CHAPTER 7

Findings & Conclusion
Findings:

1. The Barmans still retain their rural character. Even those who work or attend schools or colleges prefer to go back to their villages if they can.
2. The Barmans generally do not change their religion, social and internal political systems.
3. In each of the village’s field visited, there are Kunang, Dilo and Hebisgao etc. But there are no Nodrans.
4. The Barmans to a very large extent have given up their prejudices against the women outside the 42 julus or matriclans.
5. They are very slowly tending towards the diversification of economic life. Young men and women are taking to business activities, studying law and accepting employment under non-Barman private ownership.
6. **Hedari or Biba**: When the member of a family are unable to cultivate it’s land or harvest it’s crop, the family may approach the Kunang who gets the work done by the village boys for a token sum of money. The system still exists there.
7. **Divorce**: Divorce is permitted when it is sought on the ground of adultery, lunatcy, impotency, barreness etc.
8. **Inter-tribe marriage**: The Barmans still practise tribe-endogamy. There are few instances of the Barmans marrying non-Barmans.
9. **Religion**: The Barmans generally do not change their religion. They all practice Hinduism in the Brahminical way. But there are some, who are the followers of different Gurus but there is no conflict among them.
10. **Political activities**: The Barmans have among them, political leaders and activists from pre-Independence days. They were already the supporters of the Congress and the Communist party/ parties till. But since mid-eighties, there has been the appearance of a number of the A.G.P and the B.J.P supporters and activists among them.
Conclusion:

The Barmans, as already seen, are a tribal community living in non-tribal surroundings in the Barak Valley. Their tribal isolation has become a thing of the past. They still are, of course, struggling to retain their distinct identity, which necessitates continuance of the existence of as many as possible of their tribal institutions.

The urge to retain separate identity is something common among all the people not only in the valley but also all over the country. Racial, linguistic, religious and territorial divides and even conflicts are highly on the increase. Therefore the Barman separatism is not something uncommon. The kind of social engineering that would have led to a national synthesis has not been allowed to play its part. Therefore, it is not unnatural for the Barmans to try to create their own literature in their own language and revive their old culture and the memory of their own heroes. These, they hope will go a long way to enable them to retain their separate identity. They seemingly cannot forget the fact that they were the ruling race in the plains and thus deserve special treatment and attention.

But, it is not only the love of original language and cultural heritage that inspire the Barmans to emphasise their separate identity, there are also at work material incentives, which are available to them in the form of legal and constitutional protective discrimination in their favour. They come mostly in the form of reservations in Government, Semi-Government establishments, professional and vocational institutions. The fear that they may lose all these favours also inspires them to stick to their tribal roots.

Barmans means of livelihood, is either government and semi-government service or agriculture or both. There are few shopkeepers, tradesman, professionals and other self-employed persons. It is found recently that, they have begun to look for and accept jobs in the private establishments, tea gardens and take to business activities. A few youngmen

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and young women are studying law and some others have become insurance agents. These young insurance agents include a graduate girl, whom the author came across. But it is also a fact that they have accepted these activities as means of livelihood very reluctantly and only because they do not find jobs in the government establishments after their hearts.

Like all other middle class and upper-middle class people, the educated Barmans also have become interested in the English Medium Education for their children. A few families have rented houses close by the Holy Cross High School, Silchar where children are studying. There are also the Barman students who are studying in other English medium schools.

But Barmans are now finding themselves at crossroads. It is now accepted on all hands that all government and semi-government establishments are heavily over-staffed. Privatisation and globalisation have now become the order of the day. The Barmans also like other peoples, have to face competitions in every field. They are an intelligent people. Even in the 19th century, a British official noticed that the Kachari made an excellent linguist. Some of them were also engaged in business activities then. They need not fear the new situations they are going to find themselves confronted with. The community produced poets like Chandra Mohan Barman, a successful businessman and social activities Nandalal Barman, respected political leaders like Manindra Barman and civilians like Janmejoy Barman. Chandra Mohan belonged to the 19th century and Nandalal Barman was active in the first half of the 20th century. Another name worth mentioning is Nirupama Hagjer, widow of Joybhadra Hagjer who is also a daughter of the Barak Valley. She is also a prominent author. Admittedly, they are small in number. But, considering the total number of Barmans in the valley, the number of the Barmans who have become prominent in different fields must be accepted as considerably large.