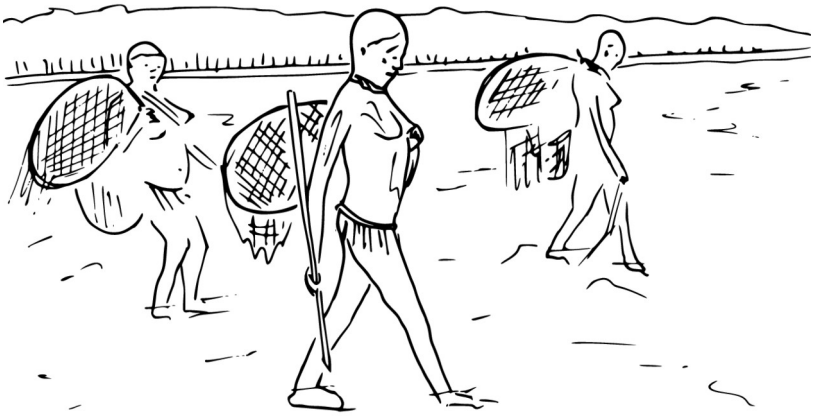


Fig.079 Illustration showing a group of native women out gathering mussels and other produces of the sea. As early observers have reported, the variety of food with which these natives were surrounded with was astonishing. These women then are the equivalent of modern women walking in a supermarket to do grocery.

Diet Among the Natives of Lower Asia

After "searching for honey" in the forest natives move to the "creeks and mangroves" to collect "crabs, fish, and fruit". Day by day they watch wild pigs getting fatter, "hunting one or two" and near the end of the rains, when the forests become "treacherous with falling trees", they go back to the beaches to "hunt turtles and feast on cicada grubs". A much healthier diet than the "sack of rice" wheat and boxes of "cereal, tea, and milk powder" provided by the colonizers. In fact, "so easily is sea food procured" that natives go out and catch the food for their "immediate use and that is all" (Mukerjee 2003). If during the rainy season animal food is "plentiful", large number of "roots, fruits, and seeds" are gathered in the dry season along with the larvae they regard as "great delicacies" (Radcliffe-Brown 1922). Natives are content with breakfast and a "heavy supper". The average amount eaten by a native exceeds that of the Indian colonizers going as far as "ten pounds of pork, or turtle" a day (Man 1833). And while they can be accused of being cannibal even when some foreign fishers try to repe one of their women, natives rush out of "the thickets" and kills them piercing their bodies with "sharp weapons", pounding them by stones until "every bone" is broken but not leaving the flesh untouched (Mukerjee 2003).