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Human Sacrifice in Colonial Central India: Myth, Agency and Representation

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The sanguinary nature of early contacts with the tribals, or adivasis, of central India did not bode well for their future reputation. The first expedition into Bastar by Captain Blunt, in 1795, was attacked and expelled from the country, from which experience may be traced some of the more fearful accounts of the savagery of tribal Gonds.ⁱ The already established reputations of the predatory Bhils of Gujarat and the rebellious Santhals and Kols of Bihar also served to colour the expectations of early travellers in central India. Hindu informants often reported the adivasis to be practitioners of human sacrifice and this was widely believed, although no evidence of this was ever uncovered.ⁱⁱ The density of the jungle and the prevalence of malaria further made any expedition into the interior something to be greatly feared. The very first such expedition, that of Alexander Elliot and four other officers, who attempted to march a route from Cuttack to Nagpur and thence to Hoshangabad between August 11th and December 9th 1778, ended in the death of Elliot and three of the other four. Only one, Thomas, actually made it to Hoshangabad, and on the return journey was considerably harassed by tigers, robbers and 'a treacherous Naig [sic]'.ⁱⁱⁱ In later expeditions however expectations were not always confirmed. The large number of Hindus, including Rajputs and 'agricultural Brahmins' resident in Chhattisgarh and the surrounding tracts was noted with surprise, and the customs and practices of the Gonds were discovered to be not always as bizarre as had previously been described. One expedition of the early 1830's reported:

It has been suspected by many that the Gonds do not scruple to perform human sacrifices and devour the flesh, but the Hindoo inhabitants whom we questioned exonerated them from the charge of cannibalism. The Gonds whom we met with, far from showing any symptoms of cannibalism, even abstain from beef. The lower classes have no objections to other kinds of animal food, although the chiefs and better sort of folk have adopted the prejudices of the Hindu in this respect.^{iv}

Richard Jenkins, in his report on the Nagpur territories formed the impression that while the wildest of the Gonds, the Murias of Bastar, engaged in human sacrifice, the majority of Gonds 'class themselves under the second cast [sic] of Hindoos'. This, he wrote, 'is a stretch of complaisance in the Marhatta [sic] officers, owing, probably, to the country having been so long under the Rajahs of the Gond tribe. They, however, term themselves Coetoor (a corruption of Khutriya)'.^v This account, attributing Gonds with the status of Kshatriyas, almost certainly arose from Jenkins' encounter with the Gond Rajah of Deogurh in Nagpur, a Hinduised 'Raj Gond', who was then still nominally sovereign over a large part of the Rajah of Nagpur's territory and still received a share of the state's revenues.^{vi} Jenkins' confusion well illustrates the uncertainty of many writers in this period, but his distinction between more 'civilised' tribals and those 'others' of whom little is known but who were suspected of the most heinous savagery is also to

be found in the account written by Vans Agnew at this time, concerning the Subah or Province of Chhattisgrah:

The only tribes I heard of that are peculiar to this part of India are the Kaonds, or inhabitants of Koandwana [Gondwana], Kakair [Kanker], and Bustar, and Binderwa and Pardeea casts found in the hills North-East of Ruttunpore....The Koonds are Hindoos and not particularly distinguished from the wild inhabitants of other jungles, except by the high character they are reputed to possess for veracity and fidelity...The Binderwas reside in Hilly and Woody Country near Ruttunpore, particularly in the Koorba and Sirgooja Hills, and much resemble the wild savages who have been described as met with in other parts of India. They appear to be so seldom seen by the other inhabitants of the Country [so] that there is much reason to doubt the truth of all that is reported respecting them. They are, however, said to have scarcely any religion; but if they regard any idol, Daby [Debi] has the preference. They go entirely naked; are armed with Bows and Arrows; never build any huts or seek other shelter than that afforded by the Jungles; but sometimes cultivate small quantities of the coarse grains; are said to destroy their relatives when too old to move about and to eat their flesh, when a great entertainment takes place to which all the family is invited. Their enemies, and the travellers they may slay, they are also said to eat. It is doubtful that they have the ceremony of marriage.^{vii}

The Concept of Sacrifice in India: myths and realities

There have been numerous studies of sacrifice by Indologists, including a book by Jan Heesterman (1993), and discussions of its role in contemporary Hindu society (Fuller, 1988 & 1992). A collection of essays entitled *Criminal Gods and Demon Devotees*, edited by Ralph Hildebrandt (1989) is one of the most useful. Amongst the collection an article, by Madeleine Biardeau, entitled 'Brahmans and Meat-Eating gods', describes the ritual of buffalo sacrifices to village gods in southern India, including an extraordinary example in Thanjavur district, at the Valattur temple, of a ritual referred to as 'human sacrifice'. The dominant caste here are Kallars, who are sudras, but see themselves as Kshatriyas (since there are Kallar kings). They are non-vegetarian, but the gods, in the temple are vegetarian, and in the ritual of 'human sacrifice' offerings of milk are dragged to the temple by men with hooks in their backs, the hooks being removed immediately outside the temple entrance in deference to the god's vegetarian diet. There is also an 'impalement stake' outside the village, whose purpose again is mythological rather than practical, it being the stake upon which was impaled the demon king who stole a Brahmin woman according to folk legend. Goat sacrifices are offered occasionally to the demon guardians of the gods, but never the gods themselves.

In another essay in the same volume Biardeau points out the similarities between the buffalo sacrifices of dussehra and the Vedic royal sacrifice or horse sacrifice, an expiatory rite for the King's sins - pointing to some instances where the two ceremonies have been fused - an instance of which is described in an essay by Waghorne on the kingly rituals of Pudokottai. Biardeau suggests that the rapport seen in these examples between Brahmans and meat-eating gods, effected by means of the opposition between 'criminal gods' and their 'demon devotees', is worked out through rituals and symbols ultimately derived from Vedic ritual: most notably the Vedic horse sacrifice and the Vedic sacrificial post, or *yupa*.

Anncharlott Erschmann goes on to describe parallels between the Navakalevara ritual - the ritual of renewal - and the rituals of worship at Jagannath - and various tribal antecedents. In particular

she sees parallels between log worship and buffalo sacrifices among the Konds of Orissa and the carved figures and form of worship of Ballabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannath at Puri. The continuity in the element of Sacrifice she considers especially important, as also the ritual of renewal of the log gods in the villages - since, as she claims, 'rituals of renewal are not a common feature in tribal and folk religion'. In Khond villages worship is usually by non-Brahmins but there are examples of Brahmins being involved, and of the log gods being worshipped with milk instead of blood. Numerous other 'symbolic sacrifices' elsewhere are described in the book, but the only blood ever spilled is that of buffaloes and goats. The spilling of human blood amongst the Konds, Erschmann says, is unknown, at least in the present day.

Finally, there is the familiar practice of hook-swinging (known as the *charak puja* in Bengal), described along with other forms of self-torture, such as fire-walking, in a number of first-hand accounts from the colonial period. According to these accounts, volunteers, usually paid and seasoned practitioners drawn from amongst marginal groups in village society, were swung from poles by means of hooks piercing the flesh of their backs and sometimes legs. Wealthier landlord families were the patrons of such festivals. Eye-witnesses described how a cloth wrap was often employed to bear some of the weight and to protect the hook-swinger from falling in case the hooks should rip through the flesh - although this rarely in practice seems to have happened. There were many motivations for this rite, although most commonly the purpose seems to have to have been the propitiation of Shiva (in Bengal and Maharashtra) and of female goddesses, commonly Durga/Kali, or Dayamava, the goddess of smallpox, in the south. The desire for children by women was a further motive cited. Propitiation in this ritual seems to have been associated with the endurance of pain: mortal injury was exceptional, and although links with human sacrifice have been suggested, Geoffrey Oddie has not found any nineteenth century evidence of this, nor of death in a hook-swinging ceremony.^{viii}

There are few nineteenth accounts of hook-swinging from the Central Provinces of British apart from an alleged 'Santhal' ceremony in Chhattisgarh and instances described in the gazettiers of Betul and Seoni districts^{ix}, but it is likely that rituals of buffalo sacrifice similar to those of South India and Orissa were associated with the celebration of the Goddess Danteshwari at Dussehra in Bastar. Thus the accounts we have of the dussehra ceremony, the earliest of which date from 1911, describe largely 'symbolic sacrifices' and the offering of milk and ghee to the god. Goat sacrifices take place, and buffalo sacrifices too, but the latter are never offered near the shrine itself, but in the forests, and at night. Whether or not 'human sacrifice' in any shape or form may also have taken place, and how and why such claims came to be believed in a literal sense, is the subject of this paper.

'The invention of perdition': human sacrifice and British relations with the Indian kingdom of Bastar in the 19th century

Bastar was a tribal state, the largest and one of the most isolated in central India. Socially and politically it was divided into forty-eight 'parganas', each with their own chief (Pargana gaita, referred as Majhis in British records), but the rulers of the state as a whole were a Kshatriya royal family which had migrated to the region from Warangal in Andhra Pradesh in the sixteenth century and who had established their capital at Jagdalpur. They brought with them a family deity, which they attempted to incorporate into the local religious pantheon, and an armed body of retainers, who acted as their bodyguard and tax collectors. Formally, the Raja of Bastar was a tributary of the Raja of Nagpur, although the annual tribute (of Rs. 5,000) was not very regularly

paid. Communications with the British first occurred when the East India Company was given administrative control of the neighbouring Chhattisgarh region after 1818. When the Nagpur kingdom escheated to the East India Company in 1854, Bastar was amongst those who become their formal tributaries at the same time, a formal Sanad being granted to the Raja in 1862.

The key tribes of Bastar were/are firstly, the Bison Horn Marias, who were known for their allegedly homicidal proclivities.^x Then there are the so-called Hill Maria, who are called the 'Meta Koitur' by the Koitur and described as existing 'in the last stage of Barbarism, perfectly naked and beyond anyone's control'.^{xi} Finally there are the Murias, who call themselves 'Koitur' (the people): known for their institution of the *gotul* (a dormitory where adolescents sleep together prior to marriage) and their ostensible practice of human sacrifice. Those living adjacent to Jagdalpur call themselves the Raja Muria. These formal names though are adapted, possibly from the Khond word 'Mervi', much as the Khonds called themselves 'Kui', the British name 'Khond' probably deriving from the Telugu word 'Konds', meaning 'small hills'.

Further tribal groups found in Bastar include the Bhattra, Halbas, Dhurwas and Dhorlas. The Halbas formed the Raja's native militia. Their non-Dravidian language has become the lingua-franca of Bastar, whilst the Dhurwa are said to be royal retainers who accompanied the Kakatiya (*Karkateeya*) kings from neighbouring Warangal. While Hill Maria clans are only found one to each village, the Bison-Horn and Muria are found in plural clan villages, though usually with one clan dominant.

Apart from ancestral deities, the original being Barha Pen, according to Popoff (1980), all of the Maria and Muria Bastar tribes worship an earth goddess, Tallur Mutte, also known as 'Tallin Ochur' among the Bison-Horn and 'Talo dai' among the Hill Maria, also 'bhum' or 'mati'. The Earth includes 'the spirits of the forest and rivers' who must be separately appeased, according to Sundar^{xii}. It is a form of this god that is supposedly to be found in the shrine at Dantewada (sometimes also referred to as 'Danteshwara' or 'Danteswara' in historical records). Although there is a supreme creating male deity, Ispuriyal, regarded as lying above her, Tallur Mutte is the most important god in practice, since she is regarded as responsible for the manifestation and continuance of the life cycle. In addition to Tallur Mutte there are also village mother goddesses (Mata or Devi), who have names and distinct personalities, who are represented by a stone or tree or by a flag when moving about. There are also lineage or clan deities: amongst Marias and Murias witches and evil spirits are exorcised by groups of young men in ceremonial dress carrying *anga deo*, the clan god, from village to village. *Anga deo* is represented by three parallel logs tied to three cross logs, carried aloft by four men. Its arrival is greeted with festivities in every village at which considerable quantities are drunk of *silpi* (palm toddy) and *mahua* (a spirit or beer made from mahua flowers). Doubtless because of its social aspects this ceremony is carried on with great enthusiasm even to the present day.^{xiii}

The State deity, Danteshwari, is said to be not a tribal invention, but the family deity which accompanied the Kakatiya kings of Warangal when they settled in Bastar. Some of the stones even of the Danteshwari temple are said to have originated from Warangal. Danteshwari is seen by the Hindus of Bastar as an incarnation of Durga (Kali) and as a Shakti Pitha, one of the 52 parts of the dead body of the goddess Sati which according to legend fell to earth after she was cut up and the pieces scattered by Lord Vishnu. It is likely that the Gonds themselves regarded her as a sort of supra village goddess, infinitely more powerful, but ultimately comparable to the *anga* (log-gods) and other local deities which they habitually worshiped.

The Jagannath- style celebrations involving Danteshwari, held at Dantewara each year during Dusshera, were initiated, it is believed, sometime around the middle of the fifteenth century, by King Purshuttamdeva. A highly Hinduised ceremony (held in the month of Arshara), which begins with worship at a Mahar shrine, of Kachin, it nonetheless includes a ritual where the King is captured by the Muria, Maria and Bhattra tribals and carried off into the forest, where offerings are made to him, the king only being restored to the Palace the next day by the same tribals (according to Popoff, three days or more later according to J.C.K. Menon^{xiv}), thus symbolising his election. The celebrations are followed subsequently by a feast and Durbar attended by all the clan chiefs, at which grievances are addressed.

Atypically in Hindu ceremonies elsewhere in central India, sacrifices (mostly of goats) take place throughout the dussehra festival, though mostly away from the shrine itself. Alfred Gell, in a recent paper,^{xv} has argued that this ceremony implies the relative powerlessness of the Raja, and the dependence of his authority on this form of annual re-investiture by the Gonds. The dussehra celebration itself he has described as a mock revolt, which underlines the autonomy of the various tribal groups which go to make up the population of the State. In other words that the Hindu raja is a king by sufferance rather than by right. Whilst this interpretation has been criticised as two-dimensional and excessively abstract by Sundar^{xvi}, the comments of the Diwan about the Hills Marias of Abujmarh (appendix 1 and below), certainly lend weight to the idea that there was a considerable gulf between the rulers and the ruled, at least by the mid nineteenth century. At the same time, it ought be emphasised that rituals of re-investiture and legitimation of this sort are not uncommon in mixed tribal/kingdoms of this sort and are indeed commonplace in a variety of religious rituals.^{xvii} Nandini Sundar is therefore certainly correct in critiquing the alleged ‘exceptionalism’ of the Bastar state and society as being at least in part a product of colonial discourse and in arguing that tribal revolts of the colonial period were a reaction to economic and social change and the material distress brought about by the imposition of colonial policies, particularly those relating to the extraction of forest produce.

Human Sacrifice as Colonial Justification – Bastar Deconstructed

From about 1837 onwards there were increasing rumours of ritual human sacrifice in Bastar. Undoubtedly this was connected with the Madras Government’s first expedition into the Khond Zamindari of Ghumsur in 1836 to enforce the payment of land tax, upon which the first allegations of human sacrifice amongst the Khonds came to light. In 1842 the Diwan, Lal Dalganjan Singh, was summoned to Nagpur to be questioned, following conveyance of allegations to the British resident there, Major Wilkinson. The Raja was represented then by his uncle, the Diwan (or Primeminister) Lal Dalganjan Singh, and a detachment of police was subsequently sent to the Dantewara temple to stand guard and prevent further such incidents.^{xviii} A special agency, the Meriah Agency (so called after the name of alleged sacrificial victims^{xix}) was soon after established by Government of India Act XXI of 1845. Sir John Campbell was appointed charge of this Agency with instructions to continue investigations and to endeavour to suppress the rite of human sacrifice, here and elsewhere in the Khond territories of central and eastern India. Meanwhile Khond resistance from the hills of Ghomsur continued, culminating in a general uprising in 1846-47.

Allegedly the uprising of 1846-7 was partly in response to the prevention of sacrifices and the famines that followed, although loss of land and the payment of land tax were probably at least

as important. Once again an expeditionary force was sent to re-impose the East India Company's control, at a considerable cost in human lives. Rebellion and the rite of human sacrifice were thus closely associated in the minds of British officials, and renewed allegations from Bastar led to an investigation by John MacVicar in the 1850s, followed by another by McNeill, and a further expedition sent to Bastar from Sironcha under the command of Colonel Glasfurd in 1862. Later still, allegations surfaced again in the 1880s in the wake of the Khond uprising in Kalahandi in 1882. By this time Lal Kalendra Singh, Dalganjan Singh's son, had become Diwan to the Raja Bhairamdeo, following an uprising in the Bastar state itself in 1876. Lal Kalendra Singh was considered untrustworthy, and was replaced by a British Assistant Commissioner in 1886 at the conclusion of this last phase of investigations into the rite of human sacrifice, and the Bastar states tribute to the British Raj raised to Rs. 15,000 per annum. But what, it must be asked, was at stake in all this? By looking in detail at the investigations of the 1850's and the 1880's, and the legal and court proceedings that followed, a number of answers can be suggested.

1. The British 'Mission Civilisatrice'

To begin with, there is a clear functional explanation for the above mentioned events, an explanation both personal and imperial. Thus, allegations of human sacrifice easily found an audience in those whose career was built upon the very existence of the phenomenon, such as John MacVicar, the Officiating Agent to the Hill Tracts of Orissa. MacVicar was appointed as an assistant to Sir John Campbell and took command of the Agency whilst Campbell himself was on medical leave, and was the first to extend the operations of that Agency from Kharonde and Jeypore into Bastar. There are parallels to be seen here with the phenomenon of Thuggee: the alleged religious conspiracy in central India, uncovered by a newly appointed and ambitious officer, by which travellers were supposedly strangled in propitiation of the goddess Kali. An element of 'sacrifice' is to be seen here also, and Thuggee was likewise established upon the uncorroborated evidence of a handful of individuals claimed as witnesses, whilst its suppression brought fame and career success to William Sleeman, the officer in charge of the specially created 'Thuggee and Dacoity' Agency. In a similar fashion, the Meriah agency was set up to put an end to Human Sacrifice in Orissa, and was given the additional responsibility of suppressing female infanticide, and for good measure also, *Sati*.^{xx} Hook-swinging, due to its rather less fatal effects was not included and was not indeed prohibited in Bombay until 1856, British Bengal in 1865, and in Madras until 1894.^{xxi}

In both the Thuggee and Meriah agencies, the rhetoric of the responsible officers is tinged with a rhetorical fervour that must have been designed to win approval from an audience beyond that of the officer's immediate superiors. Since the Thuggee and Meriah commissioners reported to either the Governor-General (in the case of Sleeman), or to a senior Commissioner (in the case of Campbell), the audience they sought to impress most probably lay at home, in Britain. In both cases, Sleeman and Campbell claimed by their own estimate to have saved the lives of hundreds and went on to write best-selling memoirs of their achievements, Campbell himself emphasising the parallels between the two 'civilising missions'.^{xxii} Above all, the investigation of the agencies justified the drafting in of considerable additional police and military forces in order to more firmly establish, or extend, British rule. Inevitably these expeditions were usually further associated with a more effective collection of land tax and/or a rise in the payments of tribute.

In one aspect Thuggee and human sacrifice significantly differed, in that Thuggee was recognised as existing within the East India Company's own territories, albeit those wrested only recently

from their former Maratha rulers. To explain its persistence therefore it was necessary to conjure up the notion of a widespread conspiracy, which served to obstruct the British authorities from knowing what was going on and which accounted for the lack of, or difficulty in obtaining evidence. By contrast, although it was claimed that human sacrifices were sometimes carried on in secret, allegations of widespread conspiracy were uncommon, since the misrule of individual native authorities could always be held responsible for the absence of evidence and the failure to apprehend those responsible^{xxiii} Hence the following description from John MacVicar in 1855:

I gather from various quarters that four or five years ago...there was some kind of bond given by the Bastar ruler to the Resident with respect to *their rite* of human sacrifice and the Nagpore raja sent down a guard to Dantewaddy to prevent its further performance. Of the guard which has ever since remained, two men incurred the displeasure of the deity and miserably perished; one was struck dead whilst on sentry at the temple, the other was destroyed by fever; such is the fable... The consequence I believe has been that not a year has passed without the immolation of human beings, the victims being either kidnapped from the villages or selected from amongst the prisoners in confinement in Jugdulpoor. A man now in my camp was set upon by a gang of rascals whilst ploughing his field. He happened to be more powerful than his assailants and struggled successfully until his shouts attracted the villagers and brought relief. He said he thought his life was gone, for he knew they meant to sacrifice him, it being the season. He added that it was determined at first to lodge a complaint with the Lal Sahib, but the idea was subsequently abandoned as only likely to bring further trouble upon him, the local authorities having undoubtedly sanctioned the outrage. I am informed that is the invariable custom, whether with villagers or prisoners, to seize and sacrifice those only who have no kindred and are not generally known in the countryside, whereby disagreeable murmurings and complaints are suppressed. I am pursuing my enquiries amongst the people at this place; when I have finished I propose following the Lal Sahib to the temple of his idol.^{xxiv}

MacVicar went on to claim that in his belief the people themselves have no affection for the rite, its continuance being entirely a whim of the local aristocracy.^{xxv} This too mirrored the claims of Sleeman, who maintained that many of the Thugs enjoyed the protection of local zamindars and aristocrats – a sentiment in tune with the anti-aristocratic prejudices of utilitarian reformers influential within the Company's administration at this time.^{xxvi} The cure, as MacVicar saw it, was the removal of Lal Dalganjan Singh, whom he described as the evil genius behind the throne of Bastar.^{xxvii} MacVicar also expresses, however, an ulterior motive, that by such actions the people should be taught to look up to the Supreme Authority of the Government of India, represented in the person of the newly arrived Deputy Commissioner in Raipur.

The time is most favourable for the measures I propose. This district is just now for the first time coming under the British rule. [In fact it was still a nominally independent though tributary state and was to remain so - CB] As yet the people know this only from report and have not yet heard of the arrival at Raepore of the Deputy Commissioner. In order that all should look to this officer (which is very important in their present transitional state) the removal of the Lal Sahib would be best effected through him, by order of the Commissioner in Nagpore. The reason of the removal would [then] be made known by proclamation, not only throughout Bastar, but in all the adjoining districts.^{xxviii}

This then, it could be argued, was a principal function of the Meriah agency: to provide evidence that justified the displacement of indigenous rulers and their advisers, and which enabled either

direct British control or else a government more sympathetic to British paramountcy, to be put in its place.

Interestingly, the situation in Bastar was to change dramatically after 1859, when the escheat of the Nagpur state and the rebellion of 1857 led to a new relationship being established with the Princely states. As already mentioned, a Sanad was granted (in 1862), and an Oath of fealty was then taken in 1870^{xxix}, whose text read as follows:

'I am a chieftain under the administration of the Chief commissioner of the Central Provinces. I have now been recognised by the British government as a Feudatory, subject to the political control of the Chief Commissioner, or of such officer as he may direct me to subordinate myself to....I will take such order with my subjects that they shall have no cause to complain against injustices of mine... When the Chief Commissioner or his Officer shall give me instructions or advice, I will obey such instructions and accept such advice. And I shall conform and cause my subjects to conform, to such Forest Regulations as the C.C. may be pleased to prescribe. If, at any time, through the misconduct of myself or my successor, my State should fall into great disorder, or great oppression should be practised, then I or my successor shall be liable to suspension or forfeiture of my or his governing powers.'

After this date 'Perdition' was far less desirable, and for a while rumours of sacrifices, instead of being investigated, began simply to be covered up.^{xxx} Thus rumours of kidnapping and sacrifice in 1868 were peremptorily dismissed by the District Commissioner of ???, who described the incident as merely one of 'raiding by Gonds' in which there may have been casualties.^{xxxi}

A similar report, forwarded to the Government of India (GOI) by the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces (CCCP) was received from the District Commissioner, Bhandara, concerning Human Sacrifices, again in 1868, in which it is said:

No instance is reported to have occurred within living memory in any district of the Central Provinces, except D.C. Chanda who says that a party of Gonds once came down in a village which had enjoyed 'singular irritations' from plunderers invoking the supposed power of the village god and seized three inhabitants and slew them before 'his shrine'. ... This however looks like a bit of defiance of the boasted power of the God. D.S.P. Raipore says that sometimes a man cut his finger into a new tank and there are other rumours of sacrificing a black cat. D.C. Bhandara says the most horrible thing done in his district was the murder of a cow by the Gonds, which was done with great mystery for fear of the Marathas. D.S.P. says Bhandara people occasionally go so far as to dress up a goat like a woman and make it walk like a sacrifice on his [sic] hind legs. D.C. Upper Godavery district thinks that the idea of murder having been human sacrifice was a horse's/mare's neck. One man killed was [in fact] a debt collector to a village trader and had been quartered on the murderer who was one of his employer's debtors...

According to a custom in this area, it was said, creditors combined the advantage of dunning their debtors and the use of their servants free of cost, which must have aroused considerable resentment. The District Commissioner observed that this latter murder was claimed to be a sacrifice for the purpose of mending a broken tank, but that if so, it had not worked, for the tank was still broken and the murderer clearly had little faith as he was currently growing rice

in it. A more likely explanation he thought was that the murderer mysteriously began the day with 8 annas and ended it with 7, having spent 13, whilst the victim, equally mysteriously, began the day with 12 annas in his pocket, and ended the day with nothing. This was, perhaps, a more immediate and overriding benefit, he argued, than the hoped for repair of the tank.^{xxxii}

The autonomy of the Bastar State was in subsequent years reduced, however, and when rumours of sacrifice surfaced again in the 1880s and later, they were used not as a weapon of territorial conquest, but simply as an excuse for further administrative interference. The mythology was last invoked in 1910, when it was alleged (quite arbitrarily) that a failure to carry on the customary rite might have been a cause of unrest amongst the Gonds. There were in fact far more practical reasons, as described by Sundar (1997), but the practice of sacrifice was never again mentioned thereafter, since following the uprising of that year, direct British administration of the State was established. In the Khond territories in Orissa, however, a British administration was never effectively established, so myths of sacrifice there seem to have persisted far longer.

For adivasis as a whole the myths of human sacrifice also persisted as part of their identification by Christians and Hindus, especially reformist Hindus. For Christians a clear strand of theological interpretation evokes the issue of sacrifice in order to distinguish Christianity from Judaism and earlier Greek and Roman faiths. In the nineteenth century this was a lively subject of debate: any encounter by a devout Christian (as most Company servants were in this period) with a barbarian and unknown community would therefore be accompanied by a presumption that human sacrifice was present. Common cause could then readily be found between Christians and radical Hindu reformers who used such issues for quite different purposes in disputes with traditionalists.^{xxxiii} Finally, traditional Brahminical learning as well as popular had a special place for adivasis within Hindu cosmology which often associated them with magic and bizarre ritual, not to mention sexual excess. Real sacrifices may of course have occurred - particularly in the consecration of tanks (these sacrifices being known as 'Buldan').^{xxxiv} However, even these could be misinterpreted by impressionable British officials, one of whom mistook a stump in the middle of a tank for a 'sacrificial post'.^{xxxv} The usual practice was most often simply to bury gold or cowries at the bottom of poles set in the middle of tanks - not the bodies of recently slaughtered humans. In reality, sacrifices of animals are carried on throughout the dussehra festival in Bastar, but there is no evidence of regular human sacrifice in the nineteenth century, despite persistent rumours to this effect.^{xxxvi}

2. The 'Evangelical' Perspective

In addition to the East India Company's strategic aims (of which he was keenly aware) and his own personal ambitions, MacVicar, as Campbell's assistant in Bastar in the 1850's, seems to have had a special missionary zeal, and to have been willing more than most to believe the worst of the Bastaris. He was thus convinced that he had proof of the existence of human sacrifice even before he arrived in the state, having received a verbal account of a kidnapping allegedly for this purpose.^{xxxvii} As if this were not enough, one of his earliest letters assured the Secretary to the Government of India that '*Amongst other atrocities of this land is the crushing of human beings under the wheels of the idol's car, at the Dussehra festival*'. Clearly he had been influenced by pamphlets written by J.C. Peggs and others describing the alleged 'atrocities' at the shrine of Jagannath at Puri, published and distributed in Britain in the 1830's

by the 'Coventry Society for the Suppression of Infanticide, Human Sacrifice and other such Barbarian Atrocities', and other similar missionary organisations.^{xxxviii}

MacVicar insisted that 'It would not perhaps be impossible to prove that the victims were not victims, although from what I have heard I am very confident that these pretended martyrdoms are the result of violence and coercion'. All this he concluded from information received before he had even crossed the border into the State. A man with a mission, no doubt, and one wonders as to the veracity of his sources. According to John Campbell, on more than one occasion his subordinates were duped by their native informants.^{xxxix} MacVicar also enquired during this tour into the custom of Sati (the self-immolation of widows). He was assured by his informants at Biersingapore in Jeypore that they were too 'low caste' for such customs, although the same informants claimed, probably ingenuously, that 'it obtains at Naurangpoor [Narainpur - in northern Baster] where there are high caste people', usually during the month of Ashvin, supposedly, between September 15th and October 15th.^{xl}

It is clear that this was a country riven with innuendo and powerful superstitions, though many of them had equally obviously only recently arrived from Scotland. When finally MacVicar eventually reached Dantewara, he was of course unconvinced when the priests at the Danteswari temple denied the practice of human sacrifice, even though they admitted their forefathers may have practised it: 'they were of course the very last men from whom there was any likelihood of arriving at the truth', he wrote in his notes.^{xli}

It must be said, that the views of the more experienced agent, John Campbell, were often equally unsubstantiated and inconsistent^{xlii} MacVicar, however, was yet more reckless and ambitious. Unfortunately, his investigations were cut short by ill health, soon after a visit to Abujmarh^{xliii}. His last and most hysterical report, reads as if he were aware that not only his health but also his career were slipping away from him:

The country is governed by the Lal Dhalganjan Sing, brother of the late Rajah and uncle of the present Raja. I believe there is nothing good about this man but his personal appearance. His turbulent character has often brought him into trouble and he has been confined as a State Prisoner at Nagpur and Raipur. The young Rajah, aged about 18, is not allowed a voice at anything that pertains to the govt. of this country, and hence the people consider him a nonentity and regard the Lal Sahib as the sole source of good and evil for themselves. Their dread of incurring his displeasure is very great, and necessarily so, for they have never known any other power nor even dreamt of such a thing as an appeal from any of his orders. or decrees. ...The extreme difficulty of attaining our end will be readily understood when it is stated that this Lal Sahib is the very head and front of the offending as regards human sacrifice. He is superstitious to the last degree, and confides in the power as he fears the wrath of his idol god Danteshwara, and thinks no harm can befall him if that divinity shields and protects him. To secure that protection no price (is) too high, no sacrifice too precocious, hence human blood has never ceased to flow. The Laull Sahib has felt himself strong enough to set at naught the orders he has from time to time received from his superiors at Nagpore.^{xliv}

Referring again to the case of a kidnap victim, supposedly intended as a sacrifice and seized with the knowledge of the Diwan, Dalganjan Singh, MacVicar reported the Diwan's denial of the allegations made against him in the following terms:

I have not the remotest doubt that he was so destined [to be sacrificed]. The whole country believed the same thing. Every witness that dare speak asserted plainly that it was for sacrifice he was carried away... [I]n no part of the district was it attempted to be denied that the system of kidnapping was rife throughout Bustar in order to provide men for Pooja. There is no doubt that last year two victims were crushed to death under the wheels of their idol car, and how much human blood washed to propitiate Dunteshwaree it will be impossible ever to discover. On one occasion, Capt. Hill reports, no less that 27 men were sacrificed at the same time. This was called 'the great sacrifice'.

Macvicar's diary reveals that in fact the Diwan was not denying anything, but merely questioning the authority of MacVicar to adjudicate in such matters. Likely as not this merely aggravated his case.^{xlv} It can easily be inferred from MacVicar's observations, however, that the undoubted prevalence of witchcraft, associated in particular with the ceremonies of marriage, as well as rumours of sacrifice, even of black cats, were probably a more potent reality than the practice of sacrifice itself, and that MacVicar had become a victim of this superstition.^{xlvi} This is apparent from the sharp difference between his views, and those of the last Agent, McNeil, who had been formerly deputed to investigate in Jeypore at the same time as MacVicar (1854).

McNeil was appointed Agent, immediately prior to the abolition of the Meriah Agency, in 1859. Both he and Colonel Glasfurd, the District Commissioner of Sironcha, who conducted an investigation in 1862 to decide on the need for the establishment of a separate police force for Bastar and Kharonde, concluded just a few years later that human sacrifice was not a problem. So careless was he of his personal position that MacNeil even said that the practice of human sacrifice was absent by then amongst the Khonds (contrary to everything he was reported to have told MacVicar in 1854), although he did say that the lesser crime of '*temple infanticide*', as he described it, was 'universal'.^{xlvii} This view may have been forced upon him by the lack of evidence, although McNeil's churlishness in absolving the Bastaris entirely of the taint of barbarism may have been partly due to the fact that his powers of joint magistrate in the locality (conferred in 1854) depended on one or other of these offences being found in some form or other.^{xlviii}

3. Indigenous Political, Symbolic and Ideological uses of sacrifice

Quite apart from evangelical and imperial zealotry as a factor in the mythology of human sacrifice, an important point is that for many Indians at the time a belief in sacrifice, if not the actuality of it, was useful, perhaps even necessary, not least of all for the Rajas of Bastar.

To begin with, sacrifice could play an important role in struggles for succession and in local political disputes. For example, in one case detailed in the records of the Nagpur secretariat, which was transparent even to the British at the time,^{xlix} the Raja of Karonde, Fatty Narian Dev, effected the deposition of the chieftainship of Toolamol and Cassimore, Shri Lutchunsing, and his replacement by his brother Ramchundar Singh in 1853, by resorting to allegations of sacrifice.¹ This dispute arose from the payment of tribute for the zamindari, which Lutchunsing says was given to his family as dowry, whilst the rajah claimed it was a *jagir*. Ramchundar Sing agreed to pay the tribute and was therefore placed in charge of the chieftainship on the justification that the previous ruler (Lutchunsing) practised human sacrifice. The charges though were unproven, and John Campbell was forced to admit that '*the charges and counter charges of encouraging human sacrifices*' were '*mere recrimination*'.

Ramchundar Singh only took control of Toolamol after burning the capital and fort to the ground. An uprising of the adivasis nonetheless still threatened, and Campbell was therefore persuaded to effect the restoration of Lutchunsing after the detention of his brother in Nagpur.

It is apparent that allegations of sacrifice could also play a part in power struggles between the Diwan and Pargana Majhis of Bastar State, or alternatively between the Diwan and the Raja. In regard to the former witness, the oral testimony of Eyar Mohamed Khan of Jagdalpur concerning the first fully documented kidnap victim is most revealing:

Offerings of human beings were made formerly. It was a servant to the Raja Mahipal Deo who was grandfather to the present Raja, during his time once in every three years, the great Poojah was celebrated to the devota, Danteshwara, when five or 600 goats, 400 or 500 buffaloes are offered, then I heard that during the night the three or four men are offered also, but this I have not seen with my eyes. About this time for the Poojah in all the frontier villages of other districts bordering on this district, men would be robbed and brought to this place for the Poojah. But as the victims were many, and the rumour in consequence generally spread abroad, it was known at Nagpur, and the Raja was sent for to that place, and orders were issued to prevent the future sacrifice of human beings, and a Mochilka taken from him. In this Mochilka, I recollect the Dalganjan Singh also affixed his signature. It was then that guards were stationed as Jagannath and at Dantewada, and a manager to report affairs to Nagpur. Although all this had been done, the seizing of human beings was carried on every year, and when strangers could not be procured, there would be a degree of agitation from fear of kidnappers in the villages of the district. Last year Dalganjan Singh returned from Tooamool to this place, and after a stay of about two months the following case occurred: a Soonda's son-in-law of Dhumpoonjea, formerly a resident of Jeypore and of about 16 or 18 years old was one night robbed from his village by some people of the village of Rokkapoul, Thoongapoul, and Joongahane in the month of Jaisht (May and June). He was taken away and secreted in the jungle near a river when this young man fortunately extricated himself and ran away to his village where he gave all the information of his capture, and as he knew some of the names of the kidnappers mentioned them to Dachin Majee, the chief of his village. Dachin Majee collected some of his people and went at night to the three villages of the kidnappers and seized five men whom he confined. Dalganjan Singh Lal Sahib hearing this sent for Dachin Majee etc. but they would not come and sent a message saying that the Lal Sahib had only to do with him in matters connected with revenue, which he would readily obey, but for his seizing and killing people of his village to attend on that account they would not obey. The Lal Sahib, finding that they would not, deputed some of his people to the villages neighbouring to the Majee's, who by good means through the villagers induced Dachina Majee, Soomar Majee etc to attend. On arrival of these before him they were immediately placed in strict confinement and Dachina Mejee and Somae Majee were fettered. The Panneen hearing all this wrote to Raipure and it is said that instructions were received to send these prisoners to that place for investigation. Eight days before this event occurred, at cultivator at Kcokopoul was seized by 10 or 12 men, but on his making a loud voice, the people of his village ran to his assistance. The kidnappers immediately decamped. At this time there was a great stir in all the country, the people of many villages entertained the greatest fear from been seized by kidnappers and at night all the males of the villages would be armed and be watchful. In these days a complaint was preferred by a Soondev of what village I do not know, to the Lal Sahib that his two sons while ploughing fields were seized and taken away by somebody and what had become of them he did not know. The Lal Sahib became enraged, and drove him away saying that as he did not catch those who caught his sons he had no business to come before him thereby disgracing him. The Soondev returned much downhearted at the conduct of the Lal Sahib. Reports of people being kidnapped not been taken notice of by the Rajah, the people of the country consider that it is he that require human beings for the Poojah, and found

it not beneficial bringing their losses of human beings before him. It is also said that the Lal Sahib departs particular individuals for the express purpose of kidnapping human beings for the Pujjah, but to test it, it is impossible. The Kokapaul and adjoining villages about seven or eight in number do not paid any tax to the sircar and the Raj is only supplied with wood when he requires it, as these are the only villages excused taxation, it would appear and it is expressed as an indulgence by the Rajah, for the express purpose of kidnapping. The chief Davota of the Raj is 'Danteshwara' before whom for a length of time human beings are sacrificed, to omit this sacrifice now would be a very great difficulty. The Raja cannot be without sacrifice every year, and the villagers around in consequence and in a great degree of fear from some of their people been kidnapped when an opportunity offers.^{li}

In this case, Datchena Majee may have been imprisoned by the Diwan not for alleging his complicity in the seizing of a 'Soonda's son-in-law', as is stated, but for undertaking a reprisal raid on a neighbouring village. Datchena Majee then further defied the Diwan's authority by saying that he and others were responsible to the Diwan for the paying of revenue and for nothing else, doubtless thereby making retaliation inevitable.

On the other hand, mysteriously, the Diwan, Lal Dalgangan Singh, and he alone, is said to have officiated at ceremonies at Dantewada - suggesting perhaps that he might have practised a form of human sacrifice in an attempt to subvert the authority of the young (16 year old) Raja, Bhairamdeo, who has just acceded to the throne in 1853. All of the witnesses testifying,^{lii} including the victim himself, spoke of the prevalence of the myth and/or the revival of the practice itself. The testimony of the kidnap victim, Biswanath of Korkopoul of Bastar, is as follows:

In the month of Jaist/May and June/ name of day or date of month I do not know, one morning 2 hours after sunrise about 200 yards from my village of Korokopaul, I was ploughing by myself my fields, which are situated in an easterly direction from my village when two tall and able men, apparently of the Oriya caste came, from I do not know, one of them caught me on the back of my waist and the other by my shoulder – when I asked them why they seized me and they replied in the 'Banthee' language that as you have eaten well and as don't you have plenty of blood in your body, we shall therefore give you to the Davota. Hearing these words, I became greatly afraid that my life would be lost in this manner, I prayed to my God and cried aloud and fear immediately subsided and having wrestled with those who had hold of me, I extricated myself and laid hold of the staff with which I drove my bullocks and struck one of the men when 10 or 12 able men who had escorted themselves in the jungle ran from it to seize men, whereupon I threatened them with a loud voice, that if they came near me I would kill them with the Tangee which I took from my waist and shook at them, they therefore stood aloof, the people of my village hearing my voice ran towards me and the people that endeavoured to seize me decamped..

Q: Why did they catch hold of you?

A: To offer me to the 'Devota'

Q: To what Devota and by whose order were you seized?

A: The Davota who requires to eat human beings is the 'Dantewara' for whom they seized me, and I must have been seized by order of the rulers of the country.

Q: Do Rulers of this District at times seize people for sacrifice?

A: I have heard so from sensible people of the District that the rulers are of this practice.

...

Q: In this District, after you were caught, were any other person caught?

A: Eight days having elapsed after I was caught was a man caught at the Gamal village.

Q: In what year in what month was the festival celebrated to 'Danteswara'

A: Month Ashada / June and July

Q: At what period generally is the festival celebrated of offering of human beings?

A: In the month Palgun and Ashad, the festival taken place, but when human offerings are made I do not know. In the Dussera festivals in Ghyatrom month, the festival is celebrated in the fort.^{liii}

A common feature throughout these testimonies is that the alleged sacrifices are always said to be done at night and in secret. Why this should so is difficult to say, the implication is always that it was because they are illegal (but then who is there about to object?). A more likely explanation is that any form of tribal sacrifice would be considered shameful and un-Hindu by Brahmins at the Rajahs courts (animal sacrifices take place in the forest and away from the temple in present day dussehra ceremonies). Or perhaps it was because they did not really happen at all in the first place.

The 'Lal Sahib' (Dalganjan Singh) was said to have been in dispute with the Raja 'Macpaul Deo' in 1849, six years before MacVicar's (1855) report, and was alleged then to have carried out a human sacrifice at Dantewara.^{liv} The actual names of the Rajas at that time were Mahipaldeo (1800-1842) and Bhoopaldeo (1842-1853). Those complaining to MacVicar in 1855 said that again the Lal had taken to 'sacrificing men instead of animals'.^{lv} With considerable imagination and rather casting doubt on the veracity of his evidence, MacVicar described his investigations as follows:

My suspicions were very naturally awakened by the strange way in which answers were given, 'I know nothing', was the fancied reply, 'but ask so and so, he or she can tell you'. Thus we were handed from one to another until our different scraps of information resulted in this: that human beings were offered in sacrifice, that there was a class of men who made these victims, and that they did so by order of the Raja. Lal Sahib is always meant, though the Rajah's name is used.^{lvi}

The wiliness of the Diwan described could of course have derived from his innocence. Otherwise, these accounts reveals the Diwan's motives to be complex, one his aims apparently being to persuade MacVicar of the futility of further enquiry:

The Lal Sahib and the Rajah paid a visit to the agent to take leave. Much conversation took place, the Lal Sahib persisted he knew nothing of human sacrifices. He was asked again to explain the seizure of Bisanant and the Saundee but he replied the Kangars who seized them can best tell them why. He admitted the truth of the Soandee's statement. He was told the Kangars had distinctly stated that it was by his order, although they afterwards denied it, why this assertion and this denial? He could not say, but he expressed astonishment that the agent was enquiring into a subject enquired into seven or eight times by Wilkinson, Agnew, etc. and disposed of. He was told that justice should be done...Much other unsatisfactory talk took place touching his relations with Jeypore, and eventually he and the Rajah took leave.^{lvii}

Then again, the Lal Sahib may have gained access to some of the witnesses to dissuade them from giving evidence - quite sensibly.^{lviii} It is certainly quite clear from his views on the Hill Marias of the Abujmarh tract that he is happy to dissociate himself from his subjects whenever he fears they may cause him trouble.

The Lal Sahib told me how they were in the last state of barbarism, perfectly naked and beyond any man's control, that they would permit no-one into their fastnesses and would pay no tribute. When I asked him if he had ever seen any of them he answered, 'no, who would go near such savages'.

On 9th Feb. 1854, MacVicar reported an encounter with the chiefs of Kattupandee. This account suggests the idea that the Diwan might indeed have carried out a sacrifice, or at least claimed to do so, for political reasons:

The chief of this old fort paid their respects; they stated that there were seven paiks stationed there. They do not know of the sacrifice of human beings, animals alone are sacrificed and have been offered for many years. On being questioned regarding the abduction of a man from Bagodery by Biswasserar Mazees and others for the purpose of sacrifice, they said it was true and that the man was killed, but whether as a sacrifice or not they did not know; it occurred nearly three years ago. The mazees paid a fine for having taken away and killed the man. There were great rumours of the Lall sahib, on his return from Nagpur having ordered men to be seized for sacrifice, but they did not know if it was true or not.

No-one was taken away from Kootapandee after more conversation, [but] a proclamation was given to the chiefs and its contents made known, prohibiting, by order of government and under the severest penalties, the sacrifice of human beings under any pretext whatsoever. All were then dismissed.^{lix}

On this occasion, the Raja of Bastar drew up (or there was drawn up on his behalf) a wonderfully diplomatic petition (or *urzee*), translated into Persian by one of the Palace secretaries and almost certainly written by Lal Dalganjan Singh, which pleaded the Raja's innocence.

In 1859, the District Commissioner of Raipur reported that there were no sacrifices, but much abuse of the police party and 'newswriter' at Dantewada by Dalganjan Singh.^{lx} The attempts by the British to impose their Police to regulate the custom thus appears to itself have become the cause of dispute, given the implicit and very real threat to the Diwan's authority.

The second case of kidnapping reported to the District Commissioner of Raipur in 1855 was most likely simply an attempt by the supposed victim to escape the custody of the Diwan.^{lxi} According to the Capt. Elliot, the D.C. Raipur, his examination of the witnesses revealed the following:

The reason for his [the alleged intended victim] having been imprisoned by the Rajah, he states, [was] ... adultery with a woman named Dummee, with whom he had fled and lived in Kotepur of Jeypore [in Kotpad?] for one year, and that on his return Lall Dulgunjun Sing had imprisoned him on the complaint of the husband of Dummee. No fine was taken from him, but the sepoy of the guard beat him and nobody interfered, so that when he came out of the jail one day to cook his food (he) ran to where government thannah is, where he claimed protection... no-one ever threatened or said that he would be sacrificed to the goddess, nor did he ever make such a statement.^{lxii}

The D.C. Raipur himself doubted the authenticity of the accusations made, although the police party (all Hindus, with a Brahmin newswriter) to whom the victim fled, reported that his fear was of being made a sacrifice. This was quite contrary to what the victim himself said to the

District Commissioner, stating that he only feared being 'beaten up' - a case perhaps of the police being overzealous in an effort to perpetuate their jobs.^{lxiii}

The final case, of which details are available in the records of the Nagpur secretariat, was reported in 1886 and seems to have been the most politically motivated. It is also the most celebrated and detailed, since the case went up as far as the High Court in Raipur, where ultimately the prosecution's case was to collapse ignominiously. The Case began with a reported kidnapping of one Jadik, whose family reported his disappearance to the authorities. Their evidence, and those of Jadik's neighbours, were as follows:

Musamat Kandri (widow of Jadik): I am certain that my husband was not eaten by a tiger, nor was he drowned. I think that he was carried off to the deo. Ever since I can remember I have heard of the Melliahs of Kachrapati and Baugpali; they catch people and take them to Dantawara.

Kula (son of Jadik): I do not know how my father was lost. He certainly was not eaten by a tiger, nor was he drowned. He may have been seized by some one, but how can I know this?

Sukra Parja: At the time I could not imagine how he (Jadik) was lost, but afterwards I heard that the Kachrapati Melliahs go out to catch men, and I suspected that they must have caught Jadik.

Karanji Parja: He (Jadik) was certainly not drowned or eaten by a tiger. If he had been, we should have found some trace of him. I have heard of the Kachrapati Melliahs since my childhood. They catch people for sacrifices at Dantewada.^{lxiv}

A number of other examples of disappearances were reported and so the Political Agent, H.H. Priest, proceeded to Danteswara to investigate. Soon after arriving he was able to obtain from Munda Pundari, the chief priest, a graphic description of a sacrifice in 1876, which he said was carried out upon the orders of the Rajah and Jia, a local zamindar. Jia himself admitted to the political agent that Lal Dalganjan Singh, the previous Diwan, had sacrificed an Oriya man and proceeded to corroborate every sacrifice since. Later on though he retracted this claim, insisting that sacrifices had not occurred since 1842, and that in the present case he was merely repeating the testimony of others because it was 'expected'. The names of various kidnappers were mentioned, and when seized, were told by the Jeypore police to admit to kidnapping for the purpose of sacrifice, or otherwise (amongst other things) they would be hanged.

A case was ultimately brought in the High Court in Raipur against Sham Sundar Jia, the local Zamindar, but it fell apart under the overwhelming evidence of coercion^{lxv} There was indeed evidence of torture of the prosecution's witnesses, but this only came out once the case came to trial.^{lxvi}

When Ramchander [the key witness amongst the alleged kidnappers] was examined in this court he said:

' I do not know about "Melias". I do not know if they seize people. I have never seen them do so nor have I ever heard of their doing so. I know "Khunjars" as thieves. I did write before that "Melias" seize men for their sacrifice at Dantiwara but that is not true. The fact is that from the time I came from my village I have acted as I was told to do by Raghunath Manji. he said that unless we said that sacrifices were made of human beings, and people seized, that we should be beaten, so I was in fear, and said what I said from fear of being beaten. It is not true. I know nothing of "Melias" really, or of victims being seized. Raghunath impressed on me there was a gallows ready at Kotpad

for those who denied knowing anything.....I was never ordered by the Rajah to seize a victim. I said so because I was pressed to name the Rajah by Raghonath, who declared that unless one of us named the Rajah we would all be kept in confinement.'

The second witness, Raghonath Manji, when examined said, ' I wrote what I did from fear. It is not true. I was very badly treated by the Jeypore police. I was taken from my village to a Sahib in Nagarnar, and after that I was raced with a horse through rice fields and taken to Kotpad. There in his tent the Jeypur Saib [Inspector] threatened and pushed me and had me taken away to the thana, where I was kept tied up for four days, being only loosened when necessary and for my meals. I was ironed and hand-cuffed, a stick was passed through my legs, and my hair was tied to a post from behind. On the fourth day I was shown a gallows and told I would be hung if I did not speak out. After this I was taken to the Political Agent. I said nothing to him of what had been done to me. He did not ask me and I was under fear then. I did speak to Ramchandrar as he says: I said that we should mention the Rajah's name, or we would not get off. I mentioned certain men as seizers. I cannot say why. ... I never heard the name of Jadik. I never saw him. I mentioned the name to the Political Agent out of my head. I never made any man over to the accused at Dantiwara. What I said about this is quite false. I have said so in fear. I said whatever came into my head. I was about a month in Kotpad.'

Another witness, Kana said:

'I denied all knowledge of human sacrifices being made. Then the Inspector showed me a pole in the ground with a cloth at the top of it., and told me that if I did not speak out and say all I knew I would be hanged on that pole at 9 o'clock that night. I got thoroughly alarmed. I then said whatever the Inspector wanted and told him what was untrue. ...My detailed narrative is based on what the Jeypore Inspector had us all tutored to say at Kotpad.. He had got hold of Matha and Marka Katiar [also] and they made a detailed statement of what was done at Dantiwara on occasions of human sacrifices, and what we were all to say in regard to specific cases. We all heard this and decided to say the same.'

Even the chief priest, Munda Pundari, who claimed he had conducted the sacrifices said that his victims were actually goats, and occasionally buffaloes, and that he had said they were human beings since everyone insisted this was so. 'If I had made any denial before, I had no hope of it being listened to', he told the court.

Clearly the confessions had been assembled by the Jeypore police, with the assistance of a large measure of coercion, but with what motive? Was it merely a case of overzealousness? A key factor in the trial, arguably was the place in which the offences originated. It was alleged by the Jeypore police that victims were being kidnapped in the Kotpad taluqa, and were being carried off to Bastar for sacrifice. This was probably not a coincidence, since Kotpad was a disputed territory. The dispute between Bastar and Jeypore went back to the cession of this territory during a succession dispute in Bastar state in 1774, when assistance was rendered to the successful claimant by the Jeypore Raja. Although control of the territory was then ceded to Jeypore by way of thanks, the Bastar rajas later claimed that this done under duress, that it was merely a zamindari, and that the sovereignty remained theirs. In return they demanded an annual tributes of Rs. 17,000, which needless to say the Jeypore Raja had refused to pay. One might speculate that a motive for raiding by Bastar into Jeypore therefore existed, as well as a motive for attempts by the Jeypore raja to make false accusations against the authorities in Bastar in an effort to discredit them. Although by the 1880s the Jeypore state came under the control of the Madras Presidency, it is reasonable to assume that the influence of the Jeypore

raja himself over the local police, was considerable. There were rivalries too between the Central Provinces and Madras police and political authorities. It hardly seems a coincidence therefore that this disputed border area seems to have figured so largely in allegations and counter allegations over the years.

The Nagpur government's enquiry into the 1886 'Jia' case ultimately turned into an enquiry into the enquiry itself, with H.H. Priest, the political agent, attempting in an official report to excuse the naivety of himself and his subordinates. Naivety there certainly was, and in retrospect, the original accusations of the family of the disappeared 'Jadik' can be seen to have been not only equivocal, but to have shown very clearly the impact of rumour.

4. The Power of Rumour

Rumour was perhaps the most important factor in all of the cases above mentioned, and was indeed a potent currency, capable of purchasing any number of advantages for those involved. In 1886, there were rumours of a planned sacrifice, and these rumours had clearly been circulating since at least 1883 when a similar 'disappearance' was reported^{lxvii}. Lal Kalendra Singh was then ordered to Nagpur, after which, more rumours followed. Rumours arose again in 1886 because the naming ceremony of the new Raja was due to take place. Whatever the truth of the matter, the impression undoubtedly seems to have persisted in the minds of the population that sacrifices normally accompanied state events. This may be either a cause or a consequence also of their involvement in succession disputes. We cannot be sure, of course, that there were succession disputes at this time - the Raja himself normally officiated in the puja ceremonies at Dantewara, but what would be more natural than for the Diwan (a relative) to officiate during the minority of the ruler, as occurred in 1908? However, this does not explain the involvement of the diwan in the ceremonies in 1883, when the Raja himself was ageing, but adult. Likewise again, note the following rumour, reported by the wife of Gopal Das to McNeill in 1855 in a village near Dantewada:

About six years ago the Lal Sahib was on bad terms with the Macpaul Deo, the then Rajah, and in consequence he ordered the sacrifice of the man at Duntewadah, when there was a rebellion in the country. My husband told me this and that is the way I know it.^{lxviii}

Clearly there were internal political dynamics here, which cannot be ignored.

Paradoxically, human sacrifice may even have become more widespread as a result of British interference and enquiries into its possible existence. Thus the Lal Dalganjan Singh was rumoured to have carried out sacrifices after returning from his highly publicised visit to Nagpur in 1842, where he had been called to answer for rumours that sacrifices had been taking place.^{lxix} It is possible that the issue in the 1850's of a proclamation by John MacVicar 'to all the chiefs' calling upon them to give up the practice, served only to confirm in their minds that the alleged sacrifices had indeed actually occurred. Nothing could arguably be guaranteed to give rumours more credence than a government proclamation, especially since evidence or witnesses of the alleged sacrifices could never be traced.

Conclusion

Rumours of sacrifice take many shapes and forms and can be accounted for in a variety of ways. It is easy to dismiss them entirely as myth, as fabulous examples of judicial error in the manner of inquisitional reports of the middle ages, or as examples of a conflict of cultures, perceptions, and discourses (as commonly used to be said of the opium wars in China). It is satisfying, moreover, to mourn the loss of a tribal culture, in which the idea of human sacrifice, had a meaningful role to play in religious ritual (Padel, 1995), rare or non-existent, but perhaps comparable in symbolic importance to that of crucifixion and martyrdom amongst the early Christians. It would be a mistake however to deny altogether the political economy and instrumentality in the events that unfolded in Bastar, at least, in the nineteenth century. Myths of sacrifice were clearly perpetuated and elaborated by both British officials, missionaries, the rulers of Bastar and neighbouring states, and their subjects themselves, for a variety of reasons and motives, as continues to be the case to this day. Whilst judicial proceedings are but interpretations, the same can be said of many sources employed by anthropologists and historians, no matter how empirically 'pure' they may appear to be. The bulk of the evidence quoted here was unpublished, and unavailable to a wider audience. The hints at conspiracy therein could simply be a mirage created by the English judicial method and the interrogations of officials. Some of these officials were Scots, some English, some Brahmins, some local informants. Not all shared the same preconceptions and foreknowledge, nor did the events described occur within the same time frame. Perhaps therefore, the encounter was not entirely structured by colonial discourse. Individual volition had a role to play. The Lal Sahib and others may have found the opportunity to use the idea of sacrifice to their own ends, as some at the time indeed alleged: to do down their enemies whilst winning favour amongst their followers, some of whom surely sincerely believed in the sacrificial rite. By echoing that most heinous of sins in the minds of good Christians, by inventing the possibility of perdition, Bastar's very own 'Black Hole', the rulers of Bastar, Karonde and Jeypore, may well have attempted, more than once, to turn the tables on their colonial adversaries and to manipulate the British presence for their own purposes. To some extent they succeeded. Although, Lal Kalendra Singh was for a while banished from the state, compensation was received from Jeypore in exchange for the Kotpad taluka as part of the British settlement of this dispute. Some respect at least for the autonomy of Bastar persisted, and the British did not ultimately take complete control of the state for another fifty years. At the same time, not a single victim was identified, or perpetrator of sacrifice ever sentenced or imprisoned, despite the very best efforts of British officials, who themselves sought to maximally exploit what they could from the rumours, allegations and events.

In an article by Robin Law (1985) on human sacrifice in Dahomey, Asante and Benin in West Africa, it is persuasively argued that human sacrifice was integral to state ritual in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and indeed seems to have increased during and immediately after the abolition of slavery. Similar examples are to be found in Eastern and Southern Africa, victims sometimes being killed by the bare hands of the king.^{lxx} The occasion for such sacrifices were the investitures and funerals of state dignitaries, the greatest number of sacrifices usually occurring upon the death of a king and upon the investiture of his successor. The victims were most often captive prisoners of war, of whom there were many. Occasionally the king himself might be the victim following some great calamity or at the close of a prescribed period of rule. It was widely believed that failure to carry out an appropriate numbers of sacrifices would bring ill fortune upon the monarch or his successor, but with few exceptions the rituals seem to have been more practical than religious in origin, borne out of a desire to instil fear into foes and subjects and alike. Whether or not this has any relevance to

the case of Bastar it is hard to say, but Hermann Kulke in *The Cult of Jagannath & the Regional Tradition of Orissa* (1978) argues that the British at the time were well aware that 'however holds the shrine of Jagannath holds Orissa' (the words of Richard Wellesley). For this reason the British made various diplomatic attempts were to take over the Puri temple complex from Raghuji Bhonsle, the Raja of Nagpur, between 1765 and 1803. Missionaries too perceived the importance of such shrines. J.C. Peggs, for one, was personally convinced that 'a blow at idolatry here, will prove a blow at the root' of Hinduism. He failed to win any converts at Puri, but later campaigned successfully against the Pilgrim tax and British support for Jagannath and other temple complexes. Overall, Kulke concludes that the effect of these campaigns merely heightened the fame of Jagannath and its 'first servitor', the Raja of Puri, especially when the whole matter of temple dues went to court in the 1880's. The same logic here could certainly be applicable to the case of Bastar.

One thing is certain: as in the myths of cannibalism described by Arens (1979), not a single bone was ever discovered in, or anywhere near, the shrine of Danteswari in Bastar. Purported victims always seemed to miraculously escape, and they and their kidnapers then to disappear, whilst tales of the sacrificial rite could never be found at more than third hand, at best. In this, the human sacrifice scares of Bastar are comparable to the witchcraft crazes of late medieval Europe. As analysed by historians,^{lxxi} these were not simple cases of hysteria or misunderstanding. There was a political economy to them: an attempt by the Church to reassert its authority in the wake of the reformation, not only over the localities, but in reaction to the growing influence of the bureaucratic state. They were also an attempt to restore patriarchal hierarchy as Europe recovered from the plague, as rural economies began to prosper, and gender balances shifted. There was a secondary side to them as well, an aspect in which allegations of witchcraft, like any other allegation, could be manipulated within the locality by individuals to their advantage. In the process they asserted their own agency and resisted becoming either the victims or villains in the representations of others.

Since 2001, Bastar has been divided into two districts - Bastar and Dantewada - within the newly formed State of Chhattisgarh. Exploitation of Bastar's mineral and forest resources continues apace: the Bailadila iron mines yielding thousands of tons of ore each year, and vast profits being derived from legal and illegal logging and the sale of minor forest produce, which is collected by under-paid tribal workers^{lxxii}. Naxalite insurgency continues to threaten these interests and is clearly supported by local tribals, most of the Tendu leaf collectors, for example, joining a Naxalite-led Union in the early 1990s which repeatedly organised strikes in pursuit of better wages. Ranged against them in the recent past has been the Congress party and, latterly, the BJP, which has been actively recruiting supporters in the tribal areas of central India. Although none of this gets much reported, there is still much that is very modern about the problems and politics of contemporary Bastar. Yet still stories of human sacrifice and cannibalism in tribal areas continue to circulate, to be reported in missionary tracts and to be repeated again in the columns of Indian newspapers, and occasionally overseas. At the same time the Muria Gond institution of the *ghotul*, the dormitory club for adolescent teenagers, in which they learn to become independent of their parents and enjoy their first experiences of sex, continues to excite the imaginations of middle class Hindus, who for more than a century now have wedded themselves (in public at least) to a Victorian ideal of abstinence and sexual restraint. Sex and death thus remain deliciously entwined in public imaginings of tribal India. Lurid pseudo-documentary accounts of the 'night life of the tribals' sell well on the streets of Bombay, and credulous officials have in recent years banned photography, all foreign

researchers, and even many Indian researchers, from the region of Bastar state. The ‘truth’ and real identity of this tribal area in the heart of the Indian subcontinent is thus likely to remain shrouded in darkness.

APPENDIX 1.

Capt. J. MacVicar described the Hill Maria as follows:

Their hill tracts are called Oobooj Doso (which literally means the country of the people without sense) and their villages and houses are similar to the those of the Bood and Goomsur Khonds. In appearance they resemble the people of the low country and the men are respectably clad, but few among the women have any garment beyond slight apron of leaves. They are a remarkably peaceful race and never use their bows and arrows save against the beasts of the forests. All disputes are settled by arbitration, the elders of the tribes being the judges, punishment invariably consists of fines of a greater or lesser number of pots of toddy according to the offence, the penalty is always drunk on the spot by those concerned and contributes no doubt to the re-establishment of cordiality. They are much afraid of death which accounts for their peaceful habits. Their fields are not ploughed but dug up with a pickaxe, and after four or five years they migrate to other areas in the same district and build fresh villages.

Their language is neither Khond nor Oriya , they only count as far as 20 and the numbers appeared to be a mixture of Kond, Teloogoo, and Hindustanee. Of course they have no written dialect. A few amongst them know Oriya.

It was pleasing to find that there did not exist ever have the tradition of human sacrifice. In the Low country it was said to that the hill tribes and never sacrificed human beings and for once the account was strictly true. The sites of their old and new villages were carefully examined, and all the class were questioned, but no foreigners amongst them, and unless they sacrifice their own offspring they have no means a procuring victims, but is quite it is quite certain that nothing of the kind occurs in the mountain track.

The people are poor but it is not true that they pay no tribute. They annually gives the Bastar ruler or his deputies four or five coolie loads of the produce of their lands, and if in return friendly relations were cultivated with them and inducements held out to visit the farm of the low country it would be more creditable than the present utter indifference with which the Rajah regards this portion of his subjects.

MPCRO, Nagpur, Judicial Compilation no. 164 of 1851 to 1870: 'Human Sacrifice'. No. 1448: Extract from letter of Capt. MacVicar, offg. Agent in the hill tracts of Orissa to the GOI, 10th April 1855.

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ENDNOTES (INCOMPLETE...)

The page numbers below in fns. 17-58 refer to my notes. The bulk of the evidence is drawn from Judicial Compilation no. 164 of 1851 to 1870: 'Human Sacrifice', found in the Madhya Pradesh Record Room in Nagpur. The court proceedings and evidence quoted therein was originally given in either local Gond dialects, Halbi, Hindi or Oriya and is mediated by official interpreters or translators in court.

¹ J.T. Blunt, 'Narrative of a route from Chinargur to Yentrageodum...1795', in *Early European Travellers in the Nagpur Territories*, (Nagpur: Govt. Press, 1930).

- ⁱⁱ Dr. Henry Spry firmly believed that in the 'wild And unreclaimed hill jungles' of central India '...they sacrifice and eat their fellow-creatures. The fact of their doing so is so well attested that there can be no doubt of its correctness': H. Spry, *Modern India*, vol. II, (London, 1837), p. 138.
- ⁱⁱⁱ NAI, Survey of India memoirs and field books: M320, Elliot Mission; M272, Route from Cuttack to Nagpur and thence to Hoosingabad, by Wm. Campbell 1778; M163, Route from Nagpur to Cuttack 1782, by Thomas (diary of events). See also C.U. Wills, *British relations with the Nagpur State in the 18th century*, (Nagpur, 1926), which contains extensive quotations from Survey records and embassies of this period.
- ^{iv} IOR (Map Room), Routes in the Central Provinces, MSS 36: Report on the route from Chunargarh to Amarkant by Lts. Waugh and Renny (1833) The belief that the Gonds practiced human sacrifice was one of the most potent myths of this period. Although no evidence was ever found the allegation was frequently repeated up and until the administration of Bastar came directly under the control of the British in 1911. The issues involved are discussed in C. Bates, ' "The invention of perdition": human sacrifice and British relations with the Indian kingdom of Bastar in the 19th century' and 'Dasehra and revolt: problems of legitimacy in 20th century Bastar', unpublished papers presented at the Centre d'Études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud in the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris, April 1992.
- ^v R. Jenkins, *Report on the Territories of the Rajah of Nagpore*, (Calcutta, 1827), p.29. Jenkins also noted that 'the different tribes divide themselves, like their Hindu neighbours, into twelve and a half castes; and these, again, branch out into subdivisions, denominated according to the number of the Penates, or household gods' (p.30).
- ^{vi} See Jenkins, *Report on the Territories of the Rajah of Nagpore*, p. 140 et seq. Apparently the Gond Raja still gave the Tika, or mark of royalty, to the Bhonsla princes on their accession to the Gaddi (or throne) and was entitled to put his seal on certain revenue papers.
- ^{vii} P.Vans Agnew, *Report on the Subah or Province of Chhattisgarh*, written in 1820, (Nagpur, 1920), p.5.
- ^{viii} See Oddie 1995. J.H. Powell in 'Hook-Swinging in India', *Folklore*, xxv, June 1914, whilst writing about the Santhals in Chota Nagpur, is the sole author to have speculated about links between hook swinging and human sacrifice.
- ^{ix} Oddie, 1995, p. 61.
- ^x V. Elwin, *Maria, Murder and Suicide* (London: OUP, 1943)
- ^{xi} MPCRO, Nagpur, Judicial Compilation no. 164 of 1851 to 1870: 'Human Sacrifice'. No. 1448: Extract from letter of Capt. MacVicar, offg. Agent in the hill tracts of Orissa to the GOI, 10th April 1855. This was the description of 'Lal Sahib', Diwan of the kingdom of Bastar. For the description of Capt. J. MacVicar himself see Appendix I.
- ^{xii} Nandini Sundar, 'Divining Evil: the State and Witchcraft in Bastar', *Gender, Technology & Development*, 5 (3), 2001, p. 432. The fascinating examples of witchcraft accusations given by Sundar are (unfortunately for the purposes of this essay) all contemporary.
- ^{xiii} I was fortunate enough to witness such an Anga Deo festival in Parasgaon in 1986.
- ^{xiv} Hyde Papers, Cambridge Centre for South Asian Studies.
- ^{xv} Alfred Gell, 'Exalting the king and obstructing the state: a political interpretation of royal ritual in Bastar District, central India' in A. Gell, *The art of anthropology* (1997 & 1999).
- ^{xvi} Nandini Sundar, 'Debating Dussehra and reinterpreting rebellion in Bastar district, central India', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, vol. 7, no. 1 (March 2001), pp. 19-35.
- ^{xvii} Singh, 1995; Fuller, 1988.
- ^{xviii} See Bhopal notes, 4, pp. 33-34.
- ^{xix} Muriah, Maliahs, Meriah: Worryingly the word 'Meriah' seems to have had a number of other uses as well, and may have simply been derived from the name of the so-called 'Muriahs' – one of the tribes with which the practice was associated. According to Gautham Bhadra, Meriah meant 'spy' or go-between in the language of the not too distant Kols of Chota Nagpur – see R. Guha (ed.), *Subaltern Studies II* (Delhi, 1988), p. 261, whilst many used the word 'Meriah' or 'Melliah' to describe not the victim, but the kidnappee (extracts, p. 262). See also McNeill on 'Joonas' below fn.40. According to Campbell, there was also a large class of captured prisoners, who became domestic serfs, many of them being ultimately absorbed into the families of their owners, in the manner described by Indrani Chatterjee (1999). These serfs Campbell called 'Possiapoes' and were never, he says, used as sacrifices. Overall there appears to be a number of confusions between anthropology and linguistics in this period, as well as disturbing instances of dialectics between the two.
- ^{xx} See Human Sacrifice typescript, p. 8.
- ^{xxi} Oddie (1995) offers several examples of ambitious or over-zealous DC's stepping beyond the bounds of policy (and the law) and attempting to prohibit hook-swinging within their districts, only to be restrained by their superiors. It was not until the later 19th century that more radical westernised Indian elites began to side with missionary opinion and to pressurise the government to ban the practice altogether.

^{xxii} William Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official*, (London, 1915); *Narrative by Major General John Campbell of his Operations in the Hill Tracts of Orissa for the suppression of human sacrifice* (London, 1864), p. 158-160.

^{xxiii} Ditto p. 3 & 19, p. 31-32

^{xxiv} P. 9

^{xxv} P. 32

^{xxvi} See J. Majeed, 'James Mill and the *History of British India* and Utilitarianism as a Rhetoric of Reform', *Modern Asian Studies*, 24, 2 (1990); Sara Suleri, *The Rhetoric of English India* (Chicago, 1992).

^{xxvii} P. 41

^{xxviii} bot. P. 31.

^{xxix} Elliott report, W. Huber, MA thesis, p. 104.

^{xxx} 62, 76 & 81.

^{xxxi} 80

^{xxxii} See Wright (1863) and Strack (1909). Randle Jackson, *Substance of the speech of Randle Jackson, Esq. at a general court of the proprietors of East-India stock, on Wednesday, March 28th, 1827, on the following motion; "that this court, taking into consideration the continuance of human sacrifices in India, is of opinion that, in the case of all rites or ceremonies involving the destruction of life, it is the duty of a paternal government to interpose for their prevention; and therefore recommends to the Honourable Court of Directors to transmit such instructions to India as that court may deem most expedient for accomplishing this object, consistent with all practicable attention to the feelings of the natives* (London: J. L. Cox, 1827).

^{xxxiii} See Oddie (1995), chapter five.

^{xxxiv} P. 64

^{xxxv} P. 78

^{xxxvi} See J.C.K. Menon's account from the 1930's (Hyde papers, Cambridge).

^{xxxvii} pp. 18-19

^{xxxviii} Republished in a single volume as J. Peggs, *India's Cries to British Humanity* (London, 2nd edn. 1830) pp v-
vi.

^{xxxix} With his usual confident racism Campbell commented: 'Only let a sharp Hindoo or Mahomedan mind ascertain what kind of information you want, and that it will be for his interest to procure it, and you may rest satisfied the supply will fully equal the demand' and then explains in detail how, in his view, a junior British official was led completely up the garden path. Of course, opportunistic cunning of this sort was not a 'Hindoo' monopoly, and it is equally possible that in both instances, MacVicar and the official concerned knew precisely what they were doing, and were wilfully naive, secure in the knowledge that any blame for misinformation uncovered would invariably fall on others, whilst any credit would be solely theirs alone. Campbell, *ibid*, p. 161.

^{xl} P. 24 & P. 26

^{xli} P. 18

^{xlii} Compare eg. P. 5 and p. 7

^{xliii} P. 39

^{xliv} pp. 40-42 - quote from p.41

^{xlv} P. 23

^{xlvi} Details of local superstitions – p. 69

^{xlvii} P. 56. McNeil described those intended for temple sacrifice as 'Joonas' in Jeypore in 1855 - see p. 26. The youthful 'joonas' he encountered he assumed that were intended for sacrifice as no middle-aged 'joonas' (the normal victims) could be found. The account is very bizarre, but upon hearing that allegations were being made the Raja of Jeypore wisely denied all knowledge and begged that his territory be taken under the 'care and administration' of the Company. Suspicion of any sort of sacrifice in Jeypore seems thereafter to have completely evaporated.

^{xlviii} P. 8

^{xlix} eg. pp. 4-6

^l P. 4-6

^{li} (pages 9-15, 17-18, 20-25, 29-) [Quote 9-13]

^{lii} pp. 11-12, 13 & 14

^{liii} Pp 12-13 Interesting features in this testimony include the description of Danteshwari 'eating' her victims (as mythologically does Kali), the somewhat sophisticated rendition into English by officials (intended presumably to inspire confidence in the testimony), and the use of dates from the Hindu calendar by someone who was not

ostensibly Hindu. Unfortunately in this and all other transcripts we do not have the original vernacular testimony by which to judge the accuracy of the translation.

liv P. 24

lv P. 22

lvi P. 29

lvii pp. 23-24.

lviii pp 29-32

lix P. 24

lx P. 46

lxi p. 15, and p. 45-6

lxii P. 45

lxiii There are parallels here with the numerous and probably exaggerated reports of 100's of 'liberated sacrifices' made by John Campbell from Goomssoor in the hill tracts of Orissa in the 1850s.

lxiv P. 260-261.

lxv (p. 180 of xeroxed hand-written notes.)

lxvi The Quote is from 181-182 of the trial proceedings - evidence of torture

lxvii p.261-2

lxviii P. 24 – check date

lxix page 24 (described above). 1842?

lxx Luc de Heusch (1997).

lxxi Thomas (1973); Harris (1975, 1977); Ankarloo & Henningsen (1990); Larner (1984).

lxxii According to the *State of India's Environment* report by the Centre for Science and the Environment in 1984-5, the legal revenues alone amounted to some Rs. 470 million, compared with a development expenditure by the State government of Rs. 50 million.