Chapter VII

CULTURE

Culture is the learned ways of acting and thinking which are transmitted by group members to other group members and which provide for each individual ready-made and tested solutions for vital life problems.¹

Every human culture is a historical growth, and only as such can it be explained or understood. Since the very essence of culture is its transmission through generations, a culture may be thought of as the experience of the past and entering as a determinant of thought and action in the present, and carrying, of course, important relation to the future of a group.²

According to Hoebel,³ "Culture is a system of learned behaviour. Although human behaviour can become standardized as habits or social usage, behaviour is always variable.

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2. Ibid, p. 16.
even when it is habit bound. Because of this propensity to variability, it is impossible to fix behaviour absolutely so that it never changes. Since culturally patterned behaviour is learned and not fixed in the organism, it is modifiable and flexible. Therefore, cultures are changable.

Culture includes both material and non-material aspects of a civilization. In the previous chapters some light was thrown upon these aspects of the Rabhas. In this chapter an attempt has been made to analyse the data regarding their knowledge, personal care and decoration, dress, ornaments, traditions, trade and transport, dialect, songs and dances.

CAUSE AND TREATMENT OF ILLNESS

It has been a common belief among all the primitive societies that they would trace the cause of a disease to the provocation of gods or jhosts. Therefore, instead of consulting a doctor they would prefer to consult an ojha; because he alone could identify the gods who were irritated or angered.

The Rabhas also have the same belief. They offer animal sacrifices to propitiate the deity associated with the disease concerned. The ojhas are consulted to detect the cause of illness. This they call tima chikai. There are three methods of detection. These are:
1. **Malrung pake chikal** (when an ojha uses rice for this purpose)

2. **Tulsini chak pake tima chikal** (when an ojha uses sacred basil (ocimum sanctum) for this purpose)

3. **Kachi pake tima chikai** (when a sickle is used by an ojha for this purpose).

If the disease is not cured by the above technique, they apply their homely treatment. Some important items in this regard are given in **Table 1**.

**Table 1**

Diseases and the Homely Treatments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of the Disease</th>
<th>Tribal Name</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cough</td>
<td>Tok chikai</td>
<td><em>Gol moris</em> (a kind of chillies) is grinded and given to the patient after mixing up the same with <em>nijung</em> (honey).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ophthalmia</td>
<td>Muksa</td>
<td><em>Dudhali</em> (a kind of grass) is rubbed into water and applied inside the affected eye.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name of the Disease</td>
<td>Tribal Name</td>
<td>Treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Diarrhoea</td>
<td>Jikai</td>
<td>Bhui-tita (a kind of wild root is grinded and given to the patient after mixing up the same with luke warm water.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Fever</td>
<td>Kalamkai</td>
<td>No such treatment. Doctor consulted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Asthma</td>
<td>Ghuagara</td>
<td>Clove and long-peper are grinded and mixed in water and boiled. The mixture is given to the patient thrice a day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Small-pox</td>
<td>Masumisi</td>
<td>No medicine. Only precautions are taken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Leprosy</td>
<td>Maharog</td>
<td>No medicine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Boil</td>
<td>Ghucha</td>
<td>Root of abhaya (a kind of wild creeper) and root of bon kopa (another wild creeper) are grinded and mixed with water. The pastelike substance is applied in the boil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Plague</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>No such disease is found among the Rabhas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>V.D.</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>This disease is also rare among them. However, if any body falls victim of this disease, he consults a doctor for treatment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
No. | Name of the Disease | Treatment
--- | --- | ---
11. | Snake-bite | Topo kakkai

The limb is tied tightly with a string above the bite mark. The ojha is sent for. He chants mantras to cure the patient.

For head-ache, body-ache and snake-bite, the ojha waves dhokia (a species of fern) over the affected part with chanting of mantras.

In order to recover from fracture in a bone, professional healers and experts are consulted.

The tribal professionals perform minor surgical operations too. The following table illustrates the minor surgical techniques of the Rabhas:

Table 2

The Surgical Techniques of the Rabhas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Bleeding from a wound</td>
<td>White paste-like juice of enda pan (a kind of small tree) is pasted on the affected part. Thus the bleeding from a wound is stopped.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Treatment by Magic

Magic plays an important role in curing some diseases among the Rabhas. In the previous chapter (Chapter VI) these techniques were already mentioned.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

People generally take bath once a day. Women take bath when they go to the kitchen for preparing meals. They wash
their clothes at regular intervals, or washing cotton clothes they use kharṣi (alkali). However, people who get soap, wash their clothes with it.

As regards their hair-cutting, it has been noticed that the Rabhas generally get their hair cut after two or three months. There are no professional barbers among the Rabhas. Nevertheless, some of them know the art of hair-cutting and cut the fellow Rabha's hair.

There is no punctuality in shaving at all. However, the use of shaving soaps and razors is increasing day by day. The people generally shave once a week.

Hunger (char coal) is used to clean the teeth. Small branches of cheora pan (a kind of a small tree found in the area) and enda pan (another small tree) are also used. But very few have this habit. A large number of people do not care about cleaning their teeth. Women and children do not put kajal (antimony) in their eyes. The use of toilet soaps is becoming popular, although gherok is extensively used by the Rabhas in bath.

Patients afflicted by leprosy and other contagious diseases are kept apart.

PERSONAL CARE AND DECORATION

A Rabha wears clothes only for protection against the vagaries of weather and not to distinguish himself from his
fellows. The hardships of life do not allow a person to think about such aesthetic considerations.

Hair Dressing

The hair is dressed generally with a small bamboo comb called khacheng. The women keep long hair and tie it in a round braid at the back. The tribal women use khusa makra made of iron but not ribbons. The mustard or cocoanut oil is used before combing the hair.

The married women put vermilion on their kopal (forehead).

As regards hair dressing of men, it will be noteworthy that they seldom dress their hair while at home or in the fields. Normally they dress their hair whenever they go outside. The men-folk too, use mustard or cocoanut oil before combing hair. The men seldom keep long hair.

Of late nail polish is becoming popular among the girls.

Tattooing

Although tattooing is very popular among several tribal and non-tribal groups of Assam, Rabhas do not use tattoo marks.

ORNAMENTS

Ornaments are worn by the Rabha women for decorative purpose. The more the number of ornaments, the better off a
Ornaments worn by the Rabha women are of traditional design and many amongst them are weighty. People generally cannot afford gold ornaments. Hence, silver ornaments are common among the Rabha women. Very few light ornaments are made of gold.

There are two kinds of ornaments for the ears as follows:

**Nambri**

This is an ear-ornament made of gold or silver and used in the lower portion of the ears. Shaped like a rupee coin the ornament has a hole in the middle and can be fixed in the ears easily. The nambri weighs between 15 to 25 grams.

**Bola Nambri**

This is another ear-ornament and is used widely. A bola nambri is used in the upper part of the ears. When used a bola nambri stands parallel to the head. The ornament is made of gold or silver and weighs between 20 to 25 grams.

The Rabhas are very fond of necklaces. These are as follows:

**Chandrahar**

This is a necklace made of silver. It weighs between 25 to 35 grams. The design varies from piece to piece.
Hancha or Hacha or Hinchil

This is another piece of necklace made of silver. This piece is heavier than the former and weighs between 35 to 50 grams, unlike a chandrarhar a hancha is made of round pieces of silver.

The ornaments of the nose are generally of gold or silver and weigh according to design and shape. Nakapati is the most common ornament of the nose. It is suspended from the left hand wall of the nose. Bol is another ornament of the nose which is also fixed in the left hand wall of the nose.

The hat-baju, kata-baju, mal kharu, har golai, mayar ching chap are different kinds of bracelets worn by the tribal women and are made of either gold or silver.

For the feet and ankles the Rabha women have anklets and rings made of silver. Bhari kharu is the most common anklet used by the Rabha women.

The other ornaments used by the tribal women are rubak (an ivory garland used by a Rabha woman in the waist), jinjiri, khusa makra, bauti, siki and saisitan.

The following table shows the variety and range of ornaments used by the Rabha women.
Table 3
Ornaments of the Rabhas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of Ornament</th>
<th>Metal Used</th>
<th>Weight (in grams)</th>
<th>Part of the Body where the ornament is used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Nambri</td>
<td>Gold or Silver</td>
<td>15 to 20</td>
<td>Ears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Bola nambri</td>
<td>Gold or Silver</td>
<td>20 to 25</td>
<td>Ears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Chandrahar</td>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>25 to 35</td>
<td>Neck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Hancha</td>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>35 to 45</td>
<td>Neck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Nakapati</td>
<td>Gold or Silver</td>
<td>4 to 6</td>
<td>Nose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Boli</td>
<td>Gold or Silver</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Nose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Jinjiri</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>10 to 15</td>
<td>Neck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Hat-baju</td>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>20 to 25</td>
<td>Hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Kata-baju</td>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>25 to 30</td>
<td>Hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Mal kharu</td>
<td>Gold or Silver</td>
<td>20 to 25</td>
<td>Hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Hir golai</td>
<td>Gold or Silver</td>
<td>20 to 25</td>
<td>Hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Mayar ching chap</td>
<td>Gold or Silver</td>
<td>15 to 20</td>
<td>Hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Bauti</td>
<td>Brass</td>
<td>20 to 25</td>
<td>Hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Bhari kharu</td>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>35 to 40</td>
<td>Ankles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Rubak</td>
<td>Ivory</td>
<td>100 to 150</td>
<td>Waist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Khusa makra</td>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>10 to 15</td>
<td>Braid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Saisitan</td>
<td>Gold or Silver</td>
<td>5 to 8</td>
<td>Finger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CLOTHING

The Rabha women know the art of spinning and weaving very well. In the past spinning was very common, but now-a-days
they have almost left the art. They now purchase cotton yarn from the weekly markets and dye the same according to their likings.

A Rabha woman can be distinguished easily by her dress. She wears mostly cotton clothes which are colourful and striking.

A Rabha male is simple in his dress. The male dresses are as follows:

Pajal

This is a strip of cotton cloth used by a man to cover the lower part of his body from waist to the knees. A pajal is 2.5 to 3 metres in length and about 0.75 metre in width. The piece resembles an Assamese dhuti (the main garment of an Assamese male); but unlike the latter, the former hardly reaches the knees. The colour of a pajal is white.

The pajal passes between the legs, and coming up behind, is wound round the waist, the end being tucked in under the folds at the back.

Phali

This is a piece of wrapping cloth used mostly by young men. The piece is about 1.5 metres in length and 0.75 metre in width. The piece is generally white, but adorned with figures of flowers. A Rabha fastens his waist by a phali.
Bukchil

It is a cotton shirt. In the past, a Rabha stitched his bukchil by himself; but now-a-days professional tailors are engaged.

Pasar or Pasra

This is a piece of silk cloth used by a man to warm the body in the winter. A pasar is about 2.5 metres in length and about 1.5 metres in width.

Khopang

This is a piece of cotton cloth used as pagri (turban). The piece is adorned with figures of flowers. This is a ceremonial dress.

Chikka Rukkal

This is a piece of cotton cloth used while taking bath. The piece is adorned with figures of flowers and resembles and Assamese gamocha (a towel).

The dress of women is ampler than of men, but it does not hamper her movements in work. These are as under:

Riphan or Ruphan

This is a hand-woven cotton piece used by a woman. The riphan covers the body of a woman from the waist to the ankles. The size of the cloth varies from individual
to individual. Young women prefer a **red-ripban**. Generally a *ripban* is spotted and adorned with big figures.

**Kambung**

This is a piece of wrapping cloth and used by women to cover the upper part of her body (from the waist to the breast). A *kambung* is 1.50 to 1.75 metres in length and 0.50 to 0.75 metre in width. The piece is adorned with various figures. The colour of a *kambung* is generally chocolate.

**Khopang**

This is a piece of cloth used by women as turban. Like men a Rabha woman wears a turban; but the style is different. A woman covers her braid together with the lower part of the head by a *khopang*. The piece of cloth is 1 to 1.50 metres in length and 0.50 metre in width. The colour of *khopang* is generally black and adorned with figures.

**Chingkhaphak**

It is an extraordinary part of their dress. It is a small rope made of cotton thread and is worn round the waist by both men and women.

Rabha women and girls are experts in decorating their clothes with figures. The following table gives a list of some of the common figures used by them.
### Table 4

**Figures used on clothes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Tribal Name</th>
<th>English Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Banthao par</td>
<td>Figure of a brinjal flower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Berg barga par</td>
<td>Figures of different flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Changtlet mug</td>
<td>Figure of an insect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Chikadara par</td>
<td>Figure of water current</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Ghoraini par</td>
<td>Figure of a horse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Hoboi chur mug</td>
<td>Figure of a hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Hutini par</td>
<td>Figure of an elephant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Jeb mahar mug</td>
<td>Figure of a fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Kadam mug</td>
<td>Figure of flower of a nuclease cadamba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Maikar daongi mug</td>
<td>Figure of a paddy flower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Maral daikaim mug</td>
<td>Figure of a human head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Masa chamen par</td>
<td>Figure of a tiger foot-print</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Panokang mug</td>
<td>Figure of a bush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Rangsang par</td>
<td>Figure of the sun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Preparation of Indigenous Dyes**

It was reported that till about 1950, the Rabha women used only indigenous colours for their clothes. But at present they almost gave it up and prefer to buy coloured thread from the market. They say that the trees and herbs for varieties
of colours are not easily available at present. On the contrary, coloured threads are available in the market.

Nevertheless, most of the aged tribal women know the techniques of dyeing and about ten per cent of the Rabha women dye white cotton thread at home. The following table gives a list of trees and herbs used by them for various colours.

Table 5
Colours and Name of the Trees and Herbs used by the Rabhas for Various Colours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Tribal Name</th>
<th>English Name</th>
<th>Name of the Tree/Herb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Akho</td>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Sidal (a kind of wild herb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Akka</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Jiya (a kind of wild herb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Chakka</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>The Indian henna. (lawsonia inermis).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Rangcher</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Indigo.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Process

The process of preparing colours is simple. Barks or leaves of a tree or of a herb are collected and boiled in
water, when it is perfectly boiled cotton thread is put into the mixture and boiled again for an hour or two. The bundles of coloured thread are covered with mud for one night. Next morning these are washed carefully and dried in shade.

Shoes

The tribals use shoes and chappals that are available in the local market. There are no cobblers amongst them. Shoe-making is a taboo among the Rabhas. Karam is a wooden sandal used by men. Women do not put on karam. By custom they are prohibited. It is privilege restricted to men alone.

HOUSES

Availability Of Land

Suitable site is selected for the construction of a nok (house). Various factors are taken into account for the construction of a house. The first factor is the location of the plot. Generally plots at a higher level are preferred so that the homestead is not affected by floods during monsoons. Other factors which determine the location of the plot are the approach path to the site and reasonable separation from the neighbour's house.

The selection of the site for the construction of a house was once a very important one in the life of the Rabhas.
According to their belief all the homestead lands were not suitable for the construction of a house. There were some places which were very suitable as house-sites whereas others were not fit for the purpose as these were always haunted by several evil spirits. In order to test the suitability of any homestead land, they used to perform some magical rites for which they first provisionally selected a place for the construction of a house. Then, either the head of the family after consultation with a magic-man or the magic-man himself placed in the evening in each of the four corners of this plot of land the durba (a kind of grass), basil leaves and rice, each equal in number to the total number of members in the family. If all these were in tact, this plot of land used to be considered as sacred and suitable for building a house. But if the materials in any corner of the plot were found disturbed, the site was usually abandoned. This belief is abandoned with the spread of enlightenment. At present the enlightened and educated Rabhas are constructing their houses at any place considered to be suitable.

Immediately before the construction of the house, the village deuri is sent for who cuts a tender fowl in the name of Risi Bai and chants the following mantras:

"He svirgini risi
Nango bati soy mane"
**Mango ardia.**

**Ching jate name tonga mana**

**Okobana nake nango ardita**

**Jate ching sana mana**

**Nama tonga mana**

**Okobana nango ardita.**

**He svirgini risi**

**Mango to mangsa khandoke rakhita".*

(Oh God Risi,
We are propitiating you
With the sacrifice of this tender fowl,
To get your blessings.
Bless us, so that in this new house
We can have peace and prosperity.
Forgive us.
If we have done
Something wrong to displease you.)

The Rabha house is not built on a platform like
the Garos. It stands on the ground.

The main item required for the construction of a
house is ba (bamboo). Bamboo is used in various ways in the
construction of a house. It is crushed and then knitted in

* Sri Bhaba Ram Rabha (82 years) of Baladmar village
(Goalpara district) recited the charm which was checked
and cross-checked from different sources.*
to make the side walls. The walls are not plastered. The **nokhrang** (roof) is made of small bamboo splinters knitted systematically and protected by **hampren** (thatch). The roof slants on both sides which helps in quick drainage of rain water. Logs are used as poles and also for the structural framework of the house. The roof is tied to the poles by **re** (bamboo or cane strips) so that it does not fly off during heavy storms. No nails or iron is used.

Whenever a new house is to be constructed the materials are collected first. Generally there is no question of purchase or sale as these are collected from government grazing lands and forests. It is more a question of labour and effort than money. When sufficient raw materials are collected, all friends, relatives and villagers are informed. Whatever the size of the house, it is constructed in one day.

**Division of the House**

The main house is divided into the following compartments:

1. The **nokchung**
2. The **nokpimung**
3. The **moja**
4. The **tagrang**

The **nokchung** is the biggest room. It is used by the husband and wife as their living room.
The nokpimung is the kitchen. Smaller in size, it is the middle room.

The moja is the children's room. It is also used as the guest room.

The tagrang is the corridor between the back wall of the house and the kitchen. This serves as the outlet from the moja to the nokchung.

The house has no varanda either in the front or in the rear.

Entrance to the House

Entrance to a Rabha house is through a door at one end of the house and generally towards the moja. The door is fixed in the middle or sometimes on the left side of the wall.

Doors are made of crushed bamboos or bamboo strips knitted systematically and supported by bamboo splinters. No windows are provided. There are no ventilators or chimneys.

Inside a House

The very first thing that one feels on entering a house is the perpetual darkness inside the house. The only thing that human eye can spot at the first look is the glare of the fire place. It is after sometime that the eyes get aclimatized to the dark, smoky chocolate coloured interior
of the house. This is due to the absence of windows and ventilators and limiting the number of doors to one or two.

The second characteristic is the perennial burning of the fire places. In the absence of chimneys the smoke of the fire takes its own course to clear out. The knitted bamboo walls and roof help the smoke to drift out. The Rabha villages present a typical view in the mornings and evenings when the fire places are in full swing and clouds of heavy smoke filter through the roofs.

Owing to the constant smoke inside the house, the inner portion of the walls, the roof and everything get tanned and looked as if they have been painted with chocolate colour.

The bardam or the fire place is an important place in the house. Not only is it used for cooking common items, it is the sole comforter against the chilly winter months. Some houses have even two fire places — one in the nokchung and the other in the moja.

Paddy-husk is used to keep fire burning throughout the day and night.

The fire in the fire place is never extinguished. In case fire is extinguished completely, which is normally not done, it is borrowed from the neighbour's house by a dowat (a small lamp). The Rabhas have a common belief that
evil spirits do not enter into a house where fire is burning.

Fish, meat, green maize and other vegetables are hung over the fire place so that they may get dried up early. Green bamboos are also kept over the fire place to tan and give elasticity. Sows are made out of such tanned bamboos.

The Rabhas do not construct separate granary. They store their agricultural produce in packets called maidop. It is knitted systematically by bamboo strips. These packets are kept on a bamboo platform in the house itself.

Guli

It is the cattle shed of the Rabhas and is constructed at one end of the court-yard.

Each house has a chatal (court-yard) which is an essential part of the household. It serves as a playground for the children. In fair weather, cattle can be tethered in the court-yard.

EATING HABITS

The Rabhas have been constantly struggling with nature for their survival. Rice is the main cereal they produce; but they have to depend on a number of wild edible roots, leaves and other green vegetables for their survival.
specially between the two crops—kharif and rabi. Again, whatever they produce is not sufficient for the whole year; because a portion is used for preparing jonga.

The table 6 below gives a list of edible wild roots and leaves used by the Rabhas:

### Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Tribal Name</th>
<th>English Meaning</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Boj a khan</td>
<td>Roots of different</td>
<td>Boiled in water and when softens can be taken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Bak khan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Jangla khan</td>
<td>Varieties and size</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Khanjaram khan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Naro khan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Meba</td>
<td>Soft bamboo seedling</td>
<td>Cut into small pieces, boiled in water and when softens can be taken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Ablaka</td>
<td>A kind of creeper with small leaf</td>
<td>Prepared as vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Panjikong</td>
<td>Another creeper</td>
<td>Prepared as vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Phackchak</td>
<td>A tree with long leaf</td>
<td>Leaves boil in water and when softens can be taken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Sufaitenga</td>
<td>A kind of creeper</td>
<td>Prepared as vegetables.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The knowledge of edible and non-edible leaves, plants and roots is imparted to the young. As a child grows he or she learns about these leaves and roots.

Rice

Rice is the staple food of the Rabhas. Their two major meals consist of mainly rice and vegetables. Table 7 below shows the set times for meals and the menu of food.

Table 7
Meals and Menu of Food

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Name of the Meal</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Mai machi</td>
<td>Soft rice taken with salt, chillies, dry fish and vegetables if available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Mai rumkai</td>
<td>Rice with vegetables, dal, fish (both dry and fresh).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>Mai rumkai</td>
<td>As of midday meal, occasionally meat (pig, fowl) also forms an item of the menu.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vegetables

Vegetables of different kinds and creepers are widely used. Boiled vegetables are preferred. In the preparation of vegetables they add khari (salt), jhaluk (chillies), raichung chakkai (onion), rasun (garlic) and chingho (ginger). They also use varieties of spices collected locally from the forest. Mushroom is a favourite item of vegetables and the Rabha women are experts in selecting the edible variety. The table below gives a list of common vegetables used by the Rabhas.

Table 8
List of vegetables used by the Rabhas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Tribal Name</th>
<th>English Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Bantho</td>
<td>A purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Bilati bantho</td>
<td>Tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Chuka</td>
<td>A kind of pot- herb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Jaganat</td>
<td>The bottle gourd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Jingra</td>
<td>A kind of local creeper and its fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Kamlenga</td>
<td>Averrhoa carimbola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Khairak</td>
<td>A long podded bean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Kangkaleo</td>
<td>Momordica charantia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Khan</td>
<td>Potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Kurchi</td>
<td>A species of bean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contd/—
Dal

The pulse-grains are boiled in water till they are soft and get a thick consistency. Salt, chillies, garlic, jinger are mixed according to individual taste.

Spices

The use of salt, chillies, onion, jinger and garlic is known to the Rabhas. Chillies are grown in abundance.

Alkali (kharchi)

Alkali is a common cooking material. The Rabhas like alkali very much and prepare it from rephang, besor phang (mustard plant) and topai phang (phascolus radiatus plant).
Special Preparation of Mangching (meat) and Na (fish)

The Rabhas have special preparations of meat and fish fitting with different socio-religious occasions throughout the year. They, however, have a preference for meat, not only in taste; but in feasts, sacrifices, celebrations and sorrows. The main item on certain occasions is meat irrespective of status. They do not take beef. It is a taboo.

Kaka rankai (dry meat) is also a special delicacy amongst the Rabhas. Fresh meat is kept in a chandri (a sieve) above the fire place, when completely dry it is kept for future use.

Like dry meat, na rankai (dry fish) is also liked by the Rabhas very much. Fish is dried up in fire generally above the fire place and not in the open sun.

Still another special delicacy among the Rabhas is nakharn (powdered dry fish). Dry fish is grinded in a mortar by a pestle and adding some salt, chillies and other spices the mixture is kept in a bamboo pipe. The opening of the bamboo pipe is tightly closed. This forms a special item of food on special occasions like the visit of a close relative or a distinguished guest. The mixture can be kept for several months.

The Rabhas take pichi (egg) also. They take both duck and hen egg.
Nu or Dudh

Most of the aged tribals do not like nu or dudh (milk). The vitamin value of milk is not known to them. However, the young and the educated Rabhas like it.

Thi (ghee)

Like milk, ghee is not liked very much by the aged Rabhas. Some of them, specially the women, of course, use it as a substitute for cosmetics and oil. People rub a little bit of it on both the palms and apply it on their face.

Rompe (fried rice powder)

Rompe is prepared by frying rice in an oven. Fried rice is powdered in a mortar by a pestle. The powder is taken with boil water or tea adding sugar or salt.

Bam Rangre

It is a common cake. Rice is powdered first and then mixed with water. Sugar or salt is added to it. When it turns into a thick paste, it is baked in an oven with or without oil.

Mala Gunglai

It is another common cake. Rice powder is mixed with water and made a thick paste. Salt, spices are added.
The paste-like mixture is fried in oil.

Mai Phakai

*Mai phakai* is rice softened in bamboo pipes. Bamboo pipes are filled up with rice adding water proportionately. The pipes are then kept in fire, when the rice inside the pipes softens it is served with sugar and curd.

Phak Chak

*Phak chak* is rice powder softened in bamboo pipes. Rice powder is mixed with water, salt and spices and made a soft paste. The mixture is poured into bamboo pipes. The pipes are then kept in fire, when the mixture inside the pipes softens *phak chak* is ready to serve.

Pangna

It is a steamed cake. Rice powder is mixed with salt and chillies and packed in a piece of cloth. The packet is steamed in a pot of boiling water, when softens it is ready to serve.

Ata Kuta

It is fried rice. Rice is fried in an oven and served with tea or *jonga*.
Drink
Chaha

Chaha (tea) is prepared more or less in the same process. First water is boiled and then the tea-leaves, sugar or gur (molasses) are mixed accordingly. Aged persons generally drink tea without milk.

The Rabhas, however, do not drink tea regularly.

Choko or Jonga

The preparation and consumption of choko commonly known as jonga is done by the Rabhas irrespective of their social positions.

From birth to funerals, friendship to revenge, cure to disease, arguments to settlements, happiness to sorrow, there is no occasion which can be completed without serving jonga. Jonga accompanies a Rabha from pre-natal to grave. Even before a child is born the mother sings that jonga is ready for him and when a person dies his body is smeared with jonga within a few moments of his death.

Jonga is prepared from rice. The basic principles of jonga preparation in all the Rabha villages are the same. They prepare it in a jonga (jar). The name of a jonga varies according to its size, for example — duani (two annas), chariani (four annas), athani (eight annas) and tokia (a rupee). The duani is the smallest and tokia is the biggest in size.
Rice is boiled in water, mixed up with bakhar (a kind of specially prepared spice) and spread out for an hour or two. The jar to be used must be completely dry. A janthi (a pipe made of bamboo strips) is placed vertically inside the jar. Thereafter, the jar is filled up with the bakhar-mixed boiled rice. The opening of the jar is closed carefully so that air cannot enter into the jar. Jonga is ready for use on the fifth day in summer and seventh day in winter.

The potency of the intoxication depends on the quantity of the boiled rice mixed with bakhar and the amount of water that is put later. The initial water flushed through the fermented stuff is highly intoxicating. The repeated flushing of water damages its strength. Generally the first and the second instalments are mixed up with water so that the jonga may have a balanced taste. The degree of intoxication also depends on fermentation. The rice fermented for more days will produce stronger drink. A minimum of four days is required for fermentation in summer and six days in winter. If a guest comes without previous notice, there may not be fermented rice. It has to be borrowed from some one in the village.

The juice that is collected in the bottom of the jar before pouring fresh water into it, is called rahi which is highly concentrated.
Jonga is a part of the Rabha diet. There is no household where jonga is not made and there is no age group which refrains from drinking it. The most notable are the small children between three or four years who are given jonga so that they may not trouble the busy mother.

After the harvest and during winter jonga is prepared invariably by every household, with the help of jonga people discuss their affairs in the early hours of night. They enjoy their leisure months with jonga and at the same time made it a means to brace the chilly winter nights which otherwise would have been difficult to pass.

Jonga is a part and parcel and an inescapable necessity of all rituals and celebrations. All festivities like birth and marriage need jonga.

In spite of the significant role that jonga plays in their society it has resulted in a number of mishaps also. To be on the safe side, the household weapons are collected and hidden in a separate place before a gathering is served with jonga. This is mainly done in marriage parties; because people become vindictive and sentimental after drinks.

Preparation of Bakhar

Bakhar is a kind of specially prepared spice. The basic ingredients of bakhar are as follows:
1. Leaf of sugarcane,
2. Concentrated chillies,
3. Root of beji kalai (a kind of wild creeper),
4. Root of agia chitha (another variety of wild creeper),
5. Leaf of cheni creeper (a local fern),
6. Leaf of bihdhekia (a poisonous herb),
7. Leaf of pine-apple,
8. Leaf of bheti tita (a poisonous herb),
9. Leaf of akan (a poisonous plant),
10. Leaf of kusa (a kind of grass),
11. Old bakhar,
12. Rice.

These ingredients are collected first according to need and dried up in the open sun. These are then powdered in a mortar by a pestle. The powder is then mixed up with rice powder and made a paste-like substance adding water. Out of the substance small cakes are made and dried up in the open sun. The cakes are given a coating of old bakhar. Within a week new bakhar is ready for use.

Bakhar once prepared can be kept for several years.

SMOKING

Smoking hukka (a smoking apparatus) is prevalent among all village communities as well as among tribal societies. It is found amongst the Rabhas also.

Smoking by ladies and teenagers is not a taboo, but women generally do not smoke hukka.
Bidis and cigarettes are also in use.

**UTENSILS**

Mostly earthen utensils are used as they are very cheap and locally available.

Aluminium utensils are also used, but brass and bell-metal pots are few. The following table gives a list of the utensils and their uses:

**Table 9**

List of Utensils and Their Uses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of Utensil</th>
<th>Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Chariya</td>
<td>A brass pot for keeping food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Denga</td>
<td>A wooden vessel for serving food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Jonga</td>
<td>A jar for preparing beer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Kargha or Karhai</td>
<td>Iron vessel for cooking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Ketlai</td>
<td>Earthen or brass pot for preparing tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Khuri</td>
<td>Bell-metal pot for keeping water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Kochpat</td>
<td>Brass spoon for serving food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Kumbai</td>
<td>A kind of jar for keeping water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Maikon</td>
<td>A bamboo spoon for serving food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Malowa</td>
<td>An earthen vessel for serving Jonga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contd-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of utensil</th>
<th>Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Metek</td>
<td>An earthen cooking vessel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Metek</td>
<td>An earthen oven for baking cakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Paila</td>
<td>An earthen vessel for keeping food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Thal</td>
<td>A bell-metal plate for serving food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Tikili</td>
<td>A small earthen pot for keeping water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TRADE AND TRANSPORT

Trade and transport are interdependent. A brisk trade means improved means of transport, while a backward and primitive economy holds no incentive for providing better facilities of transport. At the same time lack of transport facilities in any region leads to its economic isolation and backwardness. 4

The Rabhas are not good traders. They have a general dislike for trade. Of late petty pana (betel-leaf) shops, tea-stalls and a few grocery shops are managed by the Rabhas in the weekly markets and small townships like Badia, Rongchoi, Dwarka, Maladhara, Krishnai and Dudhnoi (in Goalpara district).

The Rabha country specially in Goalpara district lacks good transport facilities. Except the National Highway no. 37 and the trunk road which connects Agia with Lakhipur, the region does not have a single all-weather road. Most of the customary paths are managed by the panchayats or the forest department.

Goods are mainly transported by bicycles, hand carts, bullock carts and the people themselves to the weekly bazars (market).

A Rabha, whether he is a man or woman, old or young, possesses stamina for carrying loads. While men carry loads on shoulders women carry on their heads and back.

SANITATION

Like most of the Indian villages, the Rabha villages are untidy and unclean. But the people do not throw refuse in the paths. They collect and use it as manure. The villagers do not possess latrines — private or public. They use the nearby fields.

The region fall within the malaria belt. Flies and flies are another nuisance for the villagers. As the people are habituated to outdoor insanitation, they do not pay much attention to indoor sanitation. Most of the villagers drink water from kachcha well.
The Rabha dialect forms a part of the Bodo language, which again belongs to the Assam-Burmese branch of Tibeto-Burman linguistic group.\(^5\)

There is no particular script of this dialect. Assamese script is used for writing. The people understand Assamese and speak Assamese with a stranger. The Rabha dialect is more akin to Garo dialect than to any other of the Tibeto-Burman linguistic group.

Grierson\(^6\) points out that "this is a language which is far dying out and regarding which it has been very difficult to obtain any information. It certainly belongs to the Bodo group." Most of the Patkai and Baitlis have, however, abandoned their tribal dialect in favour of Assamese.

**ART AND CRAFTS**

Art is a part of culture; if primitive man has culture, he will also be an artist.\(^7\)

The aim of the primitive artist is good craftsmanship. The conditions under which he works are different from those...

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7. Fuch, Stephen, *"The Origin of Man and His Culture"*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1963, p. 204.
of his "civilized" counterpart. Before he can begin an artistic work he has to collect and prepare his tools and material, and usually he has to do all this single handed.

The Rabhas have a unique way of expressing their artistic tendencies. They are reflected in their textile designs which the people themselves weave. The designs of their kambung and khopang are so attractive that a female visitor to a Rabha village is quickly tempted to purchase one or two. The Rabhas are particularly sensitive to red, scarlet red, chocolate and light yellow colours.

The Rabhas are experts in cane and bamboo basketry works. These baskets are meant to render strenuous and hard service and to stand rough use and weather. So, durability and strength are more conspicuous in these than delicacy and art. Duk is a beautiful basket made of bamboo strips. It is used for keeping rice, pulse-grains and mustard seeds. Doka is a small basket. Jap or bichon is a ran made of polished bamboo or cane strips. Dam is a bamboo mat. Khochang is a beautiful bamboo comb. Bukhuri is a decent wicker hat that serves an umbrella is made of tokau (a kind of palm) leaves.

Kitchen accessories such as tokhob (a bamboo hanger), chandri (a sieve), khuri (a small basket), ban (a winnowing fan), jongka (another basket), are made of bamboo strips. The technique all through is simple.
Fishing accessories such as chorang (a bamboo scoop), khukdur (a small basket), polo (a kind of basket trap), thoche and dingri (two bamboo traps for fishing) too testify their artistic skill.

Musical instruments such as karha (a long bamboo flute), dhak or kham (a drum), muk brangsi (another bamboo flute), singa (a pipe-type instrument), lakhar brangsi (a kind of small flute), gugumel (another small flute), badung-duppa (a stringed musical instrument), gamena (a small wind instrument) are fine examples of their artistic skill. Besides, the Rabhas know the art of making artificial king-fisher (alcedo espida) with which they perform folk dances.

Art is not an isolated phenomenon. It is a part of culture, linked up with the history of the people. Consequently, the understanding of every national art is helped by a knowledge of history, and there are important historical conclusions to be derived from the study of art.

Wood Carving

Wood carving is done by the Rabhas. They generally carve korom (a kind of wooden sandal), dakham (a kind of low stool), nangal (a plough), bux (a wooden box), chaka.

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(a spinning wheel), khat (a cot), sam (a mortar), makhu (a shuttle) and a few other household accessories.

There are a few wood carvers among the Rabhas who consider their art as a part-time occupation. By profession, however, they are agriculturists. As the demand for artistic products is very low and occasional, the carvers engage themselves in this secondary activity at their leisure hours. Raw material for their product is available locally and therefore they do not charge high prices for their products.

Blacksmithy and Pottery

There are no professional blacksmith and potter among the Rabhas. The Hiras (a Scheduled caste) supply earthen pots to them. Requirements like kangka (a dao), ranokeng (an axe), kodal (a digging hoe), bakhu (a spud), karkhep (an instrument for digging), chal (a plough-share) and other items are collected from the non-tribal professional blacksmiths who sell these in the weekly markets.

Weapons

From the old swords and rhinoceros hide shields in the possession of some families it appears that the Rabhas were at some former time a martial race and indulged in warfare. That they offered fine material for the Indian army is apparent from the fact that they were freely enlisted.
with the Kacharis in the Gurkha Military Police. Sattalions
and had rendered commendable service in the expeditions on
the north-eastern frontier.9

Grierson10 says that "at one time Rabhas were the
fighting clan of the Bora family, and many members of it
joined the three Assam regiments before they took to
recruiting Gurkhas".

The Rabhas used jora-rai-dyumk (a heavy bow),
jora phijimuk (poisoned arrow), phikjuari (poisoned
spear), toral (a long sword) and shur (another variety
of spear).

Jong-hado, a crude indigenous gun was also used by
the Rabhas.

Khusung khapak, a shield made of rhinoceros skin
was also used by them. These weapons were made locally. The
Rabhas knew the method of poisoning arrow-heads and spears.

The trap in the battle field consisted of pit-fall
with sharpened stakes at the bottom.

MUSIC, FOLKSONGS AND FOLK DANCES

Religion and rituals afford ample opportunities to
the Rabhas to sing and dance. The people dance and their

9. Friend-pereira, J.C., "Census of India", 1911, Volume III,
Report, p. 141.
gods dance with them; they sing and their hills sing with them. Then the whole atmosphere is one of gay abandon. The multi-coloured dress of the people and their typical ornaments lend peculiar charm to the celebration. The people forgot the hardships of economic life and the natural calamities. They drink jonna and enjoy.

Music

The Rabha music, whether vocal or instrumental, has its own characteristics. The Rabhas have certain instruments which inspire them in singing and dancing. They are either made locally or purchased from shops. The following are the musical instruments of the Rabhas.

Dhak or Kham

It is a drum made of wood and leather. It is about 1.5 metres in length and 0.50 metre in width. It is beaten when the people sing and dance.

Muk Brangsi

It is an inevitable instrument of the Rabhas. A Rabha boy plays on it when he grazes cattle in the field. It is a bamboo flute. It is about 0.33 metre in length and has six holes.

Karha Brangsi or Karha Mal

It is a flute made of nal (a kind of reed). It is
about 2 metres in length and possesses no hole at all. When a folk song is played on the karha brangsi the tone is really moving, but only a trained musician can play on it.

Singa

It is a pipe-type instrument made of a buffalo horn. It gives good sound when used.

Lakhar Brangsi

It is also a flute made of deobah (a kind of reed). It is about 1 metre in length and possesses two holes. It is generally used by a cowherd. In Rabha dialect lakhar means a cowherd.

Gugumel

It is a very small flute and generally used by cowhers. It is made of clay and has two holes. The length of a gugumel is hardly 0.20 metre.

Badung Duppa

It is a kind of stringed musical instrument made of bamboo pipes. It is up to 0.50 metre in length and has three strings. These strings are cut out of the bamboo pipe itself very carefully. When a folk song is played on the badung
duppa the tone is heart-rendering.

Gamena

It is a small wind-instrument made of bamboo pipe. It also gives good sound when used.

Gang Glang

It is another small flute made of clay. Like gugumel, it is very short and hardly 0.20 metre in length. It has two holes like a gugumel; but unlike the latter it is played by the nose.

Kantukri

This is a pair of small cymbal. The Rabhas use a kantukri specially when mourning songs are sung.

Folk Songs

Singing is a major recreation among the Rabhas. Folk songs are mostly sung by cow herds when they graze their cattle in the fields.

The folk songs are simple in composition, involve simple imagination and are rendered in simple style. These are sung with an amazing charity of expression and sometimes each line is repeated a number of times before passing on to the next line. The women sing these songs in chorus with great delight but men generally sing these solo. Sometimes,
a duet is also sung in the form of questions and answers and over long distance.

The following types of folk songs are prevalent among the Rabhas:

1. cheokai chai (religious songs)
2. Ha songkai chai (songs relating to nature)
3. Rangsongkai chai (patriotic songs)
4. Sathar chai (love songs)

Folk Dances

If anything can be said to be the tribal amusement of the Rabhas, it must be dancing, for that, accompanied by drinking, appears to form a very prominent feature of several social functions as well as of religious ceremonies.

Sometimes men and women dance together, and sometimes separately.

The women, sometimes dance with sword and shield in their hands and men with spear. Dancing in this manner is known as dhawa and doubtless owes its origin to the old fighting days.

The folk dances of the Rabhas have some similarities with the Garo folk dances. Like dhawa among the Rabhas, the Garos have a folk dance called grika that owes its origin to the old fighting days.

The following types of folk dances are prevalent among the Rabhas:

1. **Girkai**
2. **Phawa**
3. **Hamjar**
4. **Sathar**
5. **Khokchi**
6. **Hasong**
7. **Parkanti**

**Girkai** is a dance in which both men and women take part. The men dance with stick in their hands while women dance with *ton* (a kind of basket). It is performed during the *domasi* festival. **Phawa** is a dance which represents old fighting days. Here also both men and women take part. The men dance with spear while women dance with sword and shield. **Hamjar** is a dance which is intended to represent the beginning of *jhum* cultivation. Like **girkai** here also both men and women take part. Men dance with an axe while women dance with knife in their hands. **Sathar** is a dance in which both men and women take part but bare-handed. This dance accompanies a **sathar** song (love-song). **Khokchi** is a dance that accompanies the **khokchi** ritual of the Rabhas. In this dance only men take part with arrows in the hands. **Hasong** is another dance which accompanies the **hasong** ritual of the Rabhas. Here also only men take part. In a **hasong** dance men dance in rows.
Among the folk dances the most curious is the one which takes place on the occasion of the final ritual of the dead. This dance is called *farkanti*. In this dance both men and women take part. The men dance with *manchulenka* (alcedo espida) while the women dance with sword and shield.

The dancing of a man is vigorous and to some extent boisterous but women dance in a charming and more attractive way than men.

Musical instruments consisting dhak, *singa* and *mukbransi* increase the tempo of the dance. The musicians cannot enter in the dance circle or row but keep outside and continue playing upon their instruments. The dancing is full of verb and aplomb and sometimes reaches a frenzied stage.

A dancer drinks a glass of *jonga* before dancing.

During the dance, if a woman gets tired, she quickly leaves the group and rejoins the same after refreshing herself with a glass of *jonga*. Similarly, if a male dancer feels exhausted, he gets out of the party and rejoins after drinking a glass of *jonga*.

* The Rabhas know the art of making an artificial kingfisher (*alcedo espida*) with which they dance.