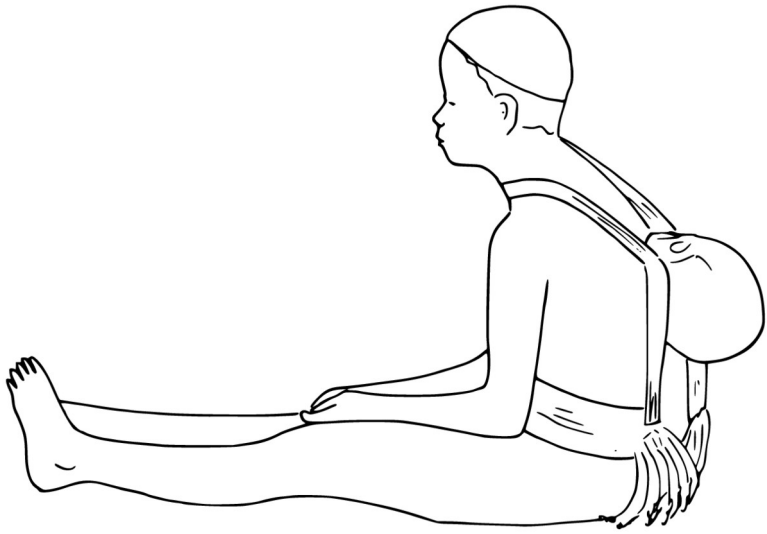


Fig.074 Illustration showing a native woman carrying the skeleton of her dead sister. The use of bones of dead family members but also of the animals they kill, make natives more in touch with events that would be otherwise easily forgotten like the death of someone. In this sense, natives can literally carry the spirit of the dead ones and make meaning out of it.

Spirituality Among the Natives of Lower Asia

When a native is burried "by the light of the moon" natives "covered with lime" dance "around the painted corpse" tied to a tree" (Mukerjee 2003) Yet no natives belive that "such actions as the murder of one man by another, or adultery" arise the anger of the gods. And anyway these gods are spirits "inhabiting the forest and the sea" or connected to "the sun and moon, lightning and thunder and the monsoons". While these spirits are all associated with "the phenomena of nature" among the native there is no "unanimity of belief" (Radcliffe-Brown 1922). Their religion is like science attempting to "understand nature". For example the moon becomes "red with anger" if he spots a fire when he rises (Mukerjee 2003). Importantly dreams are regarded "as being veridical" and a native will never awake "another from sleep". When natives die their "double" "becomes a spirit". Native healers have "the power of communicating with the spirits in dreams". Generally also natives are "emotionally tied to the bones of loved ones". Also natives "shout threats" at the spirits that they conceive to be "responsible for the death" of their friends. Also natives treasure an "earthenware bowl" in which they feed "continually" pieces of "touchwood". While they forgot how to light fire, they regard themselves as "keepers of the flame" (Radcliffe-Brown 1922).