

# A Parallel Motif in Lepcha and Barela-Bhilala Mythology

By

DIETER B. KAPP

*University of Heidelberg, Heidelberg, West Germany*

## INTRODUCTION

Both the Lepchas of Sikkim and the Barela-Bhilalas of West Nimar District, Madhya Pradesh, India, have a mythical flood tradition which has as its pivotal point the following motif: As a rule, two mountains or hills, being disposed to save a few or two human beings from drowning, rise or raise themselves above the flood waters to accomplish their object.

The present study aims at a comparative presentation of the contents of the different Lepcha and Barela-Bhilala versions of this myth. The source materials have been gathered from Western language publications on these two tribal communities (cf. References and appendix).

The arrangement of this comparative analysis is as follows: 1) A presentation of the contents of six Lepcha versions<sup>1</sup> according to nine essential elements of the Lepcha myth: (1)–(9); 2) A synoptic comparison of the Lepcha versions; 3) A presentation of the contents of six Barela-Bhilala versions<sup>2</sup> according to eight essential elements of the Barela-Bhilala myth: (1)–(8); 4) A synoptic comparison of the Barela-Bhilala versions, and 5) A comparison of the Lepcha with the Barela-Bhilala versions and a conclusion.

Since in most cases the sources for this study are not easily accessible, the texts of the analysed myths have been quoted in full as an appendix.

## THE LEPCHA VERSIONS

*Version I* (Mainwaring 1876: XX, note)<sup>3</sup>

(1) A flood submerges the whole of the country with the exception of

Mount Tendong,<sup>4</sup> nearly all the people being drowned.

- (2) There is no mention of Mount Tendong's sex and no appearance of Mount Mainom.<sup>5</sup>
- (3) A few people try to escape from the flood in a ship.
- (4) [The flood continues to rise.]
- (5) In order to support the ship, Mount Tendong rises up "like a horn."
- (6) Afterwards Mount Tendong subsides to its present form.
- (7) —
- (8) After a time the flood recedes.
- (9) —

*Version II* (Waddell 1900: 110)<sup>6</sup>

- (1) A flood occurring in the old days, when there were none but the Lepchas in Sikkim, submerges valleys and mountains with the exception of the peaks of Mount Tendong and Mount Mainom, all the people in the valleys being drowned.
- (2) Mount Tendong and Mount Mainom are spoken of as being in a brother-sister relationship.
- (3) The survivors seek shelter on Mount Tendong and Mount Mainom.
- (4) The flood continues to rise and submerges Mount Mainom. (The shrieks of the drowning can still be heard from Mount Tendong.) The still rising waters threaten to swallow Mount Tendong also, whereupon the surviving people pray to the mountain to save them. (Cf. Versions V and VI, sub (6)!)
- (5) In order to save the refugees clinging to him, Mount Tendong miraculously elongates himself.
- (6) —
- (7) —
- (8) After a time the flood subsides.
- (9) Ever since the grateful Lepchas have worshipped Mount Tendong for having saved their ancestors.

*Version III* (Stocks 1925: 359)<sup>7</sup>

- (1) In the beginning when *Foog-rong* and *Nazong-nyo*, the first ancestors of the Lepchas, lived, there came a flood drowning nearly every human creature.
- (2) There is no mention of Mount Tendong's sex and no appearance of Mount Mainom.
- (3) Only two people succeed in fleeing to the summit of Mount Tendong, thus escaping from the flood.

- (4) The flood continues to rise.
- (5) —
- (6) —
- (7) *Ko-hom-fo*, the partridge, who is married to *Takbo-thing*'s son, *Tashei-thing*, offers *chi* (millet-beer) to her father-in-law, saying that if he only would, he could stop the flood.
- (8) *Takbo-thing*, looking down from the country of the *Rum* (gods), sees that the world is flooded and that his daughter-in-law is praying to him and offering him *chi*, whereupon he takes up his walking stick and strikes the world so that the water sinks in. The world becomes dry once more, the trees and bushes grow again, and the world is repopled.
- (9) —

*Version IV* (Mazumdar 1961: 296)<sup>8</sup>

- (1) A flood submerges the whole of Sikkim, drowning all save a few of the Lepchas' ancestors.
- (2) There is no mention of Mount Tendong's sex and no appearance of Mount Mainom.
- (3) A few of the ancestors succeed in escaping from the flood and take shelter on the summit of Mount Tendong.
- (4) The flood continues to rise and gradually submerges all the mountain peaks.
- (5) In order to save the surviving ancestors, the gods raise the height of Mount Tendong to such an extent that the flood waters remain well below its summit.
- (6) —
- (7) —
- (8) After a time the flood recedes, but the survivors only dare to descend to the valleys and repopulate Sikkim again when they see a bird flying past them with a fresh twig in its beak.
- (9) —

*Version V* (Das/Banerjee 1962: 131–132)<sup>9</sup>

- (1) A flood is said to have once submerged the whole world with the exception of Mount Tendong and Mount Manom.
- (2) Mount Tendong and Mount Manom are spoken of as being in a brother-sister relationship.
- (3) —
- (4) The flood continues to rise.
- (5) Mount Tendong and Mount Manom lift their heads.
- (6) At last, Mount Tendong is submerged while Mount Manom suc-

ceeds in remaining above the water level (cf. Version II, sub (4)!). Afterwards Mount Tendong is ashamed that Mount Manom has remained unconquered, whereas he, being a male, has not been able to resist the flood waters. Hence he bends his head in order to salute Mount Manom. (So, Mount Tendong even today appears like a standing man with his head bent toward Mount Manom.)

- (7) —
- (8) After a time the flood recedes.
- (9) —

*Version VI* (Kotturan 1976: 42–44)<sup>10</sup>

- (1) Long ago, when there were only Lepchas living in Sikkim, there came a flood caused by a big cyclone which brought heavy rains with it. Gradually, the flood waters submerged homes and villages and, eventually, all the valleys and mountains of the Himalayas with the exception of Mount Tendong and Mount Motnom.
- (2) Mount Tendong and Mount Motnom are spoken of as being in a brother-sister relationship.
- (3) Men and other living creatures are panicked and seek refuge on the summits of Mount Tendong and Mount Motnom.
- (4) The flood continues to rise.
- (5) In order to save the human beings and other living creatures who have taken refuge on them, Mount Tendong and Mount Motnom rise higher and higher above the waters.
- (6) After a time Mount Motnom thinks that she sees Mount Tendong sinking. In order to have a better look, she bends forward and, while doing, so is submerged by the flood waters and all the people and living creatures who have taken refuge on her are drowned. The people on Mount Tendong see this happen and are frightened out of their wits, the more so as the waters are still rising. (Cf. Version II, sub (4)!)
- (7) The survivors pray to God to save them.
- (8) At last, God hears their prayer and sends a pigeon to them as a sign of his mercy, whereupon they all rejoice and praise God. Then they worship the pigeon as the messenger of God and offer it *Chi*. The pigeon drinks the *Chi* and, presently, feels very thirsty. So it starts drinking the flood waters and in a week's time the flood is gone and everything becomes normal again.
- (9) Ever since the Lepchas have been grateful to Mount Tendong and the pigeon for having saved their ancestors. So every year they offer prayers to Mount Tendong and worship and make of-

ferings to the pigeon at every home.

SYNOPTIC COMPARISON OF THE LEPCHA VERSIONS

- (1) All six versions inform us of a cataclysm (caused by a cyclone along with heavy rains in Version VI) in which the country of Sikkim was submerged, nearly all her inhabitants being drowned. According to some of the versions, this flood occurred (a) in the days of the first ancestors of the Lepchas (Version III), or (b) at a time when there were only Lepchas living in Sikkim (Versions II and VI). Of all the mountain peaks, however, only one, Mount Tendong (Versions I, III, and IV), or two, Mount Tendong and Mount Maimon (Versions II, V, and VI), are said to have not been inundated by the flood waters.

[Occurrence of flood/ Time of flood specified/ One or two mountains not covered by water]

- (2) While in Versions II, V, and VI Mount Tendong and Mount Mainom are spoken of as being related to each other as brother and sister, in the other three versions (I, III, and IV) Mount Mainom does not appear and the sex of Mount Tendong is not explicitly mentioned.

[Sex of mountain(s) given or not given/ Mutual relationship of the two mountains]

- (3) Only in Version I are we told that a few people try to escape from the flood by entering a ship. When we look at Versions II to VI, however, we find (a) that only two people (Version III) or a few of the ancestors (Version IV) take shelter on the summit of Mount Tendong, (b) that the survivors of the flood, men (Version II) and other living creatures (Version VI), seek refuge on the summits of Mount Tendong and Mount Mainom, and (c) that in Version V the fate of man during this catastrophe is left out of account.

[Survivors of flood/ Means of escape]

- (4) All six versions more or less explicitly indicate the continuous rising of the flood. Four versions give particulars in this respect. Version IV, which does not mention Mount Mainom, describes the flood as gradually submerging all the mountain peaks (save Mount Tendong). According to Versions II and VI (cf. sub (6)!), the deluge floods even Mount Mainom. Only Version II says that it threatens to swallow Mount Tendong also, whereupon the people who have taken refuge there pray for deliverance. Version V (cf. sub (6)!), however, reports that Mount Tendong becomes submerged, while Mount Mainom is able to resist the flood waters.

[Continuous rising of the flood with its consequences]

- (5) Five versions present an account of the rising or, in one case, the raising, of Mount Tendong (and Mount Mainom). Only Version III strangely omits this miraculous incident, the central element of the myth. So we are told that Mount Tendong (Versions I and II) and Mount Mainom (Version VI) rise or lift their heads (Version V) above the flood waters, either in order to support a ship containing a few human beings (Version I) or in order to save the people (and other living creatures (Version VI)) who have taken refuge on his (Version II) or their (Version VI) summit(s), or to save themselves (?) (Version V). According to Version IV, on the other hand, it is the gods who raise the height of Mount Tendong to such an extent that the waters cannot reach its summit, thus saving the survivors.

Only in one case is Mount Tendong said to have elongated himself only after the refugees clinging to him have offered prayers (Version II), whereas, in Versions I, IV, and VI, Mount Tendong (Version I) and Mount Mainom (Version VI) rise of his or their own accord, or the former is raised by the gods (Version IV).

[Rising or raising of the mountain(s)/ Motives for their rising or being raised/ Survivors of flood, saved by mountain]

- (6) Of the six versions, three (I, V, and VI) offer more or less distinct etiologies which explain the shape and/or height of Mount Tendong or Mount Mainom respectively. Version VI tells us that Mount Mainom becomes anxious about Mount Tendong, as she thinks that he is sinking. In order to get a better look, she *bends forward* toward him. Version V, on the other hand, speaks of Mount Tendong as having been submerged by the flood waters and therefore feeling, after the subsidence of the deluge, ashamed that he, unlike his sister Mount Mainom, was not able to resist the waters. Hence he *bends his head* toward Mount Mainom to salute her. This would also correspond to what is related in Version I where Mount Tendong is said *to have subsided* to its present form after the flood receded. Thus, both mountain peaks appear to have a shape similar to each other, reminding the onlooker of human beings who have their heads bent toward each other.

[Etiologies: shape and/or height of the mountains]

- (7) According to only two versions (III and VI) the subsidence of the flood is evoked by prayers offered (a) by the survivors to God (Version VI) or (b) by *Ko-hom-fo*, the partridge and wife of *Tashei-thing*, along with a libation of *chi* (cf. Version VI, sub (8)), to her father-in-law, the god *Takbo-thing* (Version III).

[Subsidence of flood: means of evoking it]

- (8) Thus in Version VI we are told how it came to pass that the flood disappeared from the earth. God finally hears the prayers of the surviving people and sends a pigeon to them. They rejoice and offer it *chi* (cf. Version III, sub (7)!), and the pigeon drinks the *chi*. But then the pigeon feels so thirsty that it drinks all the flood waters and soon afterwards life on earth can commence afresh. Another explanation is offered in Version III: When *Takbo-thing*, looking down from the country of the gods, sees his daughter-in-law praying and offering *chi* to him, he strikes the earth with his walking stick so that the water sinks in; thereupon the world is repleated.

Thus, in both these versions, God is said to have brought about the subsidence of the flood by taking either direct (Version III) or indirect (Version VI) action, while the other versions (I, II, IV, and V) merely mention the eventual subsiding of the flood waters, being otherwise silent on the matter. Only Version IV adds that the survivors were still so frightened that they only dared to descend from Mount Tendong and repeople Sikkim when they saw a bird with a fresh twig in its beak. Only then were they convinced that life on earth had started again.

[Subsidence of flood: means of effecting it/ Starting the world anew]

- (9) Only two versions (II and VI) are concluded with the mention of the gratefulness and of the worship which is still offered by the Lepchas to Mount Tendong (Version II) and to the pigeon (Version VI) for having saved their ancestors.

[Gratefulness and worship offered to the saviors of mankind]

#### THE BARELA-BHILALA VERSIONS

*Version I* (Koppers 1940–1941: 284)<sup>11</sup>

- (1) Long ago, the world is entirely submerged by a flood, with the exception of two hills, *Pāwan đungar*<sup>12</sup> and *Mata phen*.<sup>13</sup>
- (2) *Pāwan đungar* and *Mata phen* are spoken of as being in a husband-wife relationship.
- (3) A *Balahi*<sup>14</sup> brother and sister try to escape from the flood in a bamboo basket.
- (4) The flood continues to rise.
- (5) Whenever the water rises a glass (half a hand) higher, *Pāwan đungar* rises the span of a hand while *Mata phen* rises an ell.
- (6) The bamboo basket sits on *Pāwan đungar* (after having come floating to it?), without being reached by the water.

- (7) —  
 (8) God sees this basket and, looking inside, asks, "Who are you?" "We are *Balahis*, brother and sister," is the answer. While speaking to God, the two have their backs turned to each other. Then God says, "Look at each other and say once more who you are!" They then look at each other and say, "We are man and wife."<sup>15</sup>

*Version II* (Koppers 1940–1941: 285)<sup>16</sup>

- (1) A flood submerges the world, with the exception of two hills, *Pāwan ḍuṅgar* and *Mata phen*.  
 (2) *Pāwan ḍuṅgar* and *Mata phen* are spoken of as being in a husband-wife relationship.  
 (3) —  
 (4) —  
 (5) When *Pāwan ḍuṅgar* sees how "shamelessly" *Mata phen* has raised herself above the waters, he flies into a rage and, lifting his foot, stamps upon her. (As a result *Mata phen* is considerably lower than *Pāwan ḍuṅgar* today.)  
 (6) —  
 (7) —  
 (8) —

*Version III* (Hermanns 1966: 41)<sup>17</sup>

- (1) A flood caused by a heavy rain submerges the earth, with the exception of two hills, *Pawan dungar* and *Mata phenai*, all the people on earth, save two, being drowned.  
 (2) *Pawan dungar* and *Mata phenai* are spoken of as being in a husband-wife relationship.  
 (3) A *Balahi* brother and sister try to escape from the flood in a basket.  
 (4) [The flood continues to rise.]  
 (5) Both the hills catch sight of the basket. As each of them is eager to save the two people in the basket, they rise up and grow higher and higher. Then *Pawan dungar* becomes angry and hits *Mata phenai*, so that she is no longer able to grow higher, while he continues to grow higher and higher.  
 (6) *Pawan dungar* carries (and thus saves) the basket.  
 (7) —  
 (8) *Pawan dungar* opens the basket and finds the *Balahi* brother and sister. He asks them, "Who are you?" "We are brother and sister," they answer. Thereupon, he turns the brother toward the east and the sister toward the west and then bids them to turn around. When he again asks them, "Who are you?", they reply,



“ We are husband and wife.”<sup>18</sup>

*Version IV* (Janssen 1966: 528–529)<sup>19</sup>

- (1) A flood caused by heavy rains which pour down for three and a half<sup>20</sup> days gradually submerges the earth, with the exception of two hills, *Pavu Dongor* and *Mata Phenai*.
- (2) *Pavu Dongor* and *Mata Phenai* have to be considered as being related to each other as husband and wife.
- (3) A brother and sister, called Dhediya and Dumra, try to escape from the flood in a quadrangular boat.
- (4) [The flood continues to rise.]
- (5) *Pavu Dongor* sees the boat and when it comes near him, he catches hold of it and pulls it up, as he knows that it contains “ the seed of the earth.” But as *Mata Phenai* is also eager to save “ the seed of the earth,” they fall into a vehement quarrel in the course of which *Pavu Dongor* rises an ell for every foot *Mata Phenai* rises. Then he demonstrates his strength and power and, eventually, gives her a push so that she leans toward the east.
- (6) Thus *Pavu Dongor* saves the boat with “ the seed of the earth.”
- (7) Thereupon, the flood subsides and the earth becomes dry again.
- (8) *Pavu Dongor* opens the boat and takes “ the seed of the earth ” in his hand and laughs. Dhediya and Dumra say, “ *Bhogvan* (God) has purified the earth.”

*Version V* (Janssen 1966: 536)<sup>21</sup>

- (1) A flood comes (as had been prophesied three and a half<sup>20</sup> days ago) and submerges everything, with the exception of two hills, *Pavu Dongor* and *Mata Phenai*.
- (2) *Pavu Dongor* and *Mata Phenai* have to be considered as being related to each other as husband and wife.
- (3) A brother and sister, called Dhediya and Dumra, try to escape from the flood in a golden boat.
- (4) [The flood continues to rise.]
- (5) *Mata Phenai* and *Pavu Dongor* see the golden boat and start quarrelling about it. While quarrelling, *Mata Phenai* rises an ell higher whenever *Pavu Dongor* rises the span of a hand. Thereupon, *Pavu Dongor* becomes angry and pushes into her side, so that she leans toward the east.
- (6) [*Pavu Dongor* saves the golden boat in which Dhediya and Dumra are sitting.]
- (7) *Pavu Dongor* addresses the flood and causes it to subside.
- (8) —

*Version VI* (Janssen 1966: 539–540)<sup>23</sup>

- (1) Rain pours down (as had been prophesied three<sup>23</sup> days ago) and the waters rise and destroy everything on earth. Only two hills, *Pawa Dungor* and *Mata Phenai*, are not submerged by the flood waters.
- (2) *Pawa Dungor* and *Mata Phenai* have to be considered as being related to each other as husband and wife.
- (3) A brother and sister, Dhediya and Dumra, try to escape from the flood in a basket.
- (4) [The flood continues to rise.]
- (5) *Pawa Dungor* sees the basket which floats toward him and the brother and sister sitting inside. As he is eager to save “the seed of the earth,” he commands the rains to cease. Now *Mata Phenai*, also eager to rescue the two human beings, rises fast while *Pawa Dungor* rises only a little. Thereupon, *Pawa Dungor* becomes angry and pushes her so that she sinks. She is no match for him.
- (6) *Pawa Dungor* saves the basket containing “the seed of the earth.”
- (7) —
- (8) *Pawa Dungor* opens the basket and sees “the seed of the earth.” He is pleased and asks them, “Who are you?” “We are brother and sister,” they reply. Then *Pawa Dungor* says, “Even though you are brother and sister, from now on be husband and wife, since there is no other “seed of the earth” left to repeople the world!” He blesses Dhediya and Dumra as husband and wife.<sup>24</sup>

#### SYNOPTIC COMPARISON OF THE BARELA-BHILALA VERSIONS

- (1) Without exception, the six Barela-Bhilala versions report of the occurrence of a deluge which submerged and destroyed everything, all the people on earth being drowned, except two (Versions I, III-VI; expressly only Version III); Version II being silent on man’s destiny. This catastrophe brought about by heavy rains (Version III, IV, and VI), which poured down for three and a half days (Version IV), took place a long time ago (Version I), (and had been prophesied three (Version VI) or three and a half days (Version V) beforehand). Furthermore, all six versions are in agreement in declaring that only two hills, named *Pawan Dungar* and *Mata Phenai*, were spared by the flood waters.  
[Occurrence of flood/ Time of flood specified/ Two hills not covered with water]
- (2) According to all six versions, *Pawan Dungar* and *Mata Phenai* are related to each other as husband and wife. The relationship is expressly noted in Versions I-III, whereas in the other versions

it is suggested by the respective contexts.

[Sex of hills given/ Mutual relationship of two hills]

- (3) With the exception of Version II, which is not concerned with man's fate during the cataclysm, all versions speak of a brother and sister as being the only human beings who arrange to escape from the deluge. According to Versions I and III, these two are Balahis (not Barela-Bhilalas!), their names being, according to Versions IV-VI, Dhediya and Dumra.<sup>25</sup> As their means of escape, Versions I, III, and VI name a basket (Version I has a bamboo basket), whereas Versions IV and V have a boat which is said to be either quadrangular (Version IV) or made of gold (Version V).

[Survivors of flood/ Means of escape]

- (4) Only Version I explicitly informs about the continuous rising of the flood, but it can be surmised from the contexts of the other accounts, with the exception of Version II where the increase of the deluge waters does not seem to matter.

[Continuous rising of the flood]

- (5) All six versions tell of the wondrous event of the two hills, *Pawan Dungar* and *Mata Phenai*, raising themselves above the flood waters. In Version II this is indicated by the context with regard to *Mata Phenai*. In describing how this came to pass, the six versions display only slight variations in detail: After *Pawan Dungar* has seen the quadrangular boat (Version IV) or the basket (Version VI) floating toward him and after he has caught and pulled it up (Version IV), or after both *Pawan Dungar* and *Mata Phenai* have caught sight of the basket (Version III) or the golden boat (Version V), there arises a (vehement) quarrel between these two hills (Version IV and V), as each of them is eager to save (a) the two human beings in the basket (Version III) or (b) "the seed of the earth" (Versions IV and VI) contained in the quadrangular boat (Version IV) or in the basket (Version VI), or (c) [the brother and sister in] the golden boat (Version V).

In order to accomplish this object the two hills start raising themselves above the flood waters (Versions I-VI), after *Pawan Dungar* has commanded the rains to cease (cf. sub (7)), obviously without success (Version VI), for whenever the waters rise "a glass" higher (Version I), *Pawan Dungar* rises the span of a hand (Versions I and V) or only a little (Version VI), while *Mata Phenai* rises an ell (Versions I and V) or fast (Version VI). According to Version IV, the reverse is the case: whenever *Mata Phenai* rises a foot higher, *Pawan Dungar* rises an ell. Only Version II does not give particulars in this respect.

When *Pawan Dungar* sees that *Mata Phenai*, being a woman, dares to raise herself higher than he, being a man, he becomes angry (Versions II-VI) and, determined to punish her for her "improper conduct" and "insubordination," he (a) stamps upon her with his foot (Version II), or (b) hits her so that she is no longer able to grow higher (Version III), or (c) pushes (her side) (Versions IV-VI) after he has demonstrated his strength and power (Version IV). As a result *Mata Phenai* is now considerably lower than *Pawan Dungar* (Versions II, III and VI; VI: "has sunk"), and/or leans toward the east (Versions IV and V). Only Version I is silent about *Pawan Dungar's* anger and rude behavior toward *Mata Phenai*, which, in the last analysis, is the direct cause for the differing height of the two hills and the inclination of *Mata Phenai* to the east.

[Rising of the hills/ Motives for their rising/ Etiologies: height of the hills and shape of one of them]

- (6) While Version II fails to make mention of the fate of human beings during the flood, all other versions tell that *Pawan Dungar* manages to seize hold of the basket or boat and thus save the brother and sister, whether by direct (Versions III-VI) or indirect (Version I) action. In the case of Version V, this is implied in the text.

[Survivors of flood, saved by hill]

- (7) Only two versions expressly mention the subsidence of the flood waters. According to Versions IV and V, the flood is said to recede after *Pawan Dungar* has saved the boat containing the two people; Version V informs us that this is brought about by *Pawan Dungar* himself addressing the flood. It should be here added that in Version VI it is mentioned that *Pawan Dungar* orders the rains to stop before he has saved the "seed of the earth" (cf. sub (5)).

[Subsidence of flood/ Means of effecting that]

- (8) While, according to Versions III, IV, and VI, *Pawan Dungar* opens the basket (Versions III and VI) or the boat (Version IV) and, finding the brother and sister, is pleased (Versions IV and VI), according to Version I it is God who sees the basket and looks inside. Version V, on the other hand, fails to narrate this last portion of the myth and Version II is totally unconcerned about the fate of mankind. On learning that the two human beings are brother and sister, the deified hill *Pawan Dungar* (Versions III and VI) or God (Version I) is said to make them husband and wife (a) by asking them to turn around and look at one another

(Version I) or (b) by turning the brother eastward and the sister westward and asking them to turn around and face one another again (Version III), or (c) by simply bidding them to henceforth be husband and wife and blessing them to this effect (Version VI). Thereupon, the two recognize each other as husband and wife and the world can be re-peopled. Version IV omits this decisive action so essential to the progress and survival of mankind and adds only that the brother and sister, after having been taken out of the boat, perceive and declare that God has purified the earth.

[Discovery of surviving couple/ Starting the world anew]

COMPARISON OF THE LEPCHA WITH THE BARELA-BHILALA VERSIONS AND CONCLUSION

When we contrast the comparable myth elements of the Lepcha Versions (L) with those of the Barela-Bhilala Versions (BB), we reach the following results:

L (1): BB (1)

Both myths narrate the occurrence of a deluge which submerged the entire country/world (L; BB). Some of the versions specify the time of the flood as the (more or less) remote past (L II, III and VI; BB I). In the course of this cataclysm, the whole of mankind, except for a few people, were drowned (L; BB). Only one (L I, III, and IV) or two mountains/hills (L II, V, and VI; BB) remained above the waters.

L (2): BB (2)

Of these two mountains/hills, one is regarded as male (only L II, V, and VI; BB) and the other as female. While the L versions make them brother and sister, the BB versions speak of them as being husband and wife.

L (3): BB (3)

By means of a ship/boat (L I (!); BB IV and V) or a basket (BB I, III, and VI),<sup>26</sup> or by seeking refuge on the summit(s) of the mountain(s) (L II-IV and VI), two (L III (!); BB I and III-VI) or a few people (L I, II, IV, and VI) tried to escape from the catastrophe.

L (4): BB (4)

The flood waters, however, continued to rise, a factor which is more or less explicitly indicated in the versions (L; BB I and III-VI).

## L (5): BB (5a)

Thereupon, the mountain(s)/hills are said to rise/be raised/raise themselves above the flood waters (L I-II and IV-VI; BB) in order to save the refugees/survivors from being drowned (L I-IV and VI; BB I and III-VI).

## L (6): BB (5b)

Sub L (6) and BB (5) etiologies are offered which explain (a) the shape and/or height of the two mountains (L I, V, and VI), viz., she bends forward as she is anxious about her brother (L VI); he bends his head toward his sister as he feels shame at having been defeated by her (L V); he subsides to the present form (L I); (b) the differing height and shape of one of these hills (BB II-VI), viz., being in a temper because she dared to raise herself above him, he stamps upon his wife with his foot (BB II), hits her (BB III) or pushes (her side) (BB IV-VI), as a result of which she is now considerably lower than he (BB II, III, and VI) and/or leans toward the east (BB IV and V).

## L (7): BB (7)

While all L versions are indicative of the subsidence of the flood, which, according to two versions (L III and VI), was brought about by God, this event is expressly mentioned in only two BB Versions (BB IV and V) and was, according to Version V, effected by the male hill.

## L (8a): BB (6)

The male mountain/hill (L I-IV and VI; BB I and III-IV) is reported to have finally succeeded in saving the people who tried to escape from the deluge.

## L (8b): BB (8)

Thus the world could be repopled (L; BB).

In giving this synoptic comparison, a curious coincidence should not be omitted, viz., the fact that one of the L versions and one of the BB versions leave the fate of man in the course of the deluge out of account.

In summing up the results of these comparisons, we find an agreement of the Lepcha and Barela-Bhilala versions on the following eight points: 1) the occurrence of a deluge, 2) as a rule, two mountains/hills, one of them male and the other female, are not inundated by the flood waters, 3) the risk of a few/two human beings to escape from the flood by means of a boat/basket or by seeking shelter on a mountain,

4) the continuous rising of the flood, 5) the mountain(s) or hills becoming the saviors of mankind by rising above the flood, 6) the subsidence of flood, 7) the survivors of flood repeople the world, and 8) the present height and/or shape of the mountain(s)/hills is explained as resulting from their rising and bending or from being stamped upon, hit or pushed (etiologies).

If we take in account this remarkably long list of corresponding features, we are tempted to proceed on the assumption that we might here have an instance of myth diffusion. In the case at hand, however, this appears to be rather dubious and improbable, since there is no apparent connection between the Lepcha and the Barela-Bhilala communities and since no further version or variant of this myth is known from the other regions between Sikkim and Madhya Pradesh. We should note, however, a factor suggested by the myths, i.e., the similarity of their geographical settings. In both cases two mountains/hills, characterized by differing heights and particular shapes, are located (more or less) close to each other. So, if we bear in mind that tribal communities like the Lepchas and the Barela-Bhilalas have, from ancient times, been on very intimate terms with nature, we shall find it plausible to conclude that these geographical settings have impressed and stimulated the imaginations of both communities. Since the two mountains/hills are considered as divine beings by both communities, they are, as it were, predestined to play a prominent part in their inherited mythological concepts and traditions. Therefore, in the context of the universal deluge, the role of savior is fittingly assigned to these deified mountains/hills. Being looked upon as gods, they are, of course, quite capable of rising above the flood waters.

The parallel structure of these deluge myths of the Lepchas and the Barela-Bhilalas can be explained in this fashion. However, inasmuch as the motif of mountains/hills rising to save human beings from drowning during the deluge is found neither in South Asia nor in any other part of the world (according to Thompson and Balys 1958, and Thompson 1955-1958), the above explanation has no further support than this and can be only tentative. In any event, it would be interesting to ascertain whether this motif is found in the flood tradition of any other ethnic group in the world by searching through the more recent, but also older, literature on the subject. It is also to be hoped that by future research similarly structured flood myths will be unearthed in South Asia and/or elsewhere, for, only then could one reach a definitive conclusion.

A brief list of motifs is subjoined. However, it is confined to only

the main motifs of the Lepcha and Barela-Bhilala versions of the flood myth. The numbering of motifs conforms to that employed in the motif indexes by Thompson 1955–1958, and/or Thompson and Balys 1958. Motifs marked by an \* and bearing no number are not contained in the aforesaid indexes. It should be added in passing that from among the twelve myth versions presented and discussed in this paper, only Version III of the Lepcha flood myth has been included and considered in Thompson and Balys 1958.

**MOTIFS:**

Deluge. (A 1010.)

Escape from deluge. (A 1020.)

Deluge: escape in boat (ark). (A 1021.)

Escape from deluge in box or basket. (A 1029.5.)

Escape from deluge on mountain. (A 1022.)

\*Mountains (hills) rising (raising themselves) to support ship (boat, basket) containing human beings during deluge.

\*Mountains (hills) rising (raising themselves) to serve human beings during deluge.

Origin of [height and] shape of two mountains (hills). (A 969.10.)

Extraordinary mountains and other land features. (F 750.)

\*Rising mountains (hills).

New race from single pair (or several) after world calamity. (A 1006.1.)

New race from incest after world calamity. (A 1006.2.)

Brother-sister incest. (T 415.)

\*Brother and sister made husband and wife by deity after deluge to start new race.

Incestuous first parents. (A 1273.1.)

**APPENDIX**

1. THE LEPCHA VERSIONS

*Version I* (Mainwaring, 1876: XX, note):

There is a hill, visible from Dorjeling, (*tun-róng*), which, as the tale hath it, when all the country was under water, arose and supported a ship containing a few persons, all other people being drowned. The hill rose up like a horn, (hence its name, *á-róng*, a horn), and afterwards subsided to its present form. It is known to Europeans as the Camel's back.



*Version II* (Waddell, 1900: 110):

In the old, old days when there were none but the Rong (i.e. 'Lepchas') in this country, a great flood deluged the land. The waters drowned all the people in the valleys and covered all the mountains except this peak Tendong, and that of his sister Mainom, the adjoining mountain to the north. The few survivors who had fled to Tendong saw the peak of Mainom disappear under the water, and hence it is called 'Mainom' (properly *Ma-nom*), or 'The Disappearing Sister'; and the shrieks of the drowning can still be heard from Tendong, which then alone remained above the flood. The still rising waters lapped this peak also, and threatened to swallow it, whereupon the surviving people prayed to the mountain to save them, and it then miraculously elongated itself, and kept its clinging refugees above the rising flood. Hence this mountain was named Tendong, properly *Tün-rong*, or 'The Uplifted Horn.' After a time the waters fell, but ever afterwards the grateful Rong (Lepchas) have fervently worshipped this mountain, which had in this miraculous way saved their ancestors.

*Version III* (Stocks, 1925: 359):

In the beginning *Foog-rong* and *Nazong-nyo* lived, our first Grandfather and Grandmother (ancestors). Then the flood came and nearly every human creature perished, only two who ran to the summit of Mount *Tendong-lho* were saved.

Now *Takbo-thing* was the father of *Tashei-thing* who had married the partridge (*ko-hom-fo*), and she put some 'chi' in a large leaf (*tung-fyum-nyom*) which she offered to her father-in-law, saying if he only would, he could stop the flood. And *Takbo-thing* looking down from the country of the *Rum* saw that the world was flooded, and that his daughter-in-law was praying to him and offering him 'chi,' and he took up his walking stick (*pa-tung*) and struck the world so that the water sank in. But the partridge spilt some of the 'chi' on her breast. (The mark can be seen to this day, she is called the *tung-fyum* because of it.) So the world became dry once more, and the trees and bushes commenced to grow again, and the world was re peopled.

*Version IV* (Mazumdar, 1961: 296):

The Lepcha legend describes how the whole of Sikkim was submerged by flood. Those few of their ancestors who could escape, took shelter on the summit of a mountain which is now known as Tendong or the Raised Horn. Peaks after peaks of the high mountains were submerged. But the gods raised the height of the Tendong to such an extent that flood waters remained well below the summit. Later,

even after the surging waters had receded the survivors did not dare to come down from the shelter of the heights. Only when they saw a bird flying past with a fresh twig in its beak that they came down and repopulated the valley of Sikkim.

*Version V* (Das/Banerjee, 1962: 131–132):

It is said that once the whole world was flooded except the peak 'Tendong' (who is male) and his sister 'Manom' (which means hidden or disappearing sister and this peak is situated just by the left side of 'Tendong'). The flood water was increasing and the brother and sister were also lifting their heads, but at last the brother was also flooded, the sister remained above the water level. When the water receded, the brother was ashamed that his sister remained unconquered but he being a male could not resist the water. Hence the brother bent his head in order to salute the sister. Even today, they believe, one can see Mt. Tendong like a standing man with his head bent towards his sister, 'Manom.'

*Version VI* (Kotturan, 1976: 42–44):

Long, long ago, when there were only Lepchas living in Sikkim, there came once a big cyclone which brought with it very heavy rain. The water in the streams and rivers began to rise higher and higher and began to flow into homes and villages. In panic the people sought refuge at the top of big mountains.

The rain kept on pouring and the water continued to rise, covering vast areas including all the beautiful valleys and hills of the Himalayas. There was no place which was not covered by water, except two peaks, Tendong and Motnom peaks. These two peaks were brother and sister. They rose higher and higher above the water hoping to save the living things that had taken refuge on them.

After a time Motnom thought that she saw her beloved brother endong sink. She then anxiously bent forward to have a better look and while bending the water rose high above her and she herself sank. All the people and other living things who had taken refuge on her thus went under water.

The people who had taken refuge on Tendong saw this happen and were more frightened than ever. The water was still rising and they felt that they too would sink. "We are all doomed!" they cried in fear.

They began praying to God: "Save us, O Lord, from this danger. We know that you are displeased. If this is not a sign of your displeasure then what is it? But have mercy on us, poor creatures, and make

peace, we beg thee, O Lord!"

At last God heard their prayer and sent a pigeon. When they saw the godly pigeon, the Lepchas knew that now they would be saved. The pigeon is a bird of peace and it showed God's mercy. The bird had brought to them the message of forgiveness and hope and so they rejoiced and praised God.

The pigeon perched on the top of the peak, looking down with pity on all those beings which had taken refuge there. The people looked up to it with reverence and worshipped it as the messenger of God and made to it the customary offering of *Chi*.

The pigeon drank the *Chi* and felt thirsty. So it began to drink the flood waters and thus the water slowly began to go down. After a time the people were able to see their houses, lands and fields. In a week's time the flood had gone and the rivers and streams became normal.

But the grateful Lepchas never forgot the peak Tendong who had given them refuge and kept his head high even though he saw his sister sink under water.

Every year they offer prayers to Tendong. It is said that from the top of Tendong it is possible to see on any day the top of Motnom peak always covered with dark clouds. The Lepchas believe that one could hear at times from the top of Motnom the groans of those who were drowned in the flood.

Neither did they forget the good pigeon which had brought to them the message of hope. It was the pigeon with its divine powers that drank all the water and thus saved them from certain death. Today the bird is worshipped at every Lepcha home and offerings are made to it every year.

## 2. THE BARELA-BHILALA VERSIONS

*Version I* (Koppers, 1940-141: 284):

Once, long ago the world was entirely under water. Only two hills could be seen above the flood, the one called *Pāwan đungar* (this hill is in the neighbourhood of Dohad) and the other *Mata phen* (which means Mata, hood of a snake). These two hills were man and wife. Whenever (at the time of the Deluge) the water rose a glass (half a hand) higher, *Pāwan đungar* rose the span of a hand while *Mata phen* rose a *hāth* (an ell). On this higher hill there was a bamboo basket which had not been reached by the water. God saw this basket and, drawing near, looked into it and asked: "Who are you?" He received the answer: "We are Balahis, brother and sister." While speaking to God the two had their backs turned to each other. God said: "Look

at each other and say (once more) who you are." Then they looked at each other and said: "We are man and wife."

*Version II* (Koppers, 1940–1941: 285):

There is a further legend that *Pāwan đungar*, the man, was full of anger when he saw how shamelessly *Mata phen* had raised herself above the water. Lifting his foot, he stamped upon her so that to-day Lady Hill is considerably lower than *Pāwan đungar*, her male partner.

*Version III* (Hermanns, 1966: 41):

Sie [ein Bruder und eine Schwester der *Balahi*-Kaste] machten den Korb und setzten sich hinein. Darauf kam ein großer Regen, und die ganze Welt wurde überflutet. Außer den beiden Menschen im Korbe ertranken alle anderen auf Erden. Nun waren zwei Berge da; ein männlicher, *Pawan dungar* genannt, und ein weiblicher, *Mata phenai*. Sie sahen, daß Bhagwan alles vernichtete und nur noch ein Korb herumschwamm, in dem zwei lebende Menschen waren. Sie beide sagten: "Ich will gehen und die Menschen retten." So wuchsen die Berge empor und wurden immer höher. Da wurde *Pawan dungar* ärgerlich und schlug sein Weib, so daß sie nicht mehr wachsen sollte, und er wuchs höher empor. Er trug den Korb, öffnete ihn und sah Bruder und Schwester. Er fragte sie: "Wer seid ihr?" Sie sagten: "Wir sind Bruder und Schwester." Da nahm er sie und wendete den Burschen zum Osten und die Schwester zum Westen. Dann gebot er ihnen, sich herumzudrehen, und fragte sie wiederum: "Wer seid ihr nun?" Sie sagten: "Wir sind Mann und Frau."

*English translation:*

They [a brother and sister of the *Balahi* caste] made the basket and sat down inside. Then a heavy rain fell and the whole world was flooded. All the people on earth were drowned save the two in the basket. Now, there were two hills, a male one called *Pawan dungar*, and a female one, *Mata phenai*. They saw that Bhagwan destroyed everything and that only a basket floated about with two human beings sitting inside. Both of them said, "I will go and save the human beings." So, the hills rose up and grew higher and higher. Then *Pawan dungar* became angry and hit his wife so that she would not grow any higher, and he grew higher. He carried the basket, opened it and saw the brother and sister. He asked them, "Who are you?" They said, "We are brother and sister." Thereupon, he took them and turned the youth towards the east and his sister towards the west. Then he bade

them turn around and asked them again, "Who are you now?"  
They said, "We are husband and wife."

*Version IV* (Janssen, 1966: 528–529):

Die beiden, Bruder und Schwester, setzten sich in das Boot und verriegelten es mit dem schweren Schloß.

Dreiundeinhalb Tage lang stürzte eine kalte Wasserflut nieder.

Wie aus einer Worfelwanne floß das Wasser, Tropfen so groß wie ein Reisstampfer prasselten nieder.

Die Erde versank allmählich, das schnelle viereckige Boot begann sich zu bewegen.

*Pavu Dongor* schaute zu. *Pavu Dongor* sprach:

"In diesem Boot ist die Saat der Erde."

Das schnelle Boot kam in die Nähe von *Pavu Dongor*.

*Pavu Dongor* packte eine Ecke und zog das Boot hinauf.

Dann sagte er:

"Ich nehme die Saat der Erde."

*Mata Phenai* sagte:

"Die Saat der Erde bekommst du nicht!"

*Pavu Dongor* sagte:

"Die Saat der Erde sollst du nicht nehmen!"

Die Grenzen (der Berge) stießen zusammen und drohten zu brechen.

Die Ohren (der Berge) stießen zusammen und drohten zu brechen.

*Pavu Dongor* war nicht zu erschüttern.

*Mata Phenai* wuchs Fuß um Fuß.

*Pavu Dongor* wuchs Elle um Elle.

Dann sagte *Pavu Dongor*:

"Ihr Weibervolk habt keinen Respekt vor den Männern!"

So sagte er:

"Die Saat der Erde werde ich dir nicht geben!"

Mit gebeugtem Kopf schlug er auf die Erde, so daß sie barst.

Mit erhobenem Kopf stieß er gegen den Himmel, so daß er zersprang.

Dann gab er *Mata Phenai* einen Stoß, auf daß sie sich nach Osten lehnte.

Darauf hörte die kalte Wasserflut auf.

In jenen Tagen wurde die Erde wieder trocken.

*Pavu Dongor* öffnete das schnelle Boot und nahm die Saat der Erde in seine Hand.

*Pavu Dongor* begann zu lachen.

*Dhediya* und *Dumra* sagten:

"Bhogwan hat die Erde rein gewaschen."

*English translation:*

The two of them, brother and sister, sat down in the boat and bolted it with the heavy lock.

For three and a half days, showers of cold rain poured down.

The water gushed down as if flowing out of a winnowing fan, drops as big as rice-pounders fell down.

Little by little, the world sank; the fast quadrangular boat began to move.

*Pavu Dongor* watched. *Pavu Dongor* said,

“ In this boat is the seed of the earth.”

The fast boat came near *Pavu Dongor*.

*Pavu Dongor* caught hold of one corner of the boat and pulled it up.

Then he said,

“ I am going to take the seed of the earth.”

*Mata Phenai* said,

“ You will not get the seed of the earth.”

*Pavu Dongor* said,

“ You shall not take the seed of the earth.”

The boundaries (of the hills) collided and threatened to break.

The ears (of the hills) collided and threatened to break.

*Pavu Dongor* could not be shaken.

*Mata Phenai* rose foot by foot.

*Pavu Dongor* rose ell by ell.

Then *Pavu Dongor* said,

“ You womenfolk have no respect for the male sex.”

So he said,

“ I will not give you the seed of the earth.”

With his head bent down, he hit the earth so that it broke.

With his head raised up, he stroke the sky so that it burst.

Then he gave *Mata Phenai* a push so that she leaned towards the east.

Thereupon, the showers of cold water ceased.

In those days, the earth became dry again.

*Pavu Dongor* opened the fast boat and took the seed of the earth in his hand.

*Pavu Dongor* began to laugh.

*Dhediya* and *Dumra* said,

“ Bhogwan has purified the earth.”

*Version V* (Janssen, 1966: 536):

Sie setzten sich in das goldene Boot und verriegelten es.

Als dreiundeinhalb Tage vergangen waren, kam die Wasserflut.

Die Wogen stiegen, und das goldene Boot begann zu schwimmen.  
*Mata Phenai* und *Pavu Dongor* wendeten den Blick und schauten.  
 Sie stießen mit dem linken Fuß und legten sich einen Tragring auf  
 den Kopf (unklar).

*Pavu Dongor* wuchs Spanne um Spanne.

*Mata Phenai* wuchs Elle um Elle.

“Das Weibervolk hört nicht auf mich!”

Deshalb gab er ihr einen Stoß in die Seite, so daß sie sich nach Osten  
 lehnte.

*Pavu Dongor* begann zu sprechen:

“Wasserflut, weiche, wenn du weichen willst;

wenn du nicht weichst, wird die schwangere Erde zerbrechen und  
 aufbersten; gib mir die Saat der Erde wieder!”

Er begann zu sagen: “Meine Erde soll ruhig werden!”

Danach wich die Wasserflut.

*English translation:*

They sat down in the golden boat and locked it.

When three and a half days had passed, the flood came.

The waves rose up and the golden boat began to float.

*Mata Phenai* and *Pavu Dongor* turned and looked.

They kicked (each other?) with their left foot and put a round  
 load-pad on their heads (obscure).

*Pavu Dongor* rose span by span.

*Mata Phenai* rose ell by ell.

“The womenfolk do not listen to me!”

Therefore, he gave her a push into her side so that she leaned  
 towards the east.

*Pavu Dongor* began to speak,

“O Flood, recede if you will recede;

if you do not recede, the pregnant earth will break and burst open;  
 give me the seed of the earth again!”

He began to say, “My earth shall become calm!”

Thereupon, the flood receded.

*Version VI* (Janssen, 1966: 539–540):

Nach drei Tagen goß heftiger Regen vom Himmel und zerstörte  
 alles auf der Erde. Der Korb schwamm auf dem Wasser und kam  
 in die Nähe des Berges *Pawa Dungor*. Der Berg *Pawa Dungor* sah  
 den Korb und erblickte die Insassen. Er wollte sie retten.

*Pawa Dungor* befahl dem Regen aufzuhören.

*Mata Phenai* wuchs schnell und *Pawa Dungor* nur ein wenig. *Pawa*

*Dungor* sagte: "Ich werde die Saat der Erde nicht hergeben, weil ich zuerst den Korb sah, der auf mich zukam!" *Pawa Dungor* gab *Mata Phenai* einen Stoß, so daß sie versank. Sie konnte nichts gegen *Pawa Dungor* tun.

*Pawa Dungor* war sehr glücklich; er öffnete den Korb und sah die Saat der Erde. Er fragte sie: "Wer seid ihr?" Sie antworteten: "Wir sind Bruder und Schwester!" *Pawa Dungor* sagte: "Wenn ihr auch Bruder und Schwester seid, von heute an seid ihr Mann und Frau, weil keine Saat der Erde geblieben ist, um die Erde wieder zu bevölkern!" Er segnete *Dhediya* und *Dumra* als Mann und Frau.

*English translation:*

After three days, a heavy rain poured down from the skies and destroyed everything on earth. The basket floated on the waters and neared the hill *Pawa Dungor*. The hill *Pawa Dungor* caught sight of the basket and saw its inmates. He wanted to save them. *Pawa Dungor* commanded the rain to cease.

*Mata Phenai* grew quickly and *Pawa Dungor* only a bit. *Pawa Dungor* said, "I will not surrender the seed of the earth. I was the first to catch sight of the basket that came up to me!" *Pawa Dungor* gave *Mata Phenai* a push so that she sank. She was no match for *Pawa Dungor*.

*Pawa Dungor* was very happy; he opened the basket and saw the seed of the earth. He asked them, "Who are you?" They answered, "We are brother and sister!" *Pawa Dungor* said, "Even though you are brother and sister, from today onwards you two shall be husband and wife since no other seed of the earth has been left to repeople the world again!" He blessed *Dhediya* and *Dumra* as husband and wife.

NOTES

1. Mainwaring 1876: XX, note; Waddell 1900: 110; Stocks 1925: 359; Mazumdar 1961: 296; Das / Banerjee 1962: 131-132; Kotturan 1976: 42-44.

2. Koppers 1940-1941: 284, 285; Hermanns 1966: 41; Janssen 1966: 528-529, 536, 539-240.

3. Recorded in Sikkim; quoted with slightly changed wording in Risley 1894: 42, where the following noteworthy information is subjoined: "To this day at the commencement of the rains a monk is sent from the neighbouring monastery of Niamtchi to the top of Tendong, where he has to remain during the wet season, praying hard that a second flood may not be sent."

4. Tendong (Risley 1894; Waddell 1900; Mazumdar 1961; Das / Banerjee 1962; Kotturan 1976; Das 1978) = Tendong-lho (Stocks 1925), properly *tun-róng* (Mainwaring



1876) or *Tün-rong* (Waddell 1900): “the up-raised horn” (Risley 1894), “the Uplifted Horn” (Waddell 1900), “the Raised Horn” (Mazumdar 1961), “known to Europeans as the Camel’s back” (Mainwaring 1876).

Mount Tendong is situated to the north of the confluence of the two great rivers of Sikkim, Rangit and Tista, its altitude being given as 8613, 8660 or 8676 feet.

5. Mainom (Waddell 1900)=Motnom (Kotturan 1976), properly *Ma-nom* (Waddell 1900), Manom (Das / Banerjee 1962; Das 1978): “the Disappearing Sister” (Waddell 1900), “the hidden or disappearing sister” (Das / Banerjee 1962; Das 1978).

Mount Mainom is situated to the north of Mount Tendong, its altitude being given as 10.612 or 10.637 feet.

6. Recorded in Sikkim; quoted in Das 1978: 228.

7. Told by David Macdonald at Kalimpong, April 22nd, 1925.

8. Recorded in Sikkim.

9. Recorded in the Darjiling District of West Bengal; quoted in Das 1978: 228.

10. Recorded in Sikkim.

11. Recorded in the Barwani area. This version is, for comparison, drawn upon in Walk 1949: 62.

12. *Pāwan đungar* (Koppers 1940–1941)=*Pawan dungar* (Hermanns 1966)=*Pavu Dongor / Pawa Dungor* (Janssen 1966): “Holy Hill.” The hill Pawan Dungar is situated in the neighborhood of Dohad.

13. *Mata phen* (Koppers 1940–1941)=*Mata phenai* (Hermanns 1966, Janssen 1966: “Mother [Cobra-] Hood” (Koppers 1940–1941: 284: “*Mata*, hood of a snake”). The (exact) situation of the hill Mata Phenai is not given.

14. For particulars on the Balahi community of Nimar, traditionally being engaged in spinning and weaving, cf. Fuchs 1950.

15. According to the deluge-myth traditions of central Indian tribal communities, this is one of the devices resorted to by their gods to make a brother and sister, the only survivors of the cataclysm, forget their relationship so that they would propagate and repopulate the world again, thus outwitting the incest taboo; other devices to the same effect being: beating the brother and sister, making them drunk, disfiguring them by smallpox, etc.

It may be pointed out that the above motif, also reported in Version III, is not only met with in the flood myths of the Bhilalas and Bhils (cf., for instance, Koppers 1940–1941: 282–283, Hermanns 1964: 99–100, where—as in Version III—the girl is turned towards the west and the boy towards the east), who inhabit the West Nimar, Dhar and Jhabua Districts of western Madhya Pradesh and adjoining regions of eastern Gujarat, but also in the deluge tradition of the Warlis of Thana District, Maharashtra (cf. Save 1945: 166–168, where the brother and sister are turned round seven times in all [!]); it is, furthermore, found in flood myths from Southern India where the place of the brother and sister is taken by a father and his daughter, as, for instance, in that of the Vēṭṭekāḍu Iṅulas of Calicut District, Kerala (cf. Zvelebil 1982: 223–226, where the father is turned towards the south and his daughter towards the north) and in that of the Ālu Kurumbas of Nilgiris District, Tamilnadu (cf. Kapp 1987: no. 5, where the father and his daughter are, one after the other, asked to first turn to “that side” (=north or south) and then to “this side” (=north or south)).

16. Recorded in the Barwani area.

17. Told by Deo Prasat Monga from Salia Kala.

18. Cf. sub note 15.

19. Told by Phugria Jamra from Wedpuri near Chicklya.

20. I.e., a magical number among the Bhils and Bhilalas, sometimes simply mean-

ing "many."

21. Told by Bhanja Changor from Dongergaon.
22. Told by Gotia Sulya from Chicklya.
23. Or, three and a half? Cf. Versions IV, sub (1), and V, sub (1).
24. Here, the motif met with in Versions I and III, strangely enough, is omitted.
25. For particulars concerning the connexion of a brother and sister with two mountain peaks after the deluge in Philippine (Lepanto Igorot and Ifugao, North Luzon) and Indonesian (Toradja, Celebes, Dayak, Central Borneo) flood traditions, cf. Walk 1949: 99-101.
26. According to the flood myths current among central and southern Indian tribal communities, the most common vehicle used by a brother and sister or a father and daughter during the deluge is a big hollowed-out gourd; cf., for instance, Elwin 1949; I, 4-6, 8, 15, 24-27; XXII, 4 (central India), and Elwin 1954: I, 14, 15; VII, 14; XIX, 6, 19; XXX, 22 (Orissa); Zvelebil 1982: 223-226 (Kerala) and Kapp 1987: nos. 4 and 5 (Tamilnadu) (=motif A 1021.0.3. Deluge: escape in gourd, according to Thompson 1955-1958, and Thompson / Balys 1958).

#### REFERENCES CITED

DAS, Amal Kumar

- 1978 *The Lepchas of West Bengal*. Calcutta: Editions Indian.

DAS, Amal Kumar and Swapan Kumar BANERJEE

- 1962 *The Lepchas of Darjeeling district*. Bulletin of the Cultural Research Institute, Special Series, 2. Calcutta: D. Majumdar, Tribal Welfare Department, Government of West Bengal.

ELWIN, Verrier

- 1949 *Myths of middle India*. London: Oxford University Press.  
1954 *Tribal myths of Orissa*. London: Oxford University Press.

FUCHS, Stephen

- 1950 *The children of Hari. A study of the Nimar Balahis in the Central Provinces of India*. Wiener Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte und Linguistik, 8. Vienna: Herold.

HERMANN, Matthias

- 1964 *Die religiös-magische Weltanschauung der Primitivstämme Indiens* [The magico-religious worldview of the primal tribes of India]. *Band I: Die Bhagoria Bhil*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner.

- 1966 *Die religiös-magische Weltanschauung der Primitivstämme Indiens. Band II: Die Bhilala, Korku, Gond, Baiga*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner.

JANSSON, Hermann

- 1966 *Barela-Bhilala in Zentralindien. Ergebnisse einer Feldforschung 1963/64* [Barela-Bhilala in Central India. Results of fieldwork 1963/64]. Unpublished thesis, University of Vienna. Classification Nr. D 16.380/1,2.

KAPP, Dieter B., coll., transl., ed.

- 1987 *Der Ursprung des Regenbogens. Südindische Stammesmythen* [The origin of the rainbow. Myths of Southindian tribes]. Köln: Eugen Diederichs. (In press)

KOPPERS, Wilhelm

- 1940-1941 Bhagwān, the Supreme Deity of the Bhils. A contribution to the history of Indian and Indo-European religions. *Anthropos* 35-36; 265-325.

- KOTTURAN, George  
 1976 *Folk tales of Sikkim*. Folk Tales of India Series, 21. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers.
- MAINWARING, G. B.  
 1876 *A Grammar of the Róng (Lepcha) language as it exists in the Dorjeling and Sikkim hills*. Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press.
- MAZUMDAR, Satyen  
 1961 Folk-lore of the Lepchas. *Folk-Lore* (Calcutta) 2: 294-297.
- RISLEY, H. H.  
 1894 Nomenclature of places. *The Gazetteer of Sikkim 1894*: 39-45. Calcutta: Bengal Government Secretariat Press.
- SAVE, K. J.  
 1945 *The Warlis*. Bombay: Padma Publications.
- STOCKS, C. De Beauvoir  
 1925 Folk-Lore and customs of the Lap-chas of Sikkim. *Journal and proceedings, Asiatic Society of Bengal (New Series)* 21: 326-505. (Reprinted as *Sikkim, customs and folk-lore*. Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1975).
- THOMPSON, Stith  
 1955-1958 *Motif-Index of folk-literature*. Vols. 1-6. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- THOMPSON, Stith and Jonas BALYS  
 1958 *The Oral tales of India*. Indiana University Publications, Folklore Series, 10. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. (Reprinted 1978, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press)
- WADDELL, L. A.  
 1900 *Among the Himalayas*. Westminster: Archibald Constable and Co.
- WALK, Leopold  
 1949 Das Flut-Geschwisterpaar als Ur- und Stammelternpaar der Menschheit. Ein Beitrag zur Mythengeschichte Süd- und Südostasiens. *Mitteilungen der österreichischen Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Prähistorie* 78-79: 60-115.
- ZVELEBIL, Kamil V.  
 1982 *The Irula (Ēṛla) language. Part III: Irula lore. Texts and translations*. Neuindische Studien, 9. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.