

10-8-44. Took the following picture (2-10-8-44.) of a funeral procession in
(Karachi, India)
one of the streets of AFO 883. The few funerals I witnessed were attended with
a lot of ceremony. Did not have the chance to see ~~one~~ ~~in its entirety~~ but only
the transitional stage between the time they leave the house and that time they
arrive at the burial or burning pyres. This particular one was accompanied
with a recital of sacred hymns and invocations and a good deal of crude but
effective drum music. This Indian music is certainly fitting for that mood
of a funeral occasion, weird and mystical. The dead Hindu body in placed on
a litter like arrangement with poles sufficiently long to allow four men to
bear the weight while walking along. Over these two long poles is a super
structure on the style of a covered wagon with a light almost transparent
cloth covering and ornately decorated with fine beads and colored ribbons and
thread. The body outline could be seen thru this delicate cloth. The group
of mourners all men, carried the casket on their shoulders and when one in-
dividual showed signs of fatigue another would step up and share the weight.
This funeral group moved slowly but progressively forward without accompanying
music but another similiar group that followed had all the necessary accessories
including 5 tamboreens and hand drums. This particular group had the orchestrat-
ion leading the group with the men surrounding and following the casket the
woman and children and other curious civilian members. One man directly in
back of the casket had a bottle of fluid and would occasionally sprinkle water
on the cloth of the float. This group would move slowly forward for approx
40 feet with an increase of volume of music and then come to a halt with the
group of chanters striking a huddle in conclusion. Then after a few minutes
pause would slowly begin their forward movement. At each stop they seemed
to throw themselves into a climax of emotion. Some of these processions have
no apparnet leadership and as a result their are many moments of indecision as
to direction and procedure. The police have no regard for this type of
traffic hazard and hurry them across the intersection by forceful moves. I