

"THE NEGRITO OF PENINSULAR THAILAND"

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Introduction :

Where the Tenassarim Cordillera passes the Isthmus of Kra and extends through the Kau Ban Tat Mountain range towards the Thai-Malay frontier, dwell small bands of primitive nomadic pygmoid negroes representing without doubt the last surviving groups of the indigenous population of this area. That they once enjoyed a far greater and wider distribution seems well recorded in early writings. However, such contributions must be considered with some reservation since descriptive terminology of these people, as we shall shortly see, has been rather confusing and some such records have tended to mislead, rather than clarify the situation for subsequent investigators.

The Chinese pilgrim, I-Tsing, when returning to China from India, recorded the people of Pulo Condore as negritos and stated that many negrito slaves existed in South China at the end of the VIIth century A.D. Ancient Chinese chronicles also record the people of Fu-Nam (Cambodia) as negritos.

A skull found in Minh-Cam Cave, Annam, has been identified as negrito and M. Abadie in 1924 wrote that the Ho-Nhi of Tong King have negrito hair, skin color, etc.

Dr. Jean Brengues claims about 20% of the Chong of Pörr people of Trat and Chantaburi Provinces, on the Cambodian border, show curly negritoid type hair. The Chongs seem similar to the groups called Kui and Samrae in Cambodia and there is speculation that aboriginal negrito groups have been absorbed by other primitives who now display many of their physical characteristics.

Through persecution, enforced assimilation and warfare, the pygmies have been driven to the most inaccessible mountainous jungle regions of the peninsula. Annandale in 1902 called the Hami Negrito of Pattani Province a subject race of the Malays and Siamese and it was indeed only very recently that the aborigines attained any protective status at all. Negrito bands ceased to exist in the Malayan border state of Perlis, adjoining Satun Province, before the turn of the century and the Paya Semang (Low Country Negrito) formerly of South Kedah and the upper Krian River had also become extinct. In 1878 the Straits Branch Journal reported negrito slaves in the keep of Rajah Muda of Singgora (Songkhla). Negritos were shot, enslaved, exploited and delegated a sub-human status in most jungle areas.

Whether the negrito was always the shy retiring jungle dweller he is today or whether circumstances have altered his psychology is interesting from the standpoint of some old records. A book entitled "The Adventures of John Smith in Malaya: 1600-1605" described the escapades of an employee of the Dutch East India Company who acted as an advisor to the Malayan Queen of Pattani. He reportedly conducted campaigns against the Malays of Perak and employed within his military corps, Semang (Negrito) bowmen. That the Negrito of that day possessed powerful bows and metal tipped poisoned arrows is an established fact but their use as professional fighters seem in strange contrast to their present non-aggressive character. Other historical literature refers to Negritos armed with bows that appeared in Siamese legions marching against Malaya in the 1700's, yet warfare is a strange concept to the Negrito of recent years.

One Negrito woman of the Pattalung-Trung Negrito band related to the explorer I.H.N. Evans that the Negrito had originated in Langkawa (The old name for Ceylon) when it was burned and that their curly hair was due to singeing by fire bringing to mind tales of the Ramayana. Other Tonga believe they originated from the Apes called Bawaij and Teiok. In the Ramayana, it may be recalled, when Sita, the wife of Rama, was kidnapped by Ravana

the demon King of Ceylon, she was pursued and rescued by Rama. Rama's success was due to assistance from Hanuman, the Monkey-God, and his monkey followers. Recent students of mythology have suggested that the "Monkey Followers" were in actuality aboriginal tribes or perhaps Negritos who assisted in the campaign to help Rama.

Some of the Malayan Negrito bands attribute their curly hair to monkeys, while Siamese legend has it that Hanuman invaded the jungle, burning villages, scorching skin and frizzing hair, accounting for Negritos. In the holocaust, domestic pigs supposedly became wild pigs, cattle became Tapir, etc. That portions of the Ramayana are known to some peripheral bands and have been adopted by them seems evident to some limited degree. Negritos, although now confined to limited areas of Southeast Asia and Oceania appear to be the remnants of a once widely distributed race. In addition to the various reports mentioned earlier, there is some evidence that much of Australia was formerly inhabited by Negritos now long replaced by the present Australian Aborigine. The now extinct Tasmanian may have been a type of Negrito intermixed with the aboriginal stock judging from the basis of early reports.

The Negrito of the Malay Peninsula bears a close physical relationship to the aboriginal inhabitants of the Indian administered Andaman Islands lying off Burma's West Coast. The Aeta of the Philippine Islands is another pygmy type now restricted to deep tropical rain forests as the preceding two. Pygmy people of the Island of New Guinea are made up of several groups and appear to have a more distant relationship to the Asiatic Negrito. Pygmies of West Africa and the Ituri Forest in the former Belgian Congo seem to bear a quite remote relationship to the Asian and Oceanic Negrito. Although quite similar in physical characteristics, blood group gene frequencies in the two widely separated types seem to discredit the possibilities of any close relationship. On the basis of blood groupings; it has been suggested that no relationship exists at all between the African Negro and his Asian-Oceanic counterparts.

It appears that in both areas large size Negroid people have developed dwarfed versions of themselves which breed true to type. The theory, alternate to that which would identify the Negrito as an archaic remnant type, is that his nomadic life in an unfavorable environment has been brought about by natural biological selection producing in the course of time a pygmoid type of being.

Dr. Ashley Montagu extends the area of the "Semang" into East Sumatra and "negrito types" have been reported among primitives of Borneo, but what degree of relationship exists with the known Negrito of the Malay Peninsula, the Aetas and Andaman Islanders is still largely unknown. The entire question of the origin of pygmies and their relationship to the normal sized humans is still open to speculation and further study.

Much of what is known of the Negrito must be credited to the early explorers of the area primarily the two Austrians, Father Paul Schebesta who spent the year 1924-1925 traversing the Malayan-Thai jungles in quest of material for his numerous publications on the Negrito and to Dr. Prof. Hugo Bernatzik who visited the Pattalung-Trang bands in 1924. Mr. I.H.N. Evans has prepared the most extensive and valuable compilations of known data on the Negrito in his major publication of 1937, as well as earlier works, and did much to correct erroneous reports by early visitors. Mssrs. Skeat and Blagden did much early research for Cambridge in 1899 published in their two volumes, "The Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsula". To De Morgan and De la Croix in 1380 and especially Nelson Annandale and Herbert C. Robinson who conducted an expedition into the Malay States (Siam) in 1901-1902 for the University of Edinburgh and University College, London, we can thank what is known of the early Negrito cultures of the Ulu Pattani of South Thailand. Dr. Rudolph Martin of the University of Zurich contributed much to know physical anthropology of the aboriginal people of the area. Although much controversy over the authenticity of the works of Vaughan-Stevens of the Rudolf Virchow Stiftung of Berlin exists, he must nevertheless also be credited with many valuable observations on the peninsula during his expeditions of the 1890's.

His late Siamese Majesty King Chulalongkorn took great interest in his aboriginal subjects and visited the Negrito of Pattalung-Trang in 1907. He took a Negrito youth from Nawong, named Kanang, with him to Bangkok. The King published an illustrated book entitled "Bot Lakara Rueng Ngoh Paa" dealing with the Negrito and through his observations contributed much to the early knowledge of these people.

Since the war some limited interest has centered about the Negrito, particularly the Malayan bands, largely as a result of the Malayan Communist Emergency. Most anthropologists have experienced difficulty not only in locating these nomadic bands but once located found that these illusive little people would disappear again before work could begin, necessitating another laborious search. The Negrito is shy and retiring and bands are composed of small numbers of individuals. His fear of persecution and exploitation have caused him to wish as little contact with outsiders as possible and have led him to withdraw to virtually inaccessible areas. Evans noted that the Nawong (Pattalung) Negrito were unfriendly but that the Chong (Trang) Negrito were more receptive while Bernatzik wrote that the Negrito flee when a photographer appears. Such experiences continue to plague researchers till this day.

Finally it must be pointed out that much contradictory printed material exists on the Negrito. Equally well orientated and trained field workers have presented conflicting information in the past. Some of this can be attributed to the confusing terminology used in identification of the various bands which, while uniformly Negrito, may have quite different cultural characteristics. Early explorers also seem to have had difficulty in differentiating at times the Negrito from the Senoi (Sakai) or other aboriginal Malays.

This manuscript will to some extent unfortunately perpetuate some of the confusion since to do precise justice to the culture of each group, several separate papers or separate chapters would have to be devoted to the characteristics of each band. In South Thailand

there appears to be three distinct bands with perhaps border migrations into Thailand of two more groups at times. Each group presents distinct differences i.e. subcultures with a culture, yet are reasonably uniform in an overall sense. The following will then deal with all the groups as a composite with individual distinctions pointed out where such variances exist.

Reports of the various ethnographers who have visited the Negrito are herewith incorporated along with my own observations made during 1960-1961. Informants for additional data included Chief Mamoo of the Naratiwat Band, Chief Dam of the Ampur Padangstar, Yala Band and Klom and Kai of the Pattalung Negrito who resided for three months with Dr. Don Leuschel of Songkhla undergoing linguistic studies and Gamnan Sawing of Tambon Makree, Kau Chaison, Pattalung.

Identification, Distribution and Population :

In order to properly identify the subject it will be necessary to examine the confusing terminology enveloping the names of the various bands and indeed the entire group itself. Several different names are in common usage for the entire Negrito population as a whole as well as different band names, with numerous divergent spellings, for one and the same group.

The Negrito is commonly called "Sakai" in South Thailand after the name originally given the Malayan aborigines now generally identified as Senoi. That the Senoi are of different ethnic stock is quite evident to even a casual observer but early explorers seem to have bestowed the name "Sakai" on all aboriginal forest dwellers. Some peripheral Senoi groups who have interbred extensively, in some cases, with Negritos such as the Lanoh, do add an element of justified confusion.

The term "Sakai" was thought by Grünwedel to be derived from Sanskrit and Skeat believes it to be a subservient term used by Malays to mean "follower, retainer or dependent". The term is somewhat derogatory and the Naratiwat Negrito objected to being called "Sakai". Yet Chief Dam of the Yala band claimed Sakai was the only name by which they knew themselves.

The Negrito in actuality calls himself Moni, Monik, Menik, or some similar derivation of this word, which means "The People" after the pattern of most primitives. The Thai, in addition, have bestowed upon him the unglamorous title of Ngoh or Ngoh Paa. The "Ngoh" is the Thai word for the fruit "Rambutan", which has curly spines on it's surface reminiscent of the Negrito's wooly hair. The Negrito who understands Thai is usually embarrassed by this term and prefers to call himself "Khon Paa", the forest people.

The Negritos were formerly divided into two major subdivisions called "Pangan and Semang". The first term meaning wild, omnivorous, uncircumcized, was used to designate the Eastern bands of the Peninsula. The more widely used term "Semang", for the Western Negrito, still currently in use as an all inclusive term for the Negrito, is of more obscure origin. In Lanoh (Sabub'n), the word "sema" means man, while the Semai-Senoi call the Temiar (Temer-Senoi), "Sema", with a nasal "a". Either term could have been corrupted by Malayan into the present "Semang".

With this confusion surrounding terminology for the entire group I feel it safe to call the pygmoid Negro, "Negrito", in order to strip him of the multitudinous derogatory and misleading names with which he has been burdened, with further breakdown into band names, if known, or into the geographic location in which the band is found.

The Negrito can be divided into seven principal bands although various break-downs exist with several names in many cases for each group. Names were often bestowed upon bands in the past conforming with the name of a nearby stream or mountain. These bands may now reside in a completely different locality creating considerable confusion.

1. The Negrito of Pattalung-Trang, Thailand, called *Tonga*, Mos and Chong Negrito, which inhabit the Kau Ban Tat Range dividing Trang and Pattalung Provinces.

2. The *Jahai*, also called Mengo, Tiong, Mawas and Belubn, which range the headwaters of the Perak River in Northern Perak

and Kelantan, Malaya, and along the Bala River, a tributary of the Pergau. They extend over the border in a few small groups into Naratiwat Province, Thailand and perhaps south Yala Province.

3. The *Kensiu*, also called Kenseu, Kensieu, of Northeast Kedah, Malaya, which overlap into Yala Province, Thailand.

4. The *Kintak*, or Kenta (including Kenta-Bogn) of the Kedah-Perak border area in North Malaya. This band also overlaps into the Betong, Yala Province of South Thailand.

5. The *Menri*, also called Menriq or Menrik, of Kelantan, along the Lebir River and in Serao region of N. Pahang. This group also inhabits border areas and could conceivably penetrate into Thailand although this is not confirmed.

6. The *Batok*, also called Batek, Bateq, Kleb Temo and Nogn, lives at the headwaters of the Chiku-Krau and in the border area of Kelantan and Pahang.

7. *Lanoh* or Sabub'n. This mixed group of Negrito and Temlar-Senoi live on the Perak River and some of its tributaries toward the Piah River in Northern Perak.

Earlier reports identified a quite distinct cultural group called the Hami Negrito of the Ulu Pattani in what is presently Yala Province but this group seems to now be extinct and has not been recorded since before the turn of the century. The Negrito called, "Paya", of the west coast of Malaya also seem now to be extinct.

The Pattalung-Trang Negrito, whom I will arbitrarily call Tonga, range through dense jungle of the Kau Ban Tat Range. Within recent years the main body seem to have lived on the Trang side though Pattalung is now the primary centre of residence. Early visitors found them living at Nawong and in the vicinity of the Ga-Chong falls near the Pattalung-Trang road. They were at that time living at Kuan Mai Dam, Kau Rawn and Kau Mam Tow, in what was then Yong Star District. Early reports also placed them in Krabi and Surathani but this seems in error and no confirmation of their having extended into these areas within historic times exists.

Warrington Smyth reported 400 Negritos living near Chaiya in Surathani and others placed them near Tung Song in Nakorn Srithamarat but these also remained unconfirmed with no known Negritos in either area at present. One Negrito at the time claimed to have been to Nakorn Srithamarat to see the Wat Phra Sri Mahatat. Skeats reported Negritos near the inland sea of Songkhla on the basis of abandoned Negrito wind screens he saw. Although no Negritos live near the sea now, within recent years Negritos, usually men, came to Rattapoom District, Songkhla, to barter. Extensive jungle extends north to Pattalung and south into Satun through which the bands could have wandered. Hempelabn, a Negrito informant, claimed that within his grandparents time, Tonga Negritos from Pattalung wandered into Kedah State, Malaya, to rendezvous with Negrito there.

The principal band of Tonga Negrito now reside in Kau Chaison District, Pattalung. One semi-sedentary group under Chiefs Sang and Wai-Dam with 5 men, 5 women and 4 children, is settled several kilometers from the village of Lujangla, Tambon Tamot, Kau Chaison District, Pattalung. Another band of some 20 individuals moves about on the east slope of the Kau Ban Tat. The band occasionally enters Thai villages on the edge of the jungle to trade honey, rattan and animal skins. A Negrito informant from Trang, now completely acculturated, claimed he came from the vicinity of a village called Lam Tu which was two days walk from the Ga-Chong Falls. Negritos lived at Ga-Chong until about 10 years ago and worked on the development of the track into the falls but moved away because of increased accessibility of the vicinity and consequently more visitors.

South of the main Tonga bands near the village of Ban Doan, Tambon Tung Nui, live the last surviving Negritos in Satun Province. The group had thirteen individuals within the last ten years but is now reduced to one family group consisting of a man and his wife and child. They quite regularly enter the village for barter or to beg for food. The villagers claimed not to know where the Negrito lived but they ranged in the Dong-Chüok Chang forest between

Satun and Songkhla. They often camped in a cave near Tung Nui and are quite wary and shy of strangers. The few items of material culture which I obtained from them indicate a close relationship with the Tonga. Although little is known of the now extinct Perlis Negrito, the possible past relationship with this once adjacent group must also be considered.

In 1930 the total population estimate for the Tonga was 100 individuals. There has been some inter-marriage with Thais but the group still is probably well under the quoted figure.

The Tonga wears clothing, ragged though it may be, usually begged from Thais and Evans who studied them, while headquartered in Lampan, reported over 30 years ago that even then the Tonga were more addicted to clothing than the Negrito of Perak. During his visit, Ai-Kleng was the Chief but was domineered by a woman called Ai-Kom. He obtained from them blowpipes, quivers, monkey bone necklaces, poison tubes, jews harps, pandanus baskets, and fire making equipment. Most of the same material goods are still manufactured to-day although matches have largely replaced the fire-making tools.

Most of the men speak southern dialect Thai and have adopted the characteristic "Wai" greeting of the Thai. In addition to Trang, some adventurous individuals of this group have lived and worked in Haadyai and even Bukhet where they constituted quite a curiosity.

To the southwest, following the Malayan border, the next most significant groups in Thailand are the bands living within the Districts of Padangstar and Betong in Yala Province. One band visited in 1960, camped near the village of Tamtalu, Padangstar, had 10 men, 6 women and 6 children. Chief Dam and a Thai speaking Negrito informant, Ai-luk, said the total band had 63 people. The entire group had lived in the vicinity of the Tan-to Falls but had, for expediency, broken into two bands. The group is rapidly becoming sedentary as is the other band located near Kilo 30, Betong District. There did not seem to be extensive contact between the bands. The

Yala group appear to be Kensiu and make the classical Kensiu hair combs. It is also likely that Kintak Negrito wander into Betong from adjoining Kedah.

In 1901-1902 Annandale and Robinson reported a group called Hami or Suku living near what he called Marbek, in Jalor (Yala) and near Ban Kassot consisting of 4 men and a woman. They said their band consisted of 20 people and differed from the "Moni" i.e. other Negrito, of Rahman District. Mikluchlo-Maclay had reported them in the late 1800's and the Rajah of Yala reported them "common" near Biserat. They reportedly collected jungle goods for the Malays and Hami graves were reported in Tanjong Luar. More men than women were reported in the group which significantly has been obvious among other Negrito groups I have visited.

Further west some bands of what appear to be Jahai Negrito have established themselves on the Thai side of the border in Naratiwat Province. A settlement of 23 Negritos under Chief Mamoo live on the upper Bongaw River at the base of Angae Mountain in Rangae District, Naratiwat. The band formerly ranged into Kelantan and covered Rangae and Wang Districts. They formerly had contract, it was claimed, with the Negrito of Betong but for about ten years now the band has become the ward of a rubber planter upon whom they seem almost completely dependent. The group speaks Malayan quite well, though little Thai, and trade at Yahaw Village primarily for their simple needs. They wear discarded clothing, sarongs and even turbans and have constructed simple, crude, though permanent, houses.

Another group, also Jahai, have moved from Jeli on the Kelantan side of the border into Naratiwat to Wang District near Kampong Lukae and Kampong Balar across the Go-Lok River. This group also ranges the upper Saiburi River in the Tambon Mamung and Ban Kua areas.

The total Negrito population in Thailand probably is in the neighborhood of 300 persons compared to a census count of over 2,000 in Malaya. Estimates place the number of Negrito in Malaya

at over 3,000 with considerable confusion as to the status of inter-mixed peripheral groups. The difficulty of a head count in the deep jungle areas inhabited by the Negrito would make an accurate survey extremely difficult.

Physical Characteristics :

The peninsular Negrito possess typically Negrotoid characteristics and is a classical pygmoid. He falls well within the pygmy height range of 150 cms and averages about 1,496 mm for males and 1,408 for females. Twenty males measured near Grik, Malaya, averaged 1,528 mm. and two females were 1,427 mm. and 1,458 mm. The Tonga reportedly averages slightly smaller than the Malay Negrito. Annandale and Robinson report measurements of 1,529 mm., 1,511 mm. and 1,482 mm. for three male Hami Negrito measured in the Ulu Pattani and 1,476 mm. for one woman of the same group. This compares with a recorded average of 1,492 mm. for the male Andaman Island Negrito, 1,460 mm. for the Philippine Aeta and 1,452 mm. for the African Bambuti Pygmy. Some individual Negritos may appear quite tall but question of pure racial stock always exists and the groups as a whole falls well within the above limits.

The hair of the Negrito is Ulotrichi, or wooly, compared to the Cymotrichi, wavy-haired Senoi. Some individuals have hair curled in a mop while in others it forms irregular spirals. The late P.D.R. Williams-Hunt however claimed of 100 hair samples taken in August-September 1951 only three formed what he considered a true curl which completely spiraled upon itself. The Negrito nevertheless does present a wooly headed appearance characteristically negro. The hair is a rather lusterless black and in some groups is shaved off entirely or with a very small shock left at the front. Females often have fairly long hair presenting a frizzling shaggy appearance. There is very little body hair although some males have a slight mustache and some hair on their legs.

The skin color is dark chocolate in adults but never glossy black as among some negro groups. Children are lighter and get progressively darker. Various types of dermatomycosis seem quite

common. The typical Negrito is brachycephalic and many have a protruding forehead. Superciliary ridges are not usually heavy. There is a slight prognathism in some individuals.

The face is flat and round with deep set eyes and a broad deeply saddled nose. There is no epicanthic fold. The restless nature of the Negrito's eyes has been apparent to many observers and has been likened to a "wild animal look". The ears are small and the chin is often weak in structure. The legs are often rather short in proportion to the torso and there is frequently a wide separation between the hallux and second toe. The Negrito walks with a peculiar motion, lifting the feet high off the ground as if stepping over invisible obstacles. This is perhaps characteristic of jungle walking where a shuffling gate would be a decided handicap.

Language :

The Negrito present an interesting subject for further study from a linguistic standpoint insofar as they seem to speak an adoptive language. Both Negrito and Senoi speak a Mon-Annamese or Mon-Khmer language which was widely spoken throughout South-east Asia by both highly advanced cultures as well as numerous primitive tribal groups before invasion of the area by northern ethnic groups, such as the Thai and Burmese, speaking a different language. Why the Negrito, which are ethnically unrelated to people which would be expected to speak a Mon-Khmer language, do so, is not fully understood. There is still considerable question as to which racial group Mon-Khmer languages belong since it is spoken by Mongoloids but also some wild tribes of Non-Mongoloid origin. That it is not the original native language of the Negrito seems quite certain. The Negrito use monosyllabic root words and a method of composition of prefixes as in Mon-Khmer. The Negrito language has many words which will however never be traced to a Mon-Khmer or a Malayan origin and appear to be the remnants of the original language. Many such characteristic words have a peculiar Bn, Dn or Gn ending. The language spoken by the Negrito has a very explosive quality about it and normal conversation of a

very pleasant nature sounds as if the speakers would come to blows at any moment. In this way it is very reminiscent of some of the tribal languages of the Central New Guinea Highlands.

The language of the Negrito is in many respects quite similar to the Senoi languages of Malaya and in phonology, syntax, structure and much vocabulary duplicates one another. Whether the Negrito copied the language of the Senoi or of an earlier Mon-Khmer speaking invading group remains to be uncovered.

The Negrito language has remained quite uniform throughout the area largely because of the nomadic nature of its speakers. Through constant, though perhaps infrequent, contact by wandering bands the language was never allowed to become rigid and remains mutually intelligible to most of the speakers even though widely separated.

Even the Tonga Negrito of Pattalung-Trang, though long cut off from the main Negrito groups in Malaya, speak a language not dissimilar to the others. Strangely however, among the Tonga many Malayan loan words have crept into the language. This would well be expected among the Malayan Negrito but the Tonga have been long separated from Malayan speakers. The Malayan speaking population of Trang and Pattalung are mainly fishing peoples of the coastal area and not the jungle now inhabited by the Negrito. Whether the Negrito were originally lowland dwellers as some early explorers indicated and had some contact with Malay speaking people before the Thai invasion of the Peninsula remains for speculation. Though it is generally believed that population pressure indicated a push from north to south it seems interesting to consider the possibility that the Tonga may have reversed the arrangement and immigrated in times past from south to north accounting for the Malayan linguistic influence. A corollary can be found in the south to north immigration of the Lawa in north Thailand.

The Tonga use Malayan numerals to count to four, beyond which point most Negrito either become confused or employ the word "many". Strangely Malayan words for common nouns in

language are also used as in the Negrito words for fish, buffalo, stone, duck, elephant, banana, shirt etc. Thai words with some variation have been adopted by the Tonga for items not native to their culture i.e. door and bedroom, bathing sarong (Packoma) which they call by the Thai word for blanket and oddly also words of apparent Thai origin for moustache, belly, toe, wrist and forefinger. Whether the informants resorted to Thai words in a moment of desperation to identify some object or item while having still other terms for such body parts remains to be confirmed.

Malayan is the lingua franca of most border Negrito and only few can speak a smattering of southern dialect Thai. Among the Tonga, Thai is more widely spoken.

The language appears to be in a process of decay with more and more frequent contact in recent years. The Negrito recognize a unity in their languages and some, such as the Kenta-Bogn and Kensiu, speak the same dialect and are cognizant of a common ancestry though now separated.

The Negrito languages have been divided by Schebesta and Blagden into a Menra and Meni classification depending on the pronunciation and character of the dialects. Meni is the northeastern grouping and Menra that which is spoken in the center and southeast of the Negrito distribution area.

Food, Hunting, Growing, Gathering:

Though nomadic, the Negrito is more uniform in his wanderings than is commonly assumed. His movements are not erratic and he moves within a defined area. Some writers have indicated that the Negrito moves his camps as often as every three days. It is however more common that he will remain in an area till the availability of food is depleted and then move, unless some factor such as unwanted visitors, a tiger, a death or a natural phenomenon interpreted as a magico-mystical matter, necessitates or justifies an earlier move. He will, for example, camp in the vicinity of a Durian tree till the fruit is gone.

The lean-to, windscreen, is thrown up by the women usually with a raised bamboo sleeping or sitting platform and a cooking fire

adjacent to it. These windscreen bush shelters may be arranged in a crude ellipsoidal circle and at times are arranged in a close parallel row forming a tunnel-like arrangement with the upper edges almost joining such as a long hut without a roof pole. Within this shelter are hung the meager possessions of the owner such as blowpipes, dart containers, baskets and cooking paraphernalia. Coconut shells are used as bowls, rattan scrapers are made, a small wooden cudgel used for a mortar may be present and the ever useful knife. Leaves serve as plates and vegetables and rice are cooked in bamboos. These are stoppered and held at an angle over the fire to simmer. Meats are skewered and roasted over open flame. Leaves also serve to drink from pools and water is drunk directly from storage bamboos. Small mammals are gutted and buried in ashes to be baked with the skin still on. Prepared in this fashion they retain all the natural juices and are quite palatable although a bit revolting in appearance when first exhumed from the ashes. Food not eaten is saved till the next day and mothers often save small amounts of food in the bamboos so the children may have a cold snack the following morning. There does not appear, among any of the bands in a natural state, to be a real organized effort to preserve food. Meals are not segregated and the families usually eat as a group.

The female members of the band gather edible roots, fruits etc, while men hunt birds and small mammals or fish.

In the not too distant past, when the Negrito used the long bow and poisoned arrows to hunt big game, dogs were used extensively as hunting aides. Now that the blowgun is used for hunting, the dog has become a rather useless camp scavenger. Dogs and cats are however not generally eaten.

The Negrito is not particular what he eats and a wide variety of things are consumed. Turtles and frogs as well as mollusks, termites and various insect larvae are considered edible. Snakes are however not generally eaten as among some adjacent primitive groups. Most small mammals and birds are eaten and big animals when available, although currently few big animals appear to be hunted.

Certain very special tabus about food do exist. Depending on the band, during pregnancy, some groups will avoid eating the monitor lizard, gibbon, bamboo rats or Argus pheasant. Some bands believe chicken meat to be tabu after birth of a child. The Tonga reportedly will not eat elephant, bear, wild pig, deer or rhino but eat all species of monkey. In some bands children may not eat game killed with a bow or a gun. The Kintak do not eat elephant or bear because they believe they are reincarnated people. None of the Negrito will eat tiger meat.

Negritos are grandually learning rudimentary farming from the Senoi or the jungle villages of the Thai and Malay. Many bands now clear a jungle area and plant a crop. Plantings in some cases include corn, tapioca or rice. This "ladang" is then used as a center point for their wanderings to which the group returns from time to time. Many Negrito also work occasionally for Thai and Malaysians during rice planting and harvesting and there learn the fundamentals of crude farming.

With the introduction of guns, hunting is becoming more successful with the result of more rapid depletion of wildlife. The numerous stories of Negrito killing elephant by driving poisoned splinter into their foot soles or killing rhino embedded in mudholes has been written off by qualified observers as Malayan fables. That the Negrito formerly armed with the long bow and now with a gun could bring down a Saladang or more likely a Sambar is entirely possible.

Material Culture and Decorative Arts:

It may be said, generally speaking, that the Negrito never developed to the stone age but remained solely within the "Bamboo Age" with iron having been introduced to them at a later period. His decorative arts are limited to incised designs on bamboo, basket weaving and decoration of the few talismen that he makes. Among some groups even the bamboo decoration of blowpipes, quivers, combs etc. is missing with the aesthetic arts virtually non-existent. It is implied, with good cause, that the Negrito himself invented

none of these art styles but rather adopted them from the Senoi and then furthered them to suit his own tastes. The line ornamentation is supposedly derived from the Semai-Senoi and the dot design from the Ple-Senoi. That he is a poor craftsman is not to be indicated since his bamboo art often outshines those of adjoining tribes who perhaps first developed the technique.

The dwellings of the Negrito are uniform throughout the area with a crude windscreen of bamboo and thatch hastily thrown up. A slightly raised split bamboo platform suffice for a bed and the shelters are abandoned without any feeling of attachment. Because he is nomadic, the Negrito is also limited in the quantity and nature of his material goods which must be small, light, durable and few in number in order to be carried along on each trek. The Negrito at times makes use of caves as temporary dwelling areas. King Chulalongkorn and Skeat both reported cave dwelling among the Tonga. Although Skeat reported green leaves heaped upon a sleeping platform, so located at Ban Tun, Schebesta questions it as he never saw Negritos use leaves for bedding. Caves are at best used only temporarily. Skeat reported that the Negrito do not like to live in raised houses as the Malays but both the Yala and Naratiwat Negrito bands now have built such semi-permanent structures.

Contrary to old reports, no Negrito, except, children go naked. Women as a rule are bare-breasted but modesty dictates that both sexes be covered in other manners. Men now usually wear a short knee length sarong of woven cotton or a breech cloth of similar material. Even at the turn of the century many Negrito were clothed in ragged trousers and shirts begged from Thais or Malays. The Naratiwat Negrito today dons turbans as well as sarongs and the women on special occasions even wear the "baju" blouse. Even with commercial clothing, articles of native manufacture are also worn. Characteristic of this is the short fringed apron worn by women. This is made of the black string like rhizomorph of a rock fungus of the genus *Agaricus* and *Polyporus*. These aprons are often worn under the sarong or if worn alone are accompanied by a breech-cloth. In addition to the aprons, belts, head bands and

bracelets are also made of these rhizomorphs. The rhizomorph apron uses no string foundations but rather is plaited in long bands. The early Hami Negrito were reported to have tied foot long strings over a cord with a clove hitch to form a fringe.

Cloth is made from pounded atocarpus bark and is quite soft and flexible. A fine bark cloth is made from the leached bark of the Ipoh tree from which the potent dart poison is also obtained. Ordinarily atocarpus head bands are not worn as among the Senoi except by some closely adjacent groups especially the Menri in the east. The style is obviously copied. Negritos generally seem to prefer rhizomorph or palm fibre head bands, sometimes decorated with small flowers of which they are quite fond.

Men often wear rattan belts though this style has also been adopted by Batok Negrito women who wear rattan girdles with magical patterns. In the belt are tucked knives and the dart quiver as well as tobacco pouches etc.

Among personal adornment must be considered painting, tattooing, tooth filing, perforation of the nasal septum, cicatrization and the wearing of decorative devices as necklaces, earrings etc. Of the body decorations, Schebesta felt that most were copied from the Senoi. Tooth filing among the Kensiu and Kenta and nose boring for wearing a nose quill is reported from Perak but seems much more distinctly Senoi rather than pure Negrito. Cicatrization does not seem to be practiced. Tattooing among the dark skinned Negrito is also rare and when done seems to follow copied Senoi style. Face painting, often for magical reasons, is more common, with dots and lines, as among the Senoi, frequently employed. One Kensiu Negrito woman I observed in Yala Province had her forehead painted solid orange. Bernatzik reported the Tonga men painted black stripes and spots on their faces when they prepared for a dance. Blackening of the feet with charcoal was reported by Vaughan-Stevens as an effective charm against disease. In Naratiwat the Jahai Negrito have begun painting their faces white and applying lipstick in imitation of the Malayan women.

Men do not generally bore the ear lobes as women do. For women in most Negrito bands this is done as children. Among the Tonga it is reported however that ear lobes are not pierced till the woman is an adult. Among the Hami, unmarried girls had distorted ears and wore earrings but married women did not. Ear lobe decorations are at times sweet grass or rolled leaves.

Necklaces of small joints of bamboo, seeds and animal teeth as well as monkey bones, which have magical significance, are made and worn by the Negrito. Styles vary from band to band. Coin necklaces are also worn. Necklaces made of 17th Century Dutch coins have been reported among them and the young son of the Kensiu Chief of the Padangstar, Yala band wore a huge neck piece of Chinese coins during my visit.

One of the outstanding art forms of the Negrito which appears also to be copied from the Senoi but developed to a higher degree by the Negrito, are the beautiful incised bamboo women's combs. Cut from a great split tube of bamboo, the combs have from a dozen to over twenty teeth. The Kensiu make combs often with two characteristic horns on the top and several bands of geometric patterns across the broad body of the comb above the teeth. The combs are not reported among the Tonga or the Menri.

Extensive study has been made of the supposed magical properties of the women's combs. Vaughan-Stevens felt that the magical significance had been lost to the Negrito of the West Coast while among the Eastern bands the designs are supposed to ward off illness. Negrito of Kedah and Perak supposedly do not wear the combs for magical purposes and the Kensiu Chief, Dam, told me the combs made by his band were for decorative purposes only. Among the other bands the comb acts as a talisman to keep away the "ghostly winds" which bring disease. Vaughan-Stevens claimed design of the fifth panel in an eight panel comb protected the wearer from disease but in a six panel comb the fourth panel is the significant one causing some contradiction. In some instances the uppermost panel carries the power called "was" which deflects the wind bearing disease. Women with different

designs on their combs will protect one another if clustered close together and have reciprocal protection. More than one comb is often worn. Women are supposed to wear the combs at birth and for seven days thereafter. There are special tabus and restrictions concerning wearing of the comb following a death or during thunder showers. The combs are buried with the woman when she dies.

Birth bamboos with magical designs called "Tahong" are also worn concealed by the women. Custom prescribes that a strange man may not see the birth bamboos. The Birth Bamboos are supposed to keep the "soul bird" of the expected child.

Some bands also make a talisman called a "Penitah" which is a decorated burial staff and is stuck in the belt of the deceased before burial.

A painted stick with yellow and black or red stripes called a "Tangkel" is often set on a new grave to ward off tigers, through it's magical properties.

The plaited bags and carrying baskets of the Negrito are quite well made and women seem skillful in their manufacture. The Yala Negrito also made small tobacco bags of plaited palm leaf. Skeat also reported that the "Pangan" carried tobacco in decorated bamboo tubes.

The Negrito make a number of musical instruments varying with the bands. Which are of their own design and which are copied is hard to say. They do not seem to have made a drum. One skin drum I collected in Naratiwat from the Jahai is of obvious Malayan design. Prof. Bernatzik claimed that during a dance of the Tonga which he attended that Malayan skin drums were used and beaten by the women.

The Negrito do make a 2 string bamboo guitar or Zither much like the Senoi instrument as well as a bamboo jews harp and bamboo joints of different lengths used as stampers.

Both nose and mouth flutes are reported but the mouth flute seems more characteristically Negrito.

Henry Balfour in his report on a collection of musical instruments from the Siamese Malay States and Perak reports a wooden clapper from Rahman District (Yala), made by joining two sticks with two moveable cross members allowing the main sticks to be snapped together. This was reported as being of Negrito origin. He also reported a split bamboo clapper from Jarum, Raman District.

Weapons :

The classical weapon of the Negrito everywhere has always been the long bow. Why the Negrito of Thailand and Malaya should uniformly have given up this apparently superior weapon is a major puzzle. The blowgun, now the standard hunting instrument of all the bands, was not adopted from the Senoi till the middle of the nineteenth century. De la Croix described bows with a 6-7 foot length among the Negrito's in Pattani in 1880. The bows were not ornamented and were usually constructed of hard wood although an aberrant type of bamboo bow is also known from the area. Both the Hami and Tonga claimed to have given up the bow in the middle 1800's and at the time of early contacts still knew how to make bows although the practice has long been discontinued.

The Negrito still have their own words for bow and arrow which are called respectively "Chanu" and "Bila" among the Tonga. The arrows, also undecorated, were tipped with a beaten iron head. These were usually poisoned and with it the Negrito in the past could conceivably have been able to kill the larger animals of the jungle. Strangely, though his arrows had flight feathers to control the flight of the shaft he never seems to have mastered the significance of them. Arrows were often fletched with the feather vane pointing in the wrong direction and clipped so close that for practical purposes the feathering was useless. It may be that the Negrito considered the feathering to be of magical value and employed feathers of particular species for this purpose.

In any case, with the adoption of the blow gun, hunting methods changed and pursuit no longer required hunting dogs and

was now limited largely to small mammals, birds and especially monkeys.

The Negrito blowgun is a beautifully made object varying in length from 5' 7" in the Satun specimen to 8' 4" in the Jahai blowgun from Naratiwat. Kensiu blowguns average 6 feet. It is constructed of an inner bore composed of 2 sections of bamboo fitted together and covered at the joint with a piece of tightly taped leaf. The outer tube also is made of two joints except among the bands fortunate enough to obtain bamboo of the species, *wrayi*, which has long nodeless joints long enough to make a blowpipe. A mouth piece called "Ako" is fitted to the end piece. The mouth piece may be annular or rounded depending on the band and characteristically Negrito is the custom of building up the mouth piece of hardened pitch. The muzzle is similarly often coated with pitch to prevent splitting. At the joints a ring of rattan is placed to insure a tight grip. The Naratiwat Jahai now use live rubber for this purpose. The outer covering is usually profusely decorated with incised designs especially at the breech and muzzle ends often interspersed with rings of stripes encircling the tube. Hung up in the roof of the windscreen with the ends plugged securely with plant down to keep out insects and dirt, and constantly exposed to smoke and oily hands, the blowguns take on a deep beautiful brown sheen. The weapon is the sole domain of the man and woman and children under 12 do not usually handle it.

The blowguns of the Negrito from Satun and Tonga of Trang-Pattalung are not decorated. The mouthpiece is quite small and the tube of cruder construction than the Kensiu blowguns I collected. The rattan lashings at the joints were covered with pitch. The Hami Negrito were reported to have a decorated blowpipe seven feet long with an annular mouth piece but make a quiver of a fashion quite identical to the Tonga and Satun group. The quiver among the latter is a wide mouth section of bamboo roughly one foot long without a cover, undecorated, and bound with rattan lashings with which the quiver is tied around the waist when in use. The inside contains a series of individual bamboo or cane sections slightly

shorter than the container and tied together with string. In each of these is placed a poisoned dart. The quiver of the Hami was similar in design but had a bone charm added to it in the fashion of the Senoi. The Ulna of a white Gibbon is particularly desirable for this purpose.

The quiver of the Kensiu and Jahai in Yala and Naratiwat are quite different in design. The quiver is also of bamboo but long and narrow often only 1 1/2 to 2 inches in diameter and some 16 inches long. The bamboo node forms the bottom of the tube. The outside, as the blowgun, is profusely decorated with geometric designs and in some cases recognizable objects as leaves, flowers, insects, centipedes etc. The quiver does not have a belt loop and is normally carried tucked into the waist band, breech cloth or sarong.

The tube may have a fitted cover, as in one atypical Jahai quiver I obtained, or have a small woven bag containing plant down to act as an air seal when the dart is placed in the breech, jammed into the top of the container. Leaves are also often employed to close up the end of the quiver. There are no individual tubes inside for the darts.

The decoration of the quiver is quite significant and act as magical attractants to game and to prevent animals from becoming frightened of the hunter. Without proper designs on the quiver, and in most cases on the blowpipe as well, the hunters efforts would prove fruitless. These decorations offer direct contrast to the designs of the women's combs which act as repellants whereas these designs are quite definite attractants.

The dart is about the length of a foot sole or a forearm which are often used as measuring guides by the maker. The shaft is made of a splint of the rib of Bertam Palm (*Evgeissona*) leaves sharpened to a needle like point. A short distance from the tip the shaft is deeply notched so the poisoned head will break off in the wound. The butt end is fitted with a small conical cap the approximate diameter of the blowgun bore. When ready to shoot, the hunter inserts the dart and places behind it a small wad of plant down of fluffy flocculence of such plants as caryota or particular

species of rattan as calamus to insure as little loss of air as possible. With an explosive puff into the mouth-piece, which is held tightly cupped to the lips, the dart is propelled on its way. Blowgun range is probably within the limits of 50 meters but shots of up to 80 meters have been reported. Much would of course depend on the lung power of the individual.

Without the poisoning of the darts the weapons would be of course comparatively inoffensive and ineffectual. The poisoning of the darts is then the factor which has made the weapons of the Negrito and Senoi of so much interest.

Although some two dozen ingredients have been reported in use as dart poison, including scorpion, snake and centipede venom as well as commercial arsenic, the main substance is the sap from the Ipoh tree (*Antiaris toxicaria*) and in the other case from a liana or creeper (*Strychnos* sp.) or a combination of the two. The poison is known as "Dawk" by the Negrito and in some dialects "Dawk Santiang" is the creeper poison and "Dawk Kokeung" is the toxin of the Ipoh tree.

The poison of the Ipoh tree is collected by slashing the trunk and catching the sap drippings in a small bamboo receptacle. The fresh sap uncooked, is painted, on a small wooden paddle or spatula and held over a fire to dry. It turns, upon exposure to heat, from a milky gray to a deep chocolate brown. At this stage it is quite hard and brittle but can be softened again by warming over a flame. The dart points are spiraled through the poison on the paddle and when coated are placed next to the fire to dry. The poison from the creeper, *Strychnos*, must be cooked before it is effective. Ordinarily the poisons are not mixed and are used separately although the Tonga combine them adding to the brew chicken gall and bird fat to increase its potency. The Batok also reportedly combine the two along with other plant materials considered by them to be a toxic.

The poison is best when fresh but retains its strength for a considerable period. Darts are re-poisoned at regular intervals. The strength of mixtures apparently varies and darts with highly potent

poison are marked with a painted stripe or other characteristic marking on the butt end. In this way the hunter can employ the proper dart to be used to bring down the quarry he has sighted.

Ipoh poison under microscopic examination shows antiarin crystals. Antiarin is a heart poison stopping the hearts of wounded mammals in diastole. Cold blooded vertebrates' hearts stop in systole. If the poison is fresh, animals the size of monkeys usually die within 2-5 minutes. A wounded monkey can be observed for this period by the hunter on the ground before it loses its control and crashes to earth. Birds die more slowly and often elude the hunters by flying away and dying out of sight. Experimentation showed that Antiaris killed monkeys and pigeons but not chickens. The chicken is of course well known for its apparent resistance to normally lethal doses of many toxins. The Negrito believe the chicken is immune because it "eats earth" and this is indeed considered by some to be of use as an antidote. However, my Kensui informant, Chief Dam, vehemently denied that this was effective. Other reported antidotes for Ipoh poison are chewing *Ophioxylon* serpentinum, *Andira horsfieldi*, roots of *Hernindra sonora*, crab fat, salt and Malayan black maize. The effectiveness of these in view of the fulminant qualities of the toxin is questionable.

The poison is apparently not lethal if taken internally and some tribes reportedly use Ipoh as a medicant. The Negrito normally cut out the meat adjoining the area penetrated by the dart. After accidentally puncturing my finger with a poisoned dart I made an incision causing it to bleed and felt for some time a slight tingling in the area. That the poisoned darts could kill a man is generally conceded and there are reports of Communist Terrorists having been so killed by aborigines during the Malayan Emergency. The late anthropologist Pat Noone was reported to have been murdered by Temiar-Senoi with poisoned dart in Northern Malaya during World War II.

Other than knives and spears with bamboo blades reported by explorers in the nineteenth century, the Hami Negrito were observed armed with wooden clubs made from a tree limb. All

of these seem to now no longer be representative of the material culture of the Negrito.

Social Customs :

The Negrito bands have a rather loose democratic casteless, leadership with no powerful chieftains except in unusual cases where a person has been appointed to such a state of eminence by a government officer. Ordinarily the oldest men exercise control of the group and it's action. Elders usually act as group spokesmen. Among the Kensiu, most young men would politely refuse to answer my question till the Chief appeared although the queries were of a very elementary nature. Purchases of material items from the Negrito are frequently handled by the Chief who does the negotiating after brief consultation with the owner. Each group will also often have young men as natural leaders and occassionally a vociferous woman will have a bearing on the dicussions of a group. Among the Tonga an alert Negrito woman named Ai-San was recognized by the Thai as the group leader where in actuality she was only an extrovert personality with domineering characteristics. Ordinarily wives of chieftains have no more voice in band affairs than women of less status.

The Negrito is ordinarily monogamous and although neither polyandry or polygamy appear to be prohibited they do not seem to be the rule. The Hami, it is known were not exogamus, since the father-in-law of the Chief lived in the same camp.

Young men choose their own brides and, depending on the band, must ordinarily pay a token bride price. This may take the form of a payment of cloth, tobacco, a knife etc. Among the Batok an iron pan is reported as a customary bride price. Among the Tonga, the young man gives his bride-to-be trophies of the hunt and pays the bride's family a silver Thai coin or in some cases, a piece of red cloth.

Love magic, to attract members of the opposite sex, is recognized and practiced by some bands. Flowers of a variety identified as *Salomonina aphylla*, called "cenwei" by the Negrito, are

collected, dried, and mixed with oil. It is important that the female of this species, which grows on the ground, and the male blossom which grows in a tree, be found together to insure potency of the magic. The mixture is then placed on the forehead and breast of the chosen person. The would be lover ordinarily employs a younger member of his or her own sex to apply the magic oil to the sleeping victim. No other action is taken after these steps have been put in operation but love supposedly ensues in due course.

There seems to be no recognized wedding ceremony but the young couple among some groups retire to a separate shelter in the forest near the main band. Fidelity is generally recognized but divorce is a rather simple matter. Most couples of middle age have had more than one marriage partner before settling down with a final mate.

Anti-conception and anti-abortion medicinals are known and practiced. Although cognizant of the physical aspects of conception, the Negrito believe the soul or spirit of a child is brought by a bird called Til-Tal-Tapah. Among the Malays a similar spirit bird called Teti-Tinga-Anak is reported. Some bands believe the Argus pheasant brings the soul of a male and a bird called "Chimoi" brings the souls of women. The "Chimoi" is reported to be green by some groups and the Batok indeed believe their souls to be green as the bird. If a woman eats a bird with eggs she will bear twins.

The idea of soul birds appears to be copied from the Senoi and was reportedly first adopted by the Negrito in Kelantan. The western Negrito bands believe more in a "Hala" or "Cenoi" which act as protective spirits for some individuals and have strong tabus. Some ethnologists consider this to be perhaps the more original Negrito concept.

Delivery is usually in a squatted position and the placenta among the Jahai is buried beneath the fire. The umbilical cord is not knotted. Children are frequently named after the tree, flower, fruit, river or mountain near which they were born. Many Negrito now have adopted Malayan names as well and keep a Negrito name for use within the group. Two chieftains among the Tonga and

Kensui in Thailand bear the name "Dam" which means black in Thai.

Among the Menri, the navel cord is dried and placed in a small pouch which the child wears about it's neck or wrist. After a period it is then buried near a fire.

Dancing and singing among the Negrito seems, as so much of their culture, to also be copied from the Senoi. Ordinarily, only the women dance, making rythmic movements with body, arm and hand movements, although De Morgan reported both sexes dancing together in Kedah. There is a minimum of place movement in most Negrito dances.

Another unusual exception is the dancing described by Prof. Bernatzik among the Tonga. He described and photographed Negrito men dancing in a fashion most unlike other known dances of the peninsular groups. By the light of the full moon his dancers jumped about "like devils from the jungle" in a fashion reminiscent to him of African dancers. The men wore banana leaves about their heads and had their faces painted with black dots and stripes. Women reportedly beat skin drums and clapped hands to the rhythm of the dance, while the men screamed, beat their heels, moved stiff-legged and jumped actively about. Oddly however, Bernatzik's photographs of the dance shows men beating the drums with no woman evident.

Music in most conventional dances is supplied by bamboo stampers in the fashion of the Senoi. The Negrito in Naratiwat have adopted the Malay skin drum and metal gong and could give me renditions of both Negrito and Malayan songs utilizing these alien instruments. Rhythmic hand clapping is characteristic accompaniment.

Schebesta feels that outside of Bernatzik's report on the Tonga dancers that most, if not all, Negrito dances are copied from the Senoi. This seems also true of the songs which now include a repetoir of Malayan verses as well.

Burial practices vary considerably with bodies rarely thrown in rivers, more rarely left to lay on the ground while the band flees, or placed in trees. They are normally buried however.

King Chulalongkorn reported that among the Tonga the body is only buried very superficially and that the people then fled the area in fear of ghosts and tigers which fed on the bodies. Among the Kensiu the bodies are wrapped in cloth and layed in a shallow grave on their left side with legs pulled tightly up in a crouch. Among the Kenta the body reportedly lies on the right side. The head points towards the west or less commonly the northwest.

The Kensiu mourn in the area for seven days after which it is believed the ghost has left the area. Among the eastern bands there does not seem to be fear of visiting grave sites.

The Jahai and Lanoh bury corpses straight with arms next to the body. Williams-Hunt describes a Lanoh burial where the body was placed with the legs drawn up and laid on it's right side. The head is oriented toward the west. Although there is no agitated crying at the grave, death wailing lasts for five days. A windscreen is built over the grave. During the mourning period, singing, dancing and wearing of decorative combs is tabu. As among some western bands, food and water are left at the grave and a death meal and death dance are held. After this ceremony no one visits the grave again.

Powerful shamans are frequently given special burials. Many of the eastern bands place the body of a shaman in a tree. Some shamans, possessing Were-tiger abilities, are placed in trees by the Jahai or are buried in a seated position with the head above ground. The Kensiu bury such a personage in a conventional manner but watch the grave for 3 days and 3 nights and place food offerings on it.

Religion, Shamanism Magic:

A life after death is believed in by the Negrito but not usually in reincarnation. However, King Chulalongkorn reported that the Tonga believe in a soul called "ya" which awaits reincarnation after death. If not reincarnated in six months it becomes a ghost. This belief has not been recognized, except for the Kensiu belief about reincarnation in bear and elephant, among other groups, although a soul called variously "Rob" and "Badi" is supposedly a soul born of animals but which can possess man.

"Souls" have various appearances and among the Lanoh, looks human. Among the Tonga however, a "soul's" face shines like a glowworm. The Kensiu also believe it can only be seen against a light like a shadow. Other groups report the "soul" as blood red and the size of a seed.

The Negrito concept of "heaven" lies to the west and the departing soul reaches there through various means. The Tonga heaven lies in the western sky. The "soul" climbs a Nipa Palm and then springs over a water (stream) into a heaven called "Kot-But". The "soul" is tiny at this stage and is described as small like a thread which grows on entering "Kot-But". Most Negrito believe that heaven has no tiger or elephant and that it is cool with no thunder, lightning or sickness. There are no children born in heaven but children will be reunited with deceased parents. It is a land of shadows.

The Negrito of North Kedah reportedly believe in three heavens. The highest heaven has fruit trees which bear all year. The second heaven has fruit trees as well but these are guarded by an ape who throws prickly fruit at would-be interlopers. The third heaven, of questionable beneficence, supposedly contains only low hanging clouds which carry illness.

The Lanoh believe souls of male and female live apart in separate heavens with the men's spirits living in the east and the women's spirits living in the west. The spirits do nothing but play and decorate their hair with flowers. The Tonga believe ghosts do not eat but that they do wear clothing.

The principal diety of the Negrito is the thunder god called "Kagai" by the Tonga, Kaei by the Kensiu and Karai by some of the Malayan bands. Kagai is a diety that does not grow old but rejuvenates himself like the moon. The Tonga believe him to look like a Negrito although he is credited with creating man, plants, animals etc. Among the Lanoh, Kagai, has the appearance of a Siamang (*Symphalangus syndactylus*) and at times has long white hair with an oily sheen.

Kagai punishes transgressions by throwing lightning and creating thunder. Negrito are extremely frightened by thunder storms and hide with eyes and ears covered. Kagai's wrath may be incurred by numerous tabu violations as wearing a hair comb during a thunderstorm, drawing water in a fire blackened vessel or laughing at butterflies. Certain butterflies are especially dangerous, particularly black ones and are never to be molested. Among some groups, certain flowers may not be worn during a storm. If Kagai's wrath is to be expiated a blood offering or sacrifice must be made. This peculiarly Negrito custom was first reported among the Eastern bands but is apparently practiced by all the groups. A typical blood offering takes place during a thunderstorm when frequently a woman will cut her shin bone and scrape some blood into a bamboo receptacle containing a small amount of water. Although all in a camp are technically required to make a blood offering to Kagai it usually suffices if one person goes through the process. Women often take this action before men. Children do not participate. A little of this blood and water mixture is poured on the ground with the words "go to earth" and the remainder tossed to the sky with the expression "go to the sun". The offering to the ground is to pacify Manoj, the wife of Kagai. That thrown to the sky is for Kagai himself who lives in the heavens. The procedure varies from band to band but is essentially similar in purpose.

The Tonga also worship an ancestor figure called "Moltek" who also lives in the sky—usually in the sun. Moltek is black in color. King Chulalongkorn also mentions a female goddess, which is honored by the Tonga, who governs good and evil.

The Shaman among the Negrito is called a "Hala" who acts as an intermediary between man and the gods. The illness caused by angry spirits can be cured by the Hala through exorcism of the ghosts. He does not ordinarily make use of medicines but relies on a magic quartz crystal called a "Cebu". A small "Hala" within the group often acts as an herb doctor and cures minor illnesses with concoctions of roots, leaves, herbs etc.

A man may become a Hala several ways. Most commonly through encountering a tiger which transmits its magical powers to the man, through dreams, through inheritance from the father and through possession of the "Cebu" stone. A trained Hala always undertakes the further instruction of the novice. Only men normally become Halas.

There is lack of shamanistic ritual among the Negrito. Much of that which is practiced seems borrowed from the Senoi, but developed along special patterns to suit the psyche of the Negrito.

Many Negritos fear what is called "Hot Rain". This sprinkling of rain from an apparently cloudless sky, while the sun is shining, reportedly brings fevers and illnesses. The Negrito of the Lenggon area fear the shadow of the hawk. Special tabus are attached to certain flowers while the plant *Licula kunsteri* is held by the Negrito to have special properties. The Tonga consider certain monkey bones to be a cure for illness. Most Negritos, as well as Senoi, place magical powers in monkey bones and attach them to various charms, dart quivers etc. Numerous food tabus exist which have already been described in a previous section.

The religious and magical beliefs for a group as primitive as the Negrito is extremely complicated and varies from band to band. What is adopted belief and what is a part of the original Negrito heritage is often difficult to ascertain.

Summary and conclusion:

The Negrito are the last remaining remnants of a once widespread primitive type. They bear a relationship to other pygmoid people and this article points out pertinent information on their history, background and physical characteristics. Much of the material culture, religious beliefs and magico-mystical concepts of the Negrito have been adopted from the Senoi aborigines as have many of their social customs. The language of the Negrito presents a puzzle as well since this also appears to be adopted although bearing many words perhaps from the original language. Their traditional weapons and decorative arts have been discarded within historic times to adopt those of the Senoi.

Their distribution is spotty with some seven separate groups inhabiting areas of the peninsula where Thailand and Malaya join. Though the Negrito population is small within Thailand, one group, the Tonga, are indigenous only within Thailand while three more groups overlap the border from Malaya.

Research work among the Negrito is difficult because of the shy retiring nature of the people and because of his habits. Since the Communist Emergency, many of the aborigines have settled nearer to roads and police posts for protection, becoming within recent years semi-sedentary. With increased contact, consequent changes in culture are inevitable. Much remains to be learned of the Negrito. Two known groups have already become extinct since the turn of the century. Aborigines in jungle areas have proven indispensable to the survival of terrorists in the deep forests of Malaya and have served the same purpose in such campaigns as Vietnam and Laos. Knowing the jungle, as we would a city street, the aborigines can be a valuable asset to the government in the impenetrable border areas and warrant and deserve further attention.

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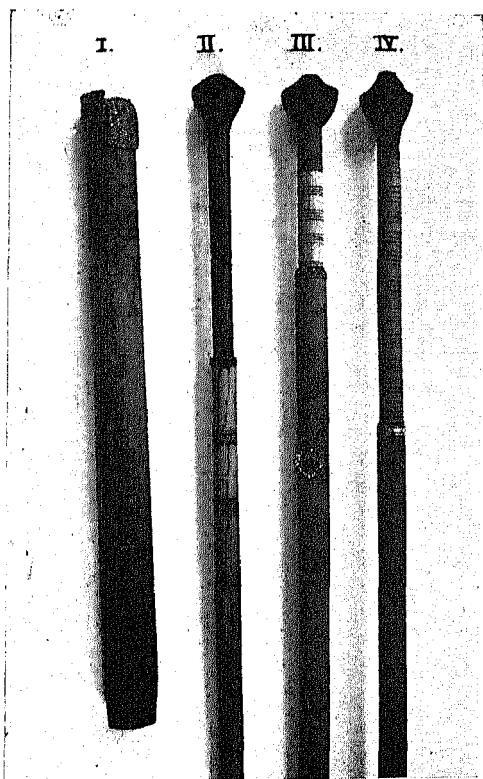


PHOTO PLATE I: Figure I is a Jahai Negrito dart quiver with woven stopper containing plant down. Figures II, III, IV are Kensiu Negrito blowguns showing different types of mouth pieces.

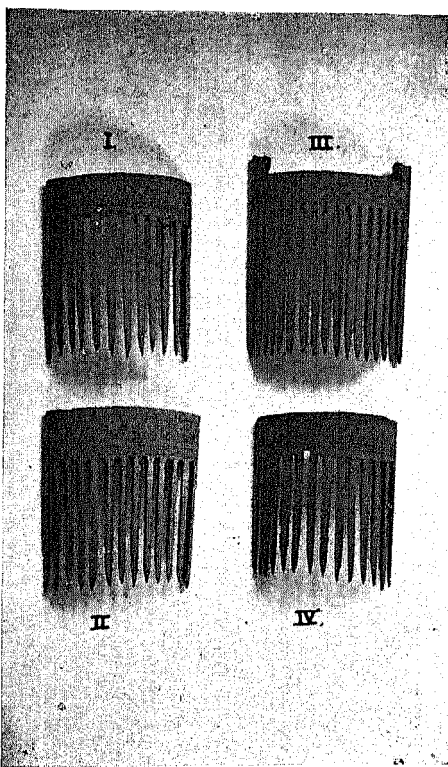


PHOTO PLATE II: Kensiu Negrito hair combs from Yala Province. Figure III shows the horned variety.

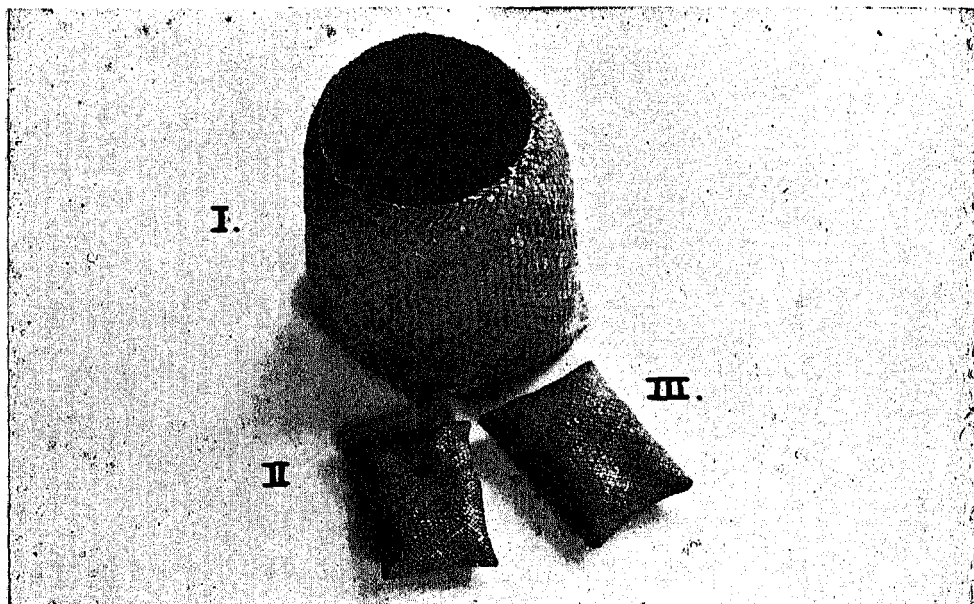


PHOTO PLATE III: Woven baskets utilizing a twilling technique made by Kensiu Negrito of Yala Province. Figure I is a packing and storage basket and figures II and III are tobacco pouches.

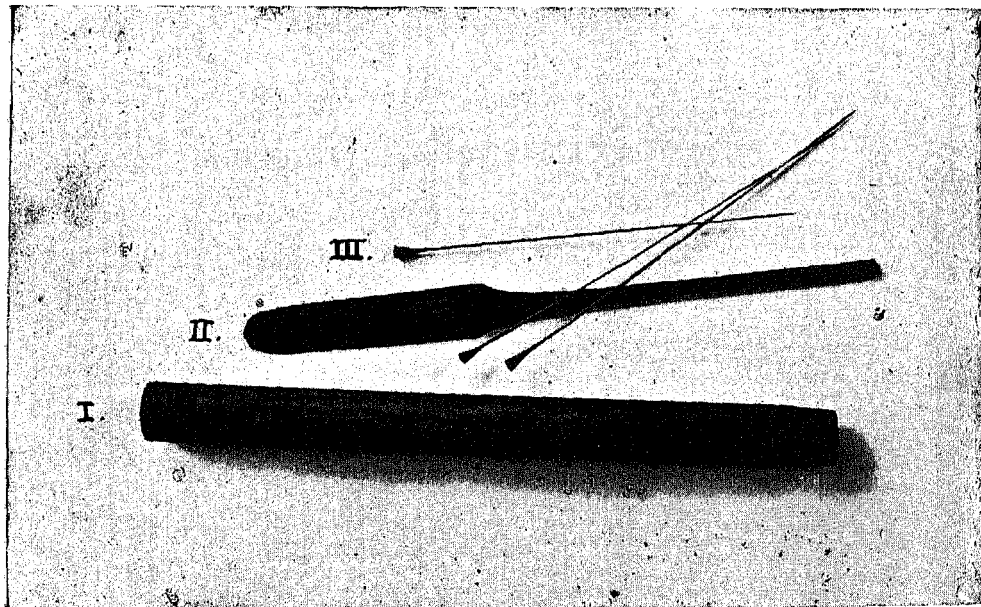


PHOTO PLATE IV: Figure I is a Jahai Negrito dart quiver. Figure II is the spatula upon which Ipoh poison is smeared preparatory to poisoning the dart tips. Figure III is a dart made of Bertam Palm rib.

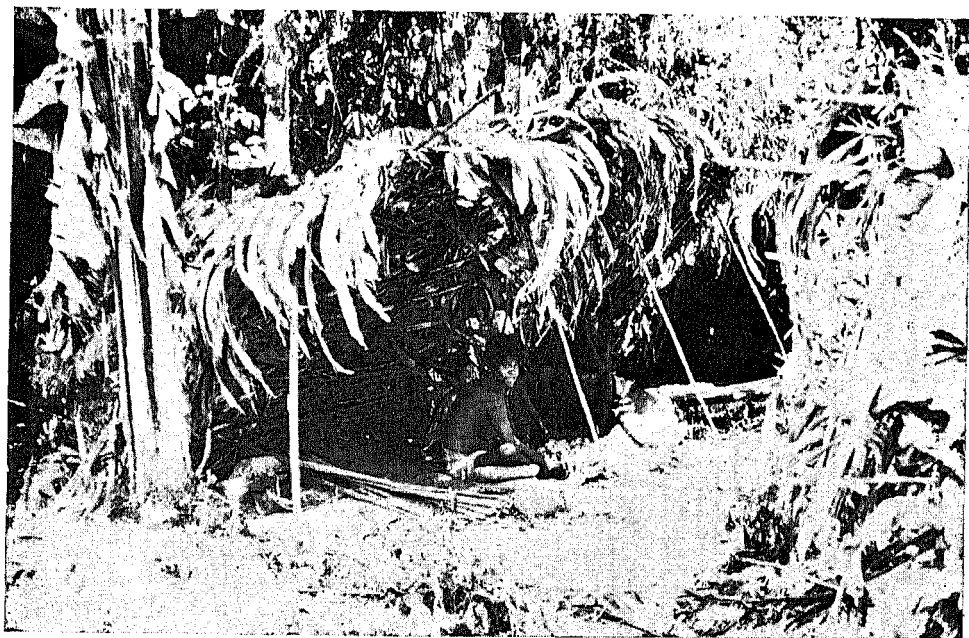


PHOTO PLATE V: Traditional Negrito windscreen living shelter. Kensiu Negrito camp Padangstar District, Yala Province, South Thailand.



PHOTO PLATE VI: Semi-permanent type of house constructed by Jahai Negrito of Rengae District, Naratiwat Province, South Thailand.

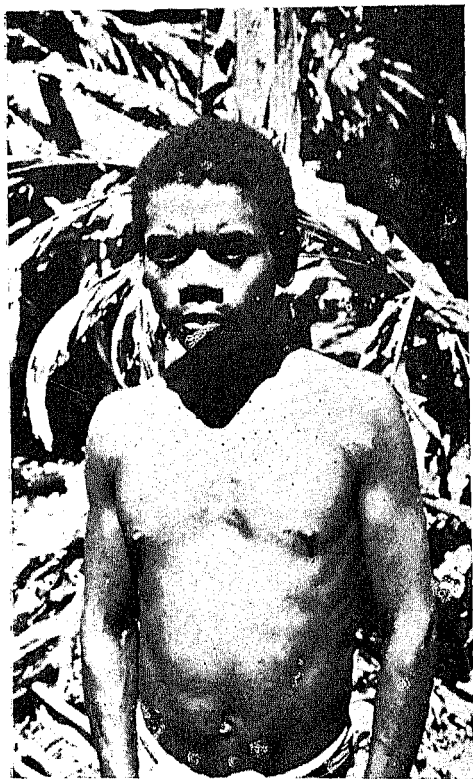


PHOTO PLATE VII: A Kensiu Negrito man from Yala Province, South Thailand. Note typical negroid features.



PHOTO PLATE VIII: A Semai-Senoi man from the Jelai Kechil River of Pahang, Malaya. Compare this "Austronesian" type with Plate VII. Some Senoi have strikingly Veddoid-Dravidian characteristics. Note more mongoloid eye, hair, blowgun and quiver type. He wears a bark headband.



PHOTO PLATE IX: The author with four Kensiu Negritos in the Ulu Pattani of Yala Province, South Thailand. Chief Dam stands to the left.

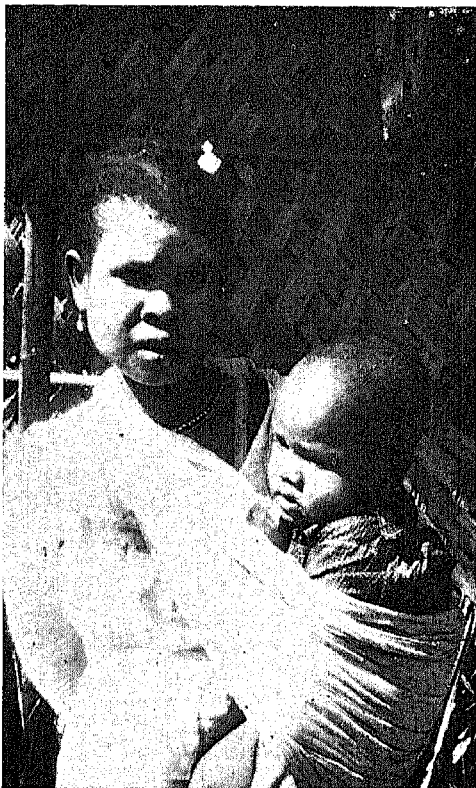
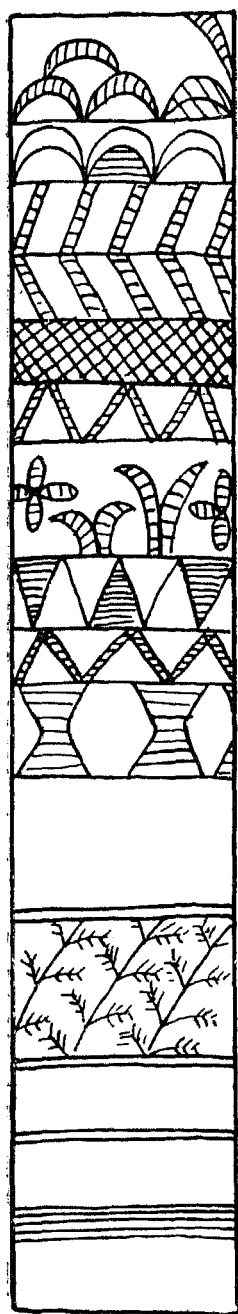
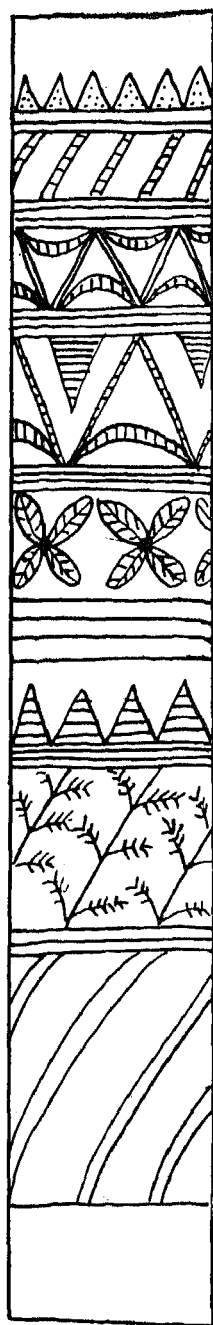


PHOTO PLATE X: A Jahai Negrito woman of Rengae District, Naratiwat Province, South Thailand. Her face is painted white with heavy applications of mascara and lipstick following local Malayan style. She wears the Malayan "Baju" blouse.

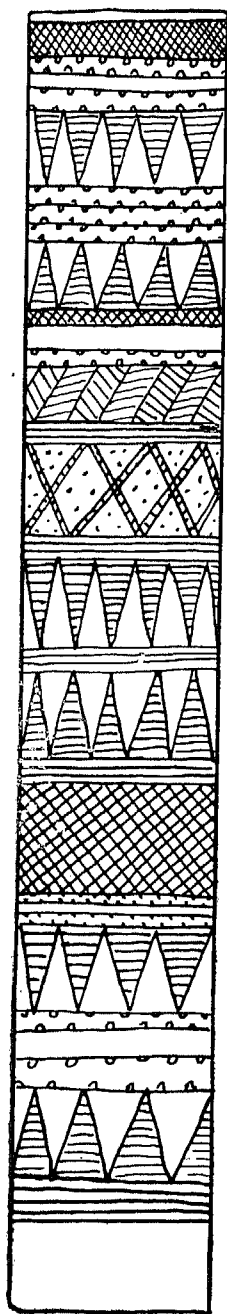


I.

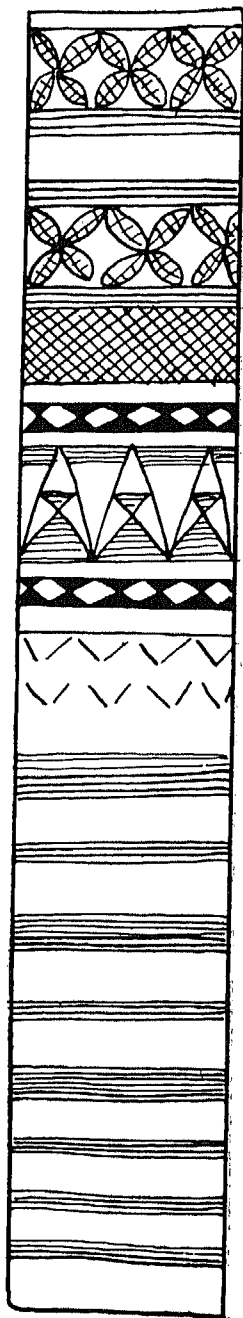


II.

PLATE I: Figure I and II. Decorative patterns of dart quivers from Jahai Negrito of Naratiwat Province, South Thailand. Quiver I is 17 inches long and $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches wide. Quiver II is 15 inches long.

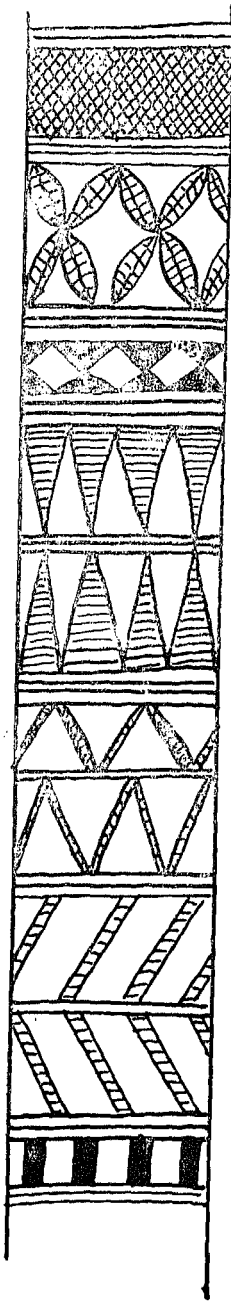


I.

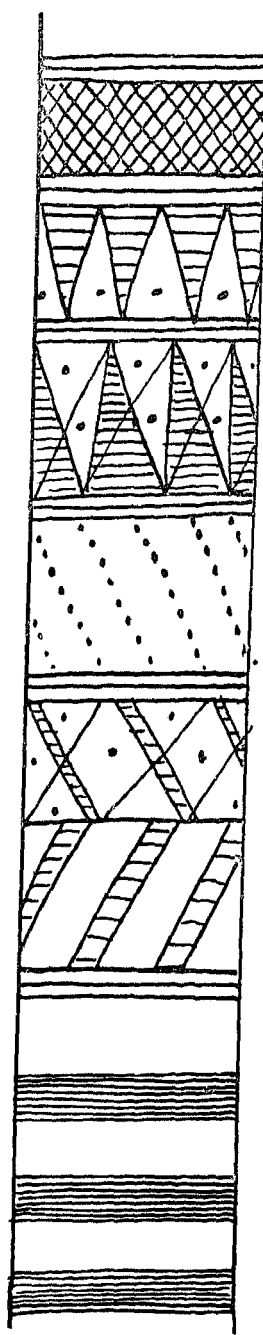


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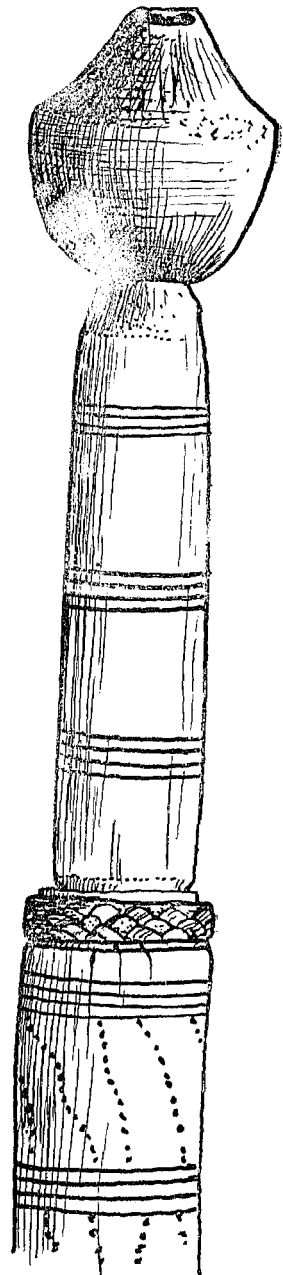
PLATE II: Figure I and II. Decorative patterns on bamboo dart quivers of Kensiu Negrito from Yala Province, South Thailand. Both quivers are 16 inches long.



I.

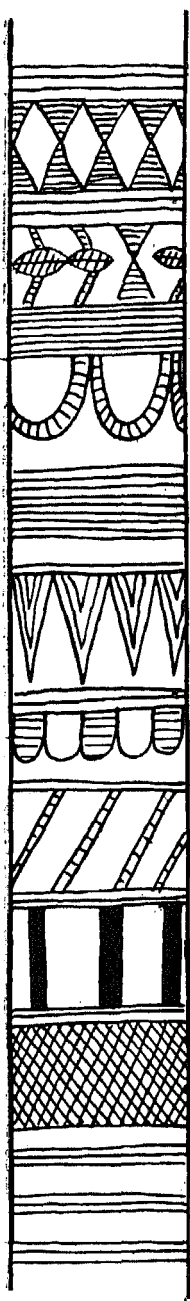


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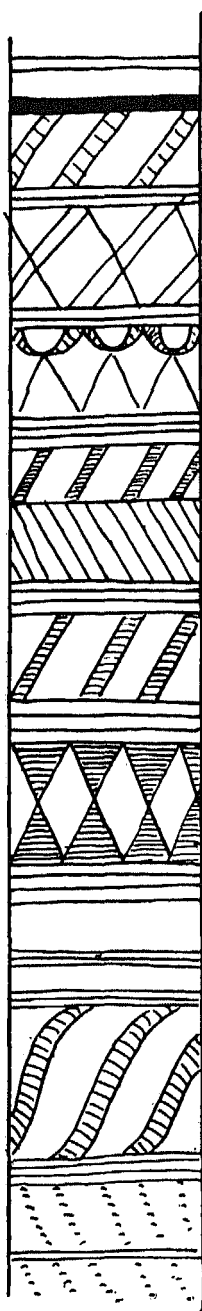


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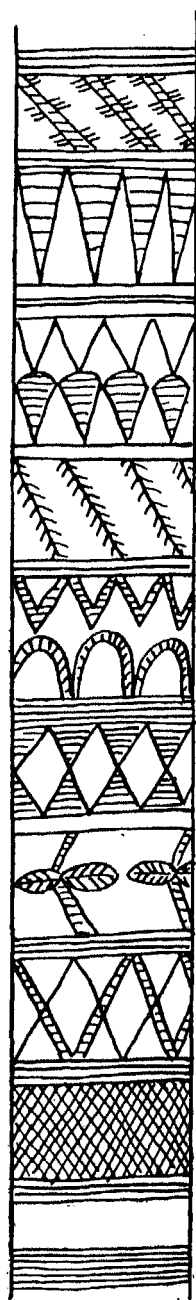
PLATE III: Figures I, II and III. Incised decorations on blowguns found among the Kensiu Negrito of Yala Province, South Thailand. Figure III shows the wooden mouthpiece and manner of attachment to the main barrel.



I

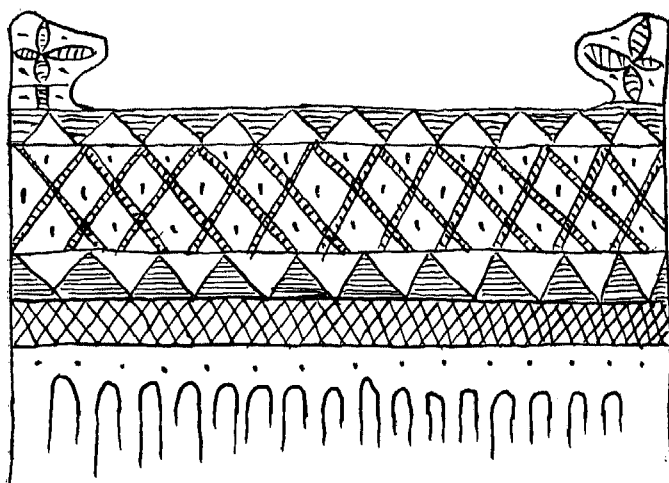


II

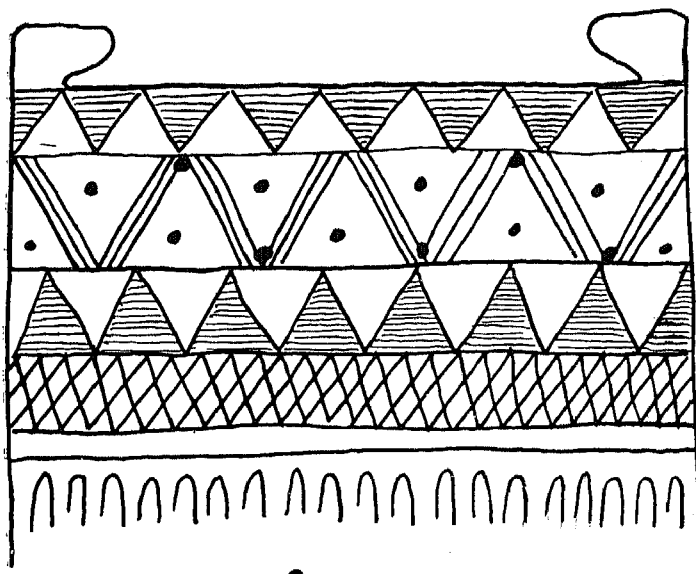


III

PLATE IV: Figures I, II and III. Incised decorative patterns found on the outer barrel of Jahai Negrito blowguns from Naratiwat Province, South Thailand. Patterns are spaced at intervals from breech to muzzle with blank areas between.

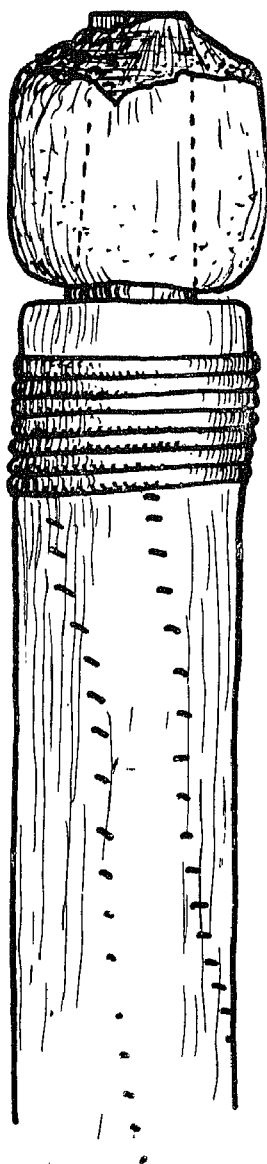


1.

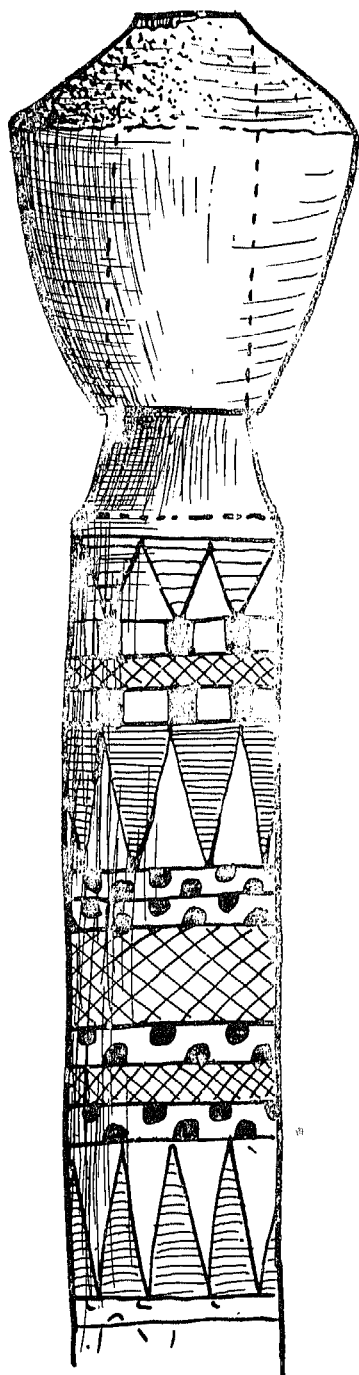


2.

PLATE V: Figure I and II. Decorative incised patterns of Kensiu Negrito women's combs from Yala Province, South Thailand. Combs without the characteristic horns bear the same patterns.



I.



II.

PLATE VI: Figure I is a bamboo blowpipe from Satun Province showing method of mouthpiece construction followed by Tonga Negrito. Figure II shows a Kensiu Negrito blowpipe from Yala Province for comparison. Both mouthpieces are built up of hardened pitch on a wooden base.