CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

PROPOSITION

This is a study of an ethnic community known as Rakkhain living in a coastal village in southern Bangladesh. I have named this village as Belkata in which the Rakkhain under study is living and the village is located at the coast of Bay of Bengal. The focus of the study is to describe the different aspects of culture of the Rakkhain people living in Belkata. In other words, I have tried to reveal the ethnography of the Rakkhain in the present study.

The original home of Rakkhain was in Myanmar. They first came to Bangladesh about two hundred years ago and settled in Cox's Bazar and the adjoining areas. However one group of Rakkhain later migrated to

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1 The earlier name of Myanmar is Burma, which is situated at the south-eastern part of Bangladesh.
Patuakhali and settled in Taltali, Rangabali and Kalapara (Khepupara). The village under study belongs to Khepupara thana under Patuakhali district.

Bangladesh is situated at the head of the largest gulf, the Bay of Bengal and at the Ganges and the Brahmaputra. It is the largest deltaic plain in the world. The total area of the country is about 55,598 sq. miles. About 6% of it is occupied by major rivers and estuaries. The country is divided into 20 main physiographic units which can be broadly grouped into three areas, as hilly (12%), terraces (8%) and flood plain (80%).

The coastal region of Bangladesh is endowed with enormous natural resources of land, water, forestry and fisheries. It contains the largest delta, the largest tidal flat with mangrove forest; the deepest sediment basin and the largest deep sea fan in the world. A quarter of Bangladesh falls in this coastal region with 710 k.m. long coast line. This coastal region has tremendous development potential but at the same time this unique ecology is fragile and complex (CARDMA, 1988:3).
The coastal area of Bangladesh is on the one hand full of resources and potentials and on the other hand it is neglected and under-developed. In the most of the coastal area people grew only a single crop which was a surplus one, because the population was much lower than what is at present. This situation has been changing rapidly. At present, a part of it is surplus but the total area is deficit in food grains (CARDMA, 1988:3)

Bangladesh has several ethnic minority groups with distinct way of life. These ethnic minorities are scattered all over the country. Some of the ethnic communities live in the hilly areas of Peripheral zone of Bangladesh. Now there are about thirty such groups living in the country. But the census report (1984) showed only 24 such tribal groups (Table-1).

They have traditionally been concentrated in the hilly, coastal and northern part of the country. Also there are many ethnic groups in the Barind region, north eastern boarder, Chittagong, Bandorban and Patuakhali districts.
The following table shows the main tribes and their distribution in Bangladesh².

Table-1. Main Tribes and their Distribution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District (old)</th>
<th>Main Tribes</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rajshahi, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Pabna and Kushtia</td>
<td>Santal, Oraon, Munda, Paharia, Rajbonsi and Koch</td>
<td>201,726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylhet</td>
<td>Khasias, Meithei (Manipur), Pathor and Tipra</td>
<td>106,823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mymensing, Jamalpur and Tangail</td>
<td>Garo, Koch, Hojong</td>
<td>82,771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT)</td>
<td>Marma, Chakma, Tanchingy, Sak, Shendu, Tipra, Mro, Khyang, Bawn (Banjogo and Pankho), Khomi and Lushai (Kuki)</td>
<td>464,057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other District (Dhaka, Faridpur, Comilla, Barisal and Patuakhali)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>42,381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total No. 24</td>
<td>897,828</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


²This is the official figure as mentioned in the BBS Census Report of 1984.
Scattered tribal settlements are also to be found in Cox's Bazar, Barguna and Patuakhali districts. A very traditional ethnic minority group of people are found in Barguna and Patuakhali district: known as Rakkhain. They are also widely known as coastal Rakkhain aboriginal. In this coastal area, plain natives are also found. Both ethnic minorities and plain natives are found living side by side in the same geographical territory of the coastal area of Bangladesh.

The present anthropological study has been undertaken to understand the ethnography of the ethnic community living in Belkata. The study will focus on their immigration and different aspects of their culture. It is, therefore, an ethnographic accounts of a coastal ethnic community. The present research may contribute in designing coastal development programmes.
OBJECTIVES

The present study aims at providing comprehensive understanding of socio-cultural and economic life of an ethnic community living in a village of Patuakhali district of Bangladesh. Thus the main objectives of the study is to prepare an ethnographic profile of a coastal ethnic community of Bangladesh; the Rakkhain. The present study, therefore, seeks to know:

- the socio-demographic profile of Rakkhain ethnic community living in the coastal village;
- social and economic organization and their functions;
- the beliefs and rituals associated with their life and living.
- the life and living pattern of the coastal people under study;
- dynamics of the coastal family life, marital transaction, kinship pattern, household and family formation etc.
- the settlement history and their way of life as a whole.
- the power structure, patron-client relationships and local level government and Non-government organizations and peoples'
participation in local level decision making process and administrative activities.

SCOPE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Preparation of ethnography is a new approach to understand the living picture of a community. A very few ethnographic researches have been conducted in Bangladesh. Needless to mention here that Bangladesh is inhabited by many ethnic communities, traditional and religious groups. These groups are containing their own culture and values with some sorts of conflicts and cohesions. Both cultural integrity and diversity are found among themselves. Each and every ethnic community, have their own identities with different cultural elements, social and economic activities, religious beliefs and practices etc. Coastal village people (Rakkhain ethnic group under this study) has a distinct cultural and ethnic identity. From such an ethnographic study, future researchers, policy makers and development workers may get information useful to them. Considering the dearth of information about different cultural groups and sub-groups,“ethnic
minorities and religious communities; the present ethnographic study will of some use to the scholars and planners working in the same field. This may encourage others to undertake further studies on other ethnic communities as well as traditional people.

METHODOLOGY

Preparation of an ethnography of a cultural group certainly requires both qualitative and quantitative information. In preparing the ethnography of the targeted Rakkhain community, both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered following the different types of data collection techniques by using various tools and materials. For the purpose of present study, a multi method strategy was followed. Method of participant observation was blended with ethnographic facts. Ethnographic research method was followed in conducting the field work in the village. The author followed mainly participant-observation method by staying in the study area. Field work was conducted in the village Belkata for two years in a cyclic way. During the tenure of the fieldwork, I was a participant observer. During this period I
observed daily life of the Rakkhains, their family and social activities. Changing ecology, religious activities, year round agricultural practices and the way of their socio-cultural lives were under close observation during the period of my fieldwork. I attended and observed all the social, cultural and farming activities of the studied village. For better understanding, I also visited the neighboring villages.

In other words, I conducted intensive fieldwork in the village by being a participant observer. For deep understanding of the ethnic group living in the village, I established successful rapport by living with the Rakkhains under study. This helped me to have an insight about the total way of the life and living practices of the targeted community with many others ethnographic and contemporary socio-cultural events.

For this research purpose, I recorded the daily life of the coastal people and their various social activities using slide camera, audio-visual recorder and note books. For better projection many slide films were prepared containing socio-economic aspects of coastal people. During the field work, I
established very friendly relations with all classes of people. For this purpose, I had to move around the agricultural field, homestead land, residents and the sea shore to gather the necessary information.

I also consulted some research reports for the purpose of present study. I also gathered relevant information from CAB net work's literature, District Gazetteer, CIDA's socio-economic reports, SPARRSO's map, RRA reports and anthropological books and journals. Different discussion meetings with cross-section of Government officers, local elites, Rakkhain Matbors, Union Parishad Chairman were held during this long study period.

TECHNIQUES OF DATA COLLECTION

Both primary and secondary nature of data were gathered for the purpose of present ethnographic study to provide both ethnographic and ethnological information regarding the Rakkhain ethnic community. Primary data of this study were mostly collected following the techniques of data collection.
• Participant Observation
• Informal interviewing and discussions.
• Memory Method.
• Life History Method.
• Audio-visual Recorder
• Slide Camera
• Diary/Note Books

Quantitative data of this study were collected using following techniques of data collection.

• Single Page interview schedule for conducting household census.
• Multi Pages semi-structured Interview Schedule.

STUDY AREA AND POPULATION

In the coastal area there are two types of people: Plain natives and tribal ethnic group (Rakhain). For centuries they are living in same area of
coastal belt. Tribal people and non-tribal people live in different districts of coastal zone in Bangladesh. Specially for the research purpose one village of Patuakhali district has been selected as a typical. For generating ethnographic and socio-anthropological data, intensive field work was conducted in selected village. The selected village is Belkata which is situated on the bank of Bay of Bengal, under Kalapara Thana of Patuakhali district.

All the households of the Belkata village were selected for this study. The village contained 76 households at the time of my fieldwork.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data were primarily processed and analysed manually and sometimes by using computer. Quantitative data were interpreted and analysed by supplementing through other information gathered by participant observation, informal interviewing, group discussions etc.. Both the quantitative and qualitative data and information were gathered and
analysed using some important socio-cultural variables and parameters. In this regard, ethnomethodology was considered as one of the important method of data collection.

EXPERIENCE OF FIELD WORK

At the initial stage of my field work in the coastal village, I was rather a stranger to local people. They asked me many questions about my presence in this rural community. Some body suspected me as a Government agent or a donor agency man. Therefore, I had to face many problems in the field in the beginning and I had to maintain different types of relations with different types of people. Having both positive and negative reactions, I had to proceed with my work. The beginning was painful but ultimately I was able to establish rapport with the people under study and finally I got their all cooperations and support.

As a student of social anthropology, I had to stay in the coastal village under study in Patuakhali district. Before this research work, I was involved in a
socio-economic research work as a co-ordinator of CIDA's project in this coastal belt for three months. During that period, I stayed with the people occasionally for data collection. But this time I was instructed by my Ph.D. supervisors to live in the coastal village for a long time for the purpose of present study. I found it rather difficult to live there as it was a very backward area of Bangladesh in terms of communication and staying in such a remote village.

After the initial difficulties were over, I began to live there comfortably by making little adjustments here and there. People of this village are mostly illiterate. Still they appreciated my staying in their village. Accommodation was a big problem at the initial stage. For some days, I had to stay in a tribal Matbor's (leader) house. Later I lived in one of villager's house.

At the initial stage I could not take food and drinking water properly. I got saline test in water and food. During the fieldwork, I suffered physical troubles for salinity in the area. After few days, I was however, fully
habituated with coastal food and social customs. I used local dress like lungi, gangi and simple shirt during my stay in the village.

I had to face many problems in communicating with local illiterate Rakkhains. At the initial stage, I could not understand their language and for this reason I had to take assistance from a Rakhain literate person namely Tan Tung as interpreter. As a new comer in this area I had to suffer from insecurity while residing in a village near the Bay of Bengal. I knew about water upsurge, cyclone etc. Initially, I was little bit afraid but within a very short time I was able to regain the strength for this study facing all physical, social and cultural odds and obstacles.

The people of this area accepted me properly when sufficient rapport was established. I was able to adjust with them freely overcoming the problems. I had to take my food in Rakkhain houses where I was living. In this way, I gathered many new experiences about the people of this coastal region.
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There is hardly many ethnographic study on the coastal people of Bangladesh, whether tribal or non-tribal. Not even many ethnographic studies on rural people and ethnic communities have been conducted so far. However, a few systematic village studies have been conducted in the course of last three decades or so. These studies deal with different aspects of rural communities and some of these studies are partly or fully the ethnographies of Bangladesh. Some such ethnographic and village studies have been reviewed in the following section because these studies have some relevance to my present study.

The two major ethnographic studies on rural communities of Bangladesh are the studies of Bertocci (1979) and Chowdhury (1978). Both of them described the culture of people under study. Both the studies depicted at length the way of life of the rural communities of Bangladesh. However, the focus and emphasis of their studies were not the same.
Bertocci conducted his study in two villages of Comilla district and concluded that "absolute smallness in farm size should not obscure the importance of small differences in land ownership and associated economic activities associated with them as there reflects clear variations in class, status, life style and power". The relationship between land holding, status and class is a complex phenomenon. Bertocci's data confirmed and overall association of landownership with relatives social rank. He nevertheless considered that it was important to maintain a conceptual and empirical distinction between status and class. The villagers themselves discriminate between high status lineage, middle status lineage and low status lineage, however not all these families with high status titles are wealthy peasant household since within the same bari there can be considerable variations in land holding between the households. It is likely that there will be a continually changing balance of strength between paribars in a bari and perhaps between bars and families divide holdings amongst sons and the demographic balance of the nuclear family shifts. Bertocci has distinguish between the people having traditional high status and the people acquiring economic strength through education and marriage and thereby have
become politically important. From this he attributes a great deal of fluidity to the system in which different lineages rises to power and there they are not high status lineages but then acquired status by marrying into high status lineage (ibid: 27-37).

It will be very important to take up this analysis especially to contrast a situation which has been heavily involved in the new technology with an area which has been relatively untouched. The hypothesis here would be that the tendency for status (especially *sardary*) and landownership to coincide would increase and the extent of circular mobility decrease under conditions of new opportunities for increasing agricultural productivity which also provides greater scope for investment in non-agricultural processing plants. In other words, the hypothesis suggests that a stable rich peasant class will emerge under conditions which reduces the vulnerability of families in that class to the weakening process of fragmentation through inheritance as other non-agricultural source of income become available as a result of initial higher productivity of holdings. This hypothesis is in contrast to Bertocci’s speculations, who does not seem to take account of
either the possibility for richer peasants to prey on the misfortunes of other
by acquiring their land, or the role of the new technology in stimulating
other forms of rural (but non-agricultural) economic activity like money
lending itself which hitherto plays a prominent part in his analysis.

Chowdhury (1978:67) conducted intensive field work in the village
Meherpur. He observed: “Meherpur is inhabited by two major religious
groups, namely Muslims and Hindus. The Muslims of the village are
stratified as high, low and scheduled castes. The social hierarchy among the
Muslims of Meherpur does not follow the Hindu caste pattern. The hindu
caste system in Meherpur is primarily based on the concept of rural purity
and pollution sanctioned by Hindu religion. But the Muslims of the village
are not stratified on the basis of the ritual purity and pollution. They are
stratified mainly on the basis of traditional ownership and control of land,
wealth, education and on the differences in the style of life.”

The basis of ranking among the Muslims in the rural areas is high and low
status. The high status Muslims are known as *khandans* and low status
Muslims as *grihastas*. The *khandans* include all those who have the patronymics of *Kazi, Gazi, Bhuiya, Chowdhury* etc. These patronymics are hereditary and are used either before or after the names. The *grihastas* are directly engaged in agricultural work. A grihasta may be a land owner, who cultivates his own land. He may take lease of other's land and work on land for production. They do not have much formal education. Besides these, there are low status muslims such as *Jolas* (traditionally weavers) and *Baddis* (village eyesurgeons). It may be mentioned that some *Khandan* families do not own any land as they sold out their land in course of time but still they hold high status. Chowdhury (1978:70) further observed: “The *Khandan* are land owners of the village. They trace their khandani to the ownership and control of land from an early stage. In fact, they were the intermediary groups who used to collect land revenues even during the British rule. They were entitled to enjoy a portion of land revenue collected by them. The old status acquired through education and a particular style of life followed by them decide their position in the status hierarchy of Meherpur. A *khandan* is he who is long associated with ownership and
control of land and has it least some education and who can be distinguished from the *grihastas* and *kamlas* by a particular style of life."

The *grihastas* are neither old landowners nor educated. They do not have any tradition of land ownership and land control. They have also not entered into school and colleges. The *grihastas* landowners are recent landowners. They purchased land when the *khandans* began to sell out their land in the recent past. They could not purchased *khandani* by purchasing land. By and large they are sharecroppers. Therefore, economic class and social status groups are almost identical and it is possible to establish certain correlation between the two.

Chowdhury (1978:71) also observed that there cannot be any marital relation between the *khandan* and *grihastas*. There is not a single case of intermarriage between a *khandan* and *grihastas* in the history of Meherpur. Besides the lack of marital relations between the *khandans* and *grihastas*, there are a number of informal endogamous both among the *khandans* and *grihastas*.
In 1947 there had been a large scale of migration of Hindus. Before there migration, they used to maintain the structural distance between the different castes. Srinivas (1966:15) has rightly observed that the elders of the dominant caste in a village were the watchdogs of a pluralistic culture and value system. Traditionally, they prevented the numbers of a caste from over the hereditary occupation of another caste, then maintained the structural distance between the different caste living with their jurisdiction.

Hindus of Meherpur can be broadly classified into three categories; namely, upper caste Hindus; the lower caste Hindus and the schedule caste Hindus. The divisions are hierarchical based on the concept on purity and pollution as sanctioned by Hindu religion. In this case, birth determines the caste position of an individual in the Hindu society.

The lower caste Hindus of Meherpur are again divided into many caste sub-division on the basis of superiority and inferiority. Intermarriage between the castes is almost impossible in Meherpur.
Wood studied a village in Comilla district which he called Bondokgram (1976). Land holding by sizes and percentages in Bondokgram has been shown in Table-1. In his sample of 76 households, 14 (18.4 per cent) where landless, 18 (23.7 per cent) owned less than an acre (each), 25 (32.8 per cent) owned between 1 and 2.49 acres (each) and 19 households (25.1 per cent) owned above 2.5 acres each. This shows that land is concentrated in the "below 2.5 acres" category (ibid.:68). At the same time he finds a reduction of holdings in the '7.5+ acre' category.

Table-2: Landholding by sizes and percentages in Bondokgram.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Land owned</th>
<th>Effective landholding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.01-0.99</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00-2.49</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25+</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two of the most important aspects of the economic life of the villagers as he mentioned were petty leasing and usury. Of the land-owning households, 43.5 per cent (ibid.:139) households mortgaged out their land. Wood found that class differentiation did take place in Comilla village but it was dominated by usurious capital. Money-lending and mortgage transactions played a major role in the village. He says that “The significance of these mortgages cannot be overstated in this minifundist context, since they are likely to be a much more important part of the class structure and power distribution story in this area than elsewhere. The cumulative impact of these mortgage transactions function to increase and stabilize the gap between the richer and poor peasants” (ibid.:139).

Besides accumulating land through mortgage transactions, the richer peasants families (‘2.5 acre’ category) diversify their economic activities into the sphere of exchange and professional employment (ibid.:143). Wood also shows that Government programmes are particularly strong in that areas but the benefits of the programmes are monopolized by the rich peasants. Poor peasants as a weaker economic class have little access to
these benefits. Wood suggest that there is no shifts towards capitalist relation of production in Bondokgram in spite of state policies in favour of the peasants as they prefer to diversify economic activities rather than reinvest in agriculture. However, he admits that class differentiation is fast taking place in Bondokgram.

Arens and Beurden studied a village in Kushtia district and named in Jhagrapur (1980). They classified the agricultural population of the village into (a) poor peasants, (b) middle peasants, (c) rich peasants and (d) landlords (ibid.:82). The landlords and the rich peasants are the exploring class and the middle and poor peasants are the exploited class. The number and percentages of families according to their class position in Jhagrapur have been shown in Table-3 "Most poor peasants in Jhagrapur are forced to sell their labour. Some of them work twelve months a year as labourers, while others do it regularly or occasionally. Most labourers find employment within or close to their own village. Some of them are permanently employed by one and the sample patron. The number of migrant labourers in Jhagrapur is relatively small, yet their influx can upset
traditional employment patterns. The wage rate is calculated to be less than one seer of husked rice on an average. This is not sufficient to keep a labourer alive, late alone the family members who are dependent on him. The worsening of the condition of labourers has received an extra down-word push after the 1971 War. Real wages in 1975 were about 40 per cent of what they were in 1969. It is improbable that the wage rate will recover quickly" (ibid.: 103-104).

About the sharecropping pattern, their findings are that “almost 40 per cent of all families in Jhagrapur are sharecropping some land. Relatively many of them can be found among the middle peasant families. For several reason it is difficult for poor peasants, and especially for the poorest among them, to become sharecroppers (or bargadars). Several small peasants who sublet land to sharecroppers are forced to do so by circumstances. Most crop sharing agreements are made on the basis of the Bhag system. According to this, the land owners receive 50 per cent of the crop while there is only slightly more than $37\frac{1}{2}$ per cent left for the actual tiller, as he has to play for most of the raw materials. The fear of the sharecroppers of being evicted is
increasing” (ibid.: 110). The above accounts of Arens and Beurden reveal the nature of class exploitation in Jhagrapur are also prove that it is through tenancy and wage labour that the production is being organized there. The authors are of the opinion that the Gangni thana in which Jhagrapur is located is more traditional with more feudal traits. “Most rich landowners in the area are traditional and use the surplus of their sharecroppers and labourers for their personal wealth and status, and not for investing in agricultural innovations” (ibid.: 123). The landlord and large surplus peasants of Jhagrapur are no exception. Class differentiation is taking place in Jhagrapur but it is not so fast as in Bondokgram because the degree of modernization of agriculture is faster in Comilla than in Kushtia. The only landlord in Jhagrapur has no sunk tubewells and is thinking of purchasing tractors and thus he likely to introduce mechanization in agriculture. Arens and Beurden think that it is not possible to conclude what exactly is the main contradiction in that area and it has not been possible for them to characterize the mode of production by means of only one element. They think that one can talk of growth of rural capitalism in the context of the Comilla area but such a development is considerably slower in Gangni
thana. However, the germ of capitalistic development is present in Gangni thana. The conclusion of Arens and Beurden is therefore, that the remnants of feudal relations is still dominant in Kushtia (Gangni thana in particular) area but the germ of capitalistic growth is very much there as the landlords are slowly introducing mechanization in agriculture. In determining the enemies of the poor peasants in Jhagrapur and the surrounding, they think that it is still the feudal landlords and to fight them is part of the class struggle there.

**Table-3: Number and percentage of families according to class position in Jhagrapur.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Number of families</th>
<th>% of all families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landlord</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Arens and Bewden, 1977:82*
Rahman (1990) in his Ph.D thesis on “The Shandar-Beday community of Bangladesh” mentioned that the Shandar Beday is an ethnic group of rural Bangladesh and they maintain a very nomadic mode of life. They do not have any agricultural land. The Shandar Beday is a boat-dweller nomads. By profession, they are snake-charmers or Shapuria. They catch snake from forest. They exhibit snake in the market and also they are practicing Baji or Majic for their survival. They live in traditional boat and move with bohor (collectively) from one place to another place through river or canal in search of their livelihood. The Shandar Bedeys are endogamous and their families are patriarchal in nature. The Shandar women earn greater part of their family income. For that reason male part prefer more female member as second and third wife. Also the people are accepting Pon-protha (dowry) system in their own community.

Timm (1991) has written about the Adibasis of Bangladesh. Some Adibasis are living in different plain land areas. He showed that these Adibasis have their own traditions of their social and cultural life practices. Also Adibasis are different by ethnic identities, cultural traits, religious
practices and linguistic traditions. Traditionally Adibasi people live in the hilly and coastal belt of Bangladesh. They love to live in the natural and forest zones. Many of the Adibasis of Bangladesh are now settled in the plain land areas and surviving with agriculture.

Khaleque (1984) worked among the Garo tribes of Mymensingh district. Garos have migrated from hilly areas to the plain land. Garos believe in supernatural beings whom they call Mite. They think all mites are living in the jungle. Tatara is the supreme and most powerful mite. They also believe that there is a soul in every living creature, human being animal and tree. They believe that human body have two souls. The Garos have their own religion and culture. They observe post funeral ceremony by offering big feast. The perform dance and songs at the time of the feast.

Sattar (1971) described different tribes namely, Mughs, Kukis, Chakmas, Lushis, Murangs, Tangchangyas, Shendus, Bonjogis, Pankhos and Tipra. Mugh is also found in Patuakhali coast of Bangladesh. The name Mugh was given by the Bengalees. This tribal people have originally come
from the Arakan state. They speak Burmese language. The educated Mughs think that Mugh is an insulting term unfairly conferred by the Bengalees on them. Sattar highlighted in the “Sylvan Shadows” the cultural aspects of the tribes of Bangladesh. He was a civil servant and not a trained anthropologist. Nevertheless, we get useful information from his work.

Selina (1993) worked on Marma tribe of Bandarban district. She lived with this hilly tribal people for a long time. She gathered socio-cultural, religious and many other ethnographic information about this tribe. In the earlier period the Marma tribal people were nomadic in nature and they dependent only jhum (shifting cultivation) in the hilly zone. Marma people live in the machang type houses, where they provide accommodation for their family members. In the ceremony they perform traditional music with songs and dance. The Marma women are industrious and play important role in the economic activities with the men. The widow inherits all the property of her deceased husband. Parental properties are inherited by sons and daughter after the death of parents. The pregnant Marma women ritually believed in rokka (female ghost). During the time of
puberty attainment the young brother and sister do not sleep in the same house. At this time boys live in the dormitory. The Marma people worship saitabi (house goddess). The Marmas are Buddhist by religion. This ethnic group are most backward people of the eastern region of Bangladesh.

Mostafa (1992) wrote a book on the impact of Local Administration on the Rakkhains of Patuakhali district. He has mentioned that the Rakkhain people are deprived by the plain natives. He deals with the socio-economic and administrative aspects of the Rakkhain community of Barguna and Patuakhali districts. However, this was not an ethnographic study of the Rakkhain.

Justin (1990) worked on Nicobarese tribe of Andaman. The Nicobarese tribe is a declining tribe of Andaman of India. They live near sea-shore permanently. They are mongoloid stock. Most of them have been converted to christianity since 1945. They live in pati house, and also they use fishing trap payuh (paddle), coconut scraper, canoe (boat) etc. This tribal people use coconut leaves as clothes. The traditional food of the
Nicobarese are banana, coconut and other wild fruits and tubers. They drink coconut water and local made liquor *handia* prepared from rice. They smoke loose tobacco rolled or wrapped in *paundums* leaf. Most of them have a habit of chewing betel leaf and betelnut and other ingredients like lime processed tobacco. The Nicobarese families are patrilineal. Their residence pattern is either patrilocal or matrilocal having no specific rule of residence practices. Among the Nicobarese there is a universal belief in evil spirits.