves because mother does not have much time to stitch several sets. It follows the same course. Gradual transition from simple small baskets to large and artistic baskets are made by the girls after the age of eight years. Beautiful baskets are retained by mothers from use and are given to the girl at her bedding.

Agricultural Activity

Girls are sent to the field where the ears of com are standing exposed to the parrots and other birds. They are required to drive the birds away and guard the crop. Girls help in sowing and reaping field but never touch the Plough. Ploughing is the responsibility of men and so only boys help in it. A small girl helps her mother in grinding the grain or winnowing it. Dance and songs are learned by girls of if they are Interested in it. Women usually dance in 'Holi' festival. The smaller girls are not forced to learn this art. An interested girl looks the women dance, comes to her Play group with mind haunted with music, and imitates the women. The next year she joins the row of dancing girls standing on the rear of the row and learns the art by the time she is twelve.

Boys start with taking out big cattle even beyond their power to control with other boys from the neighbourhood. They are sent for this task even when they are below six. I saw a boy of 4 or even less than that pulling rope of a water buffalo, trying to drag it towards the village. The animal was of course, unaffected while the boy was jumping, and pulling the rope and shouting. Boys generally are not left alone with the cattle, however. They start by going in older men's company and remain on the outskirts of the village and never venture into the jungles. They are asked to accompany their father in the bullock cart loaded with wood from the Jungle and a boy of eight may be seated in one cart to drive it while the father i.e driving another. By ten years the boy is competent enough to drive the cart on his own. As the boys grow older they are taught to make their own ploughs, and mend their implements, weave their fishing nets. They go with men to the river for bigger fishing expedition and by the time a boy is twelve or thirteen he is able to throw the heavy fishing net in the river with correct posture.

All are busy in work in such a way that a boy hardly thinks it unnatural and tiresome to work. He has ample time to play and at the same time finish a work assigned to him. Only occasionally will a parent be found scolding a son to leave the game and go to some work. When it does happen that a boy shows greater interest in roaming here and there standing and talking in the neighbourhood or playing 'Pasa' or 'Chhakki' with playing cards during busy agricultural season, the father scolds him mildly to discourage play.

Boys are seldom beaten. When they grow older they may be shamed and teased by saying that the parents of his fiancée will consider him to be lazy and wont give him their daughters. They do not, however, have to worry much because as children's play consists mainly of an imitation and dramatization of serious adult activities and as they see their adults busy In the same type of work day after day, an interest from simple play to an Interest in serious work is automatic and imperceptibly gradual one.

School Going

Children especially boys at this age may be sent to the teacher but the parents never emphasize school going. A small girl or boy may be sent to the teacher just out of curiosity and fun in most cases and out of a genuine interest in gaining knowledge in only some cases. After a year or two girls are invariably withdrawn while boys too are not pressed to continue if he shows practically no interest.

There is no marked change between a boy who has been to the school and one who has not been to one, except only if a boy has perchance continued to study for more than a year. This much of learning make a difference In as much that boy is able to recognise the Hindi letters and is perhaps able to count. A boy who has studied upto fourth standard is able to write and read though often wrongly, even if a boy can read Hindi script he does not understand

its full meaning because of the difference between his own language tharuat and Hindi. A boy of about 13 years could even read a Ramayan presented to him by his teacher but was not able to Interpret Its meaning. Another boy could read Hindi and some English and intended to secure some job like city people after studying more. He was quite encouraged by his ambitious parents and the teacher and used to be presented with small city luxuries like a shirt or half-pant of city boys, shoes and small books by his father.

Regarding the behaviour of the literate and illiterate boys, both of them would speak same language naturally and use same abusive language and curses and Will show interest in same type of food and games. Their habits of personal hygiene, way and nature of dress is same except that on special occasions the two boys mentioned above could be able to feel more important and boast of something which others cannot. The education has not penetrated deep yet. In the school one can find students of all ages sitting in one row trying to learn but often looking around at something of their interest until the teacher reminds him of his lesson.

School going boys too have to work in the field. They still do not have the opportunity to be relieved from heavy work just because they sometimes go to school. Adult recognition of the increase in children's responsibility by studying is meagre.

Training in correct conduct and moral is not a formal one. Children at this stage are able to understand the conversation of their elders. They are always present and never discouraged to listen to elders conversation. They enjoy adult jokes and laugh loudly with them when a joke generally connected with Imaginary connections between men and women Small boys and girls accompany the adults on a visit to some relative in the same or a distant village, They observe the way elders greet each other, the way guests are entertained. They learn through an appreciative or scandalous conversation as to which behaviour is undesirable and which invites praise.'

Often a grown up girl may be directly asked not to make friends with boys because it is bad, though elders can never know as to when this is defied, 'Another source of training children into the morals and ethics is through storytelling, and asking and solving riddles, singing stories in the form of songs and then explaining their meaning,' Children are part, of each of these sittings and collect more knowledge than is intended to be imparted to them. Thus they know as to which of day is auspicious and which is ominous for beginning a new task by listening to the elders who discuss and decide the time when they would commence it. They learn the importance of ritual friendship of adults by hearing about it and doing the same among themselves.

Children will be seen flocking together on festive occasions like a 'Pooja', Holi festival, a sacred Katha (story) recited by Hindu Pandit amidst enchantations and worship, and above all the ceremonies like Chhati, Mundan **Bauli**, marriages ceremony and the funeral ceremony,

They attend these, hear discussions about these things and gradually learn the importance of all these activities gradually. Thus the period of late childhood to puberty is a period in which a child starts learning and accumulating the skill of his people through observation and imitation then passes on to a stage where some tasks are assigned to him and some he does out of mere fun, learns various games from senior children.

He learns things through an apprenticeship to his parents through casual instructions and guidance regarding correct behaviour. During this period a Tharu boy or a girl learns most

of the adult activities so that as he reaches puberty he is competent enough to support himself and to be married. Girls know most of the female duties like cooking, embroidery, stitching, baby tending, processing of grain and helping in the sowing and harvesting. Boys by now are capable of carrying on most of the agricultural activities can make some of the agricultural implement or at least mend them, there is practically no difference between in a youth belonging to the family of the village head 'Pradhana' and that of someone else. All have to learn the same skills.

All have to follow same code of conduct that is, they should obey elders, should not use abusive language for elders, but they are free to curse youngsters with any type of language. All of them are required to make friends within the circle of same sex. All this they learn without much conflict and in the end with the marriage after a year or two they become normal adult of their community. They lead a life conforming to their group without great Individual deviations in it.

Conclusion

The process of transformation of the child who is in Ammar's words "relatively peripheral" into the "adult who is central link in village social life" is very gradual and smooth. Among Tharus it is difficult to describe distinguished stages as to mark the transition from one stage to another, reason; they do not observe special performance at the completion of any of them.

Weaning of Tharu children is not abrupt and forced. As an infant is handed over to some small nurse after a year or so, the infant is in constant care of one or the other though a little away from his mother. The Infant knows that he has to turn to his nurse or mother always ready to respond to its cry. He does so and is lifted into the arras soon. He is not, however, paid very great attention by his busy mother or a small nurse who is more interested in her play. The infant in a general picture appears to be a fearful, and dependent individual. He is capable of making demands on his mother or nurse. He is timid and unaggressive.

Thus toilet training starts when a child is or 2 years. He is taught to defecate at a proper place but is not punished if he does otherwise. As the child grows older, he gradually inculcates the habit of doing so through occasional scolding for having done otherwise. Baths start with 'dai's' bathing an infant to mothers doing it for the Child. The child starts taking interest in this activity by first playing with a bucketful of water, then pouring it on himself. He is able to take his own bath by the time he is six.

The beginning of responsibility training cannot be worked out clearly. But it definitely starts In the late Infancy and early childhood when child is asked to chase chicken from the gram left to dry under the sun or taking small things from one adult to another. The smaller, almost insignificant chores are replaced by more significant ones and a child of 4 can be depended upon for taking out goats of his family to graze along with some older child of the neighbourhoods Lifting and amusing an infant is one of the most common task expected and carried out by small children of 4 to 6 years.

This brings us to a consideration of training of nurturance and sociability. The task of minding an infant develops in the child(especially girls) nurturance, which seems giving help or emotional support (Whiting). It becomes part of a little girl's behaviour to lift up an infant as soon as it starts crying. This, of course, is inculcated by first instructing a girl to amuse a crying infant or to lift it up in order to relieve the busy mother. The instinct of nurturance in girls finds its expression in girl's doll-play in which by doing whatever they like to do with the dolls they feel big, important and motherly.

Sociability increases when a child starts walking with ease and is able to associate with other children of the household or neighbourhood. Tie enters into the play-group of other children as a timid observer. Gradually, he becomes an active and experienced member of the play-group and is able to scold or instruct younger recruits in games. Often a child has the opportunity to visit some relative in another village or to visit the market, or attend a marriage or other feast. A Tharu child is not discouraged or interfered by his parents in his choice of playmates. Slowly first by listening about and then by actually entering into ritual friendship, a Tharu child learns the importance of friends and cooperation, so vital for a village life. A Tharu has, thus, fairly extensive and intensive social contacts by the time he reaches adolescence.

Children's play, specially their fantasy play of adult activities, reflects development of self reliance, and achievement. They try to imitate the adults and to become like them. They enact adult activity in which they show their desire to achieve qualities like others. From the interest in mere play to an interest in significant and meaningful work is a very gradual and imperceptible transition. For this the parents do not have to worry themselves as the children do not take the chores assigned to them as apart from their play.

Adult segregation of sexes does not start in early childhood. It, however, starts in the later childhood without much deliberate instructions and prohibition. The division of labour in sexes is reflected in the assignment of even simple tasks to the children. As the children grow up and show interest in serious work girls automatically stay in the village with older ladies while boys go out to fields.

Aggression Training

Beatrice Whiting points out to the hypothesis that a child who is teased by parents and other adults is more aggressive than one who is not teased, and the amount of teasing or playful wrestling in leisure settings. If we accept this we can say that the lack of aggressive behaviour is due to the absence of playful teasing of children by adult. Moreover, when a child is angry he is not stopped to cry or abuse. With the result, when a child recovers from outbursts of anger and resentment he is fully recovered and satisfied.

Training in inhibition of emotion does not bother adults or children. They are never checked for example when they laugh very loudly or show an interest in adult joking, or when they utter abusive language which is sometimes obscene too.

Training in sex is not formal among the Tharu. Small children are checked if they are seen playing objectionable games related to sex. They are not scolded for referring to sexual parts and acts in their abusive language. Older children learn about the biological life through conversation of older girls. Adults say that the children, specially girls do not have to be told about it, and they know about it through their association with their agemates.

Training in social norms too like other types of training is imparted slowly. The Tharu children accumulate knowledge of proper behaviour by observing older people's behaviour. They imbibe the sense of shame, for example, by seeing their mothers feel shy in singing or dancing in the presence of their offines. A mother claims that her little daughter feels shy in presence of the relatives of her fiance even before the girl herself knows the meaning of feeling shy or modest.

The proper way of behaving with elders and with visitors or the way of greeting an older or younger relative (younger not in age but in kinship) is not taught to the Tharu children. They

are constantly present in the village and see a visitor being greeted and entertained in different ways by different relatives. They look at a bride behaving with her offines during her marriage, or at a father offering worship to the godlings. They feel the excitement and enthusiasm in their mothers' preparation of beautiful garments and ornaments for a coming festival or marriage. Thus they are constantly trained in the norms of their community through observation or through conversation of elders.

Techniques of socialization of Tharu children are mere casual instructions and later order to do this or that, with scolding and abusing children for some undesirable behaviour. Severe punishment and beating is almost absent. But none of these is so effective In children's training as imitation and observation by children of adult activity. Lowie says 'Everywhere children mimic their elders and thus get painlessly educated for adult tasks' (1934), In this way Tharu children as they pass the stages of infancy to early and late childhood and reach adolescence learn most of Tharu way of life through observation and imitation of adult. All the skills they erabibe in this way be it agricultural activity or fishing, or artistic activities of plastering and painting the mud walls or embroidery and dancing and singing.

And through constant and casual instructions and guidance the Tharu children are transformed from passive observers to active members of their community.

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