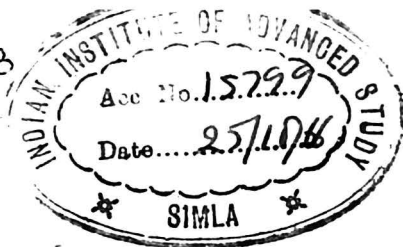


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STUDIES IN EYEBROWS AMONG THE BENGALEES*

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The paper deals with my personal observations on the character of eyebrows among the Bengalees. The data collected were exclusively from residents in Calcutta and were confined to middle class Bengalees of higher castes. My observation included 200 persons only, of whom there were 160 males and 40 females and among these 200 individuals there were 20 children between the ages of 4 and 12 years.

Studies on eyebrows and eyelashes were undertaken by Prof. Rozprym¹ of the University of Masaryk on 600 individuals of both sexes of Lísên near Brno in U. S. A. Such studies had also been undertaken previously by Prof. Suk and published in the Report of the Annual Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1932.

The observations were carried out with the naked eye and required a very careful and minute observation.

Eyebrows are collections of hair which are found on the upper orbital margin of each eye and these groups of hair, on closer observation, are found to be arranged in certain directions and positions in relation to the orbital margin. The colour of the eyebrows was also noted.

I have given below in a tabular form the distribution of the different forms of eyebrows and as the family groups were very limited I dispensed with the study of any hereditary influence among my subjects.

* Read before the Anthropology Section of the Indian Science Congress (Jubilee Session), Calcutta, 1938.

¹ Rozprym, F.—Eyebrows and Eyelashes in Man : Their different forms, pigmentation and heredity, *J. R. A. I.*, Vol. LXIV, 1934.

Throughout my observations I have followed the classification of Prof. Rozprym (*vide* J.R.A.I., Vol. LXIV, pp. 353-395).

The form of the eyebrow may be defined as the area covered by the growth of hair on or near about the upper orbital margin. In all my observations I selected the left side as had been done by Prof. Rozprym.

1. Spreading Type :—In this type the group of hair begins with a narrow strip on the nasal side and gradually broadens as it approaches the temple. Of my total subjects 27% showed this type and of these there were 47 males and 7 females. The males predominate in having this type.

2. Even Type :—This type is more or less regular in shape throughout its entire length from the nasal to the temple side and it is more frequent. In my series I have 45% of this type, of which the females show a large preponderance there being 24 (60%) women and 66 (41·2%) men.

3. Double Type :—This type begins broadly near the nasal side and then thins down near the middle and again broadens out and finally narrows down towards the temple. This type was found only in 10% of the series of which there were 19 males and 1 female.

4. Narrowing Type :—This type has a broader outline near the nasal side and gradually tapers towards the temple. There are only 14% of this type of which males are 22 and females 6.

5. Peaked Type :—In this type the outlines at both the extremities grow irregularly but with a distinct peak-like elevation near about the middle formed by the growth of hair upwards. Only 2% of my series shows this type of which 3 were males and 1 female. Thus it is evident that there is almost no sexual difference in this type.

6. Arched Type :—This type shows the growth of hair from below upwards with a distinct curve in a regular manner.

There are only 3 persons of this type in my series of whom 2 are males and 1 female.

7. Rising Type :—This type shows growth of hair from below upwards in a slanting outward direction and exhibits almost no upper outline in the shape. I found only one male in the series.

Besides the types mentioned above Prof. Rozprym noted several other types such as Shedding, S-shaped, Falling and Irregular ; but in my series I had none of these types.

TABLE SHOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF TYPES

	Total 200	%	Male 160	%	Female 40	%	Rozprym TOTAL	Male	Female
1. Spreading	54	27%	47	29.4%	7	17.5%	40%	20%	20%
2. Even	90	45%	66	41.2%	24	60%	24%	7.2%	16.8%
3. Double	20	10%	19	11.9%	1	2.5%	15%	10.6%	4.4%
4. Narrowing	28	14%	22	13.8%	6	15%	14%		
5. Peaked	4	2%	3	1.9%	1	2.5%	8%		
6. Arched	3	1.5%	2	1.2%	1	2.5%	1.3%		
7. Rising	1	0.5%	1	0.6%	Nil	Nil	0.3%		

POSITION OF EYEBROWS

The position of eyebrows is ascertained in relation to the upper orbital margin and this can be studied by a careful palpation. It is found that the position of the eyebrows varies with regard to age as has also been noted by Prof. Rozprym

1. Supra-marginal Type :—The groups of hair of the eyebrows lie on a plane slightly above the upper orbital margin.

2. Marginal Type :—The groups of hair lie almost along the line of the upper orbital margin and this is especially marked on the nasal side.

3. Infra-marginal Type :—The groups of hair lie slightly below the line of the upper orbital margin.

TABLE SHOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE POSITION OF
EYEBROWS IN RELATION TO AGE.

Types	6—12 years Children Total—20		Up to 50 years Adults Total—155		Above 50 years Old Total—25	
Supra-marginal	19	95%	2	1.3%	Nil	
Marginal	1	5%	137	88.4%	6	24%
Infra-marginal	Nil		16	10.3%	19	76%

From the table above, it is found that 95% of the children have Supra-marginal position and 5% Marginal and the latter were of a bad health and under-nourished.

Of the adults 88.4% show Marginal position and only about 10.3% have Infra-marginal position.

Among the persons above 50 years of age 76% have Infra-marginal position and only 24% show Marginal.

The figures as stated above more or less tally with the figures found by Mr. Rozprym.

DIRECTION OF HAIR

The direction of the groups of hair of the eyebrow means that the hairs run either in the direction of the temple or in the direction of the bridge of the nose. These groups of hair are also found to run in single or double lines. When the hairs run in double lines these may run from above downwards or from below upwards and almost in all cases in a slanting manner and always towards the middle line. It is also to be noted that in double currents the hairs may run completely from one end to the other uniformly or incompletely where one of the currents of hairs may be partially developed.

In my series of subjects, I found lateral directions in all the subjects and among them double currents were most prominent, claiming 96%. Of these 96%, there are 60% incomplete double

currents and 40% complete double currents. No case of single current is noticed in the series.

Single Current—Nil.

Double Current—Complete—40%

Double Current—Incomplete—60%

ABNORMAL TYPES OF EYEBROWS

Besides the types mentioned before, three individuals of whom 2 were males and 1 female show an abnormal type of groups of hair. These groups of hair besides their usual extension towards the temple, show groups of dense hair growing in the middle of the two eyebrows near the glabellar region. These groups of hair are called “whorls” and show two kinds of directions. In one series the hairs grow upwards in a curved direction with convexity upwards and this type is called Concentric whorl, in the other type which is Eccentric whorl the groups of hairs grow upwards on the nasal side of each of the eyebrows.

TABLE SHOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF WHORLS

Type	Bengalees Total—200	Rozprym
Concentric	6%	12%
Eccentric	Nil	4%

There is another type of abnormal eyebrow in which the groups of hairs merge laterally with the hairs on the head by upward and lateralward growth on the temple. I found only one such individual in my series.

Uni-lateral Whorl :—Instead of whorls being present on both the eyebrows, here it is found only on one side. I noticed only one in my series.

Besides the above Prof. Rozprym noticed another type of abnormal type of eyebrows in which groups of hair grow upwards

between the two eyebrows having no relation with the direction or the general form of the eyebrow. I did not notice any such specimen in the series.

COLOUR OF THE EYEBROWS

In these series of Bengalees it was found that 90% have black eyebrows and the remaining cases range between dark, brown and black.



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