

**THE LISU: A LITTLE KNOWN ETHNIC  
GROUP OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH  
(AN ETHNOGRAPHIC SILHOUETTE)**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE  
DOCTORATE DEGREE OF PHILOSOPHY  
IN ANTHROPOLOGY  
(FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES)  
RANCHI UNIVERSITY**

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SHILLONG**

**1987**

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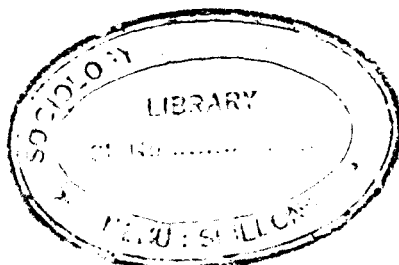
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## PREFACE

In 1981, Dr. Ajit K. Danda, the present Director, Anthropological Survey of India, set afloat rightly and timely too, a research project entitled "Ethnography: Structure and Process" to fill up the blank in the ethnographic studies on the ethnic groups in India from the anthropological point of view. In order to facilitate the studies, he scientifically divided the different ethnic groups in India into three categories- fully researched, less researched and unresearched. The purpose behind this categorization or classification as well as the project was to delineate the distinctive characteristics, the shared cultural traits, and the elements of pan Indian importance that constitute an ethnic group a component of Indian civilization; and to sort out more elements of diversity in the culture of India than its unity. As one of the researchers in the project I studied an unresearched ethnic group designated as Lisu located in inaccessible and inhospitable hilly terrain near Burma border in the present state of Arunachal Pradesh. I am thankful to Dr. Ajit K. Danda, Director, and Dr. P. K. Dasgupta, the then Regional Officer, Shillong, for assigning me in the project and thereby providing all the facilities to successfully complete the field investigation on the Lisu. This dissertation is a product of that field investigation. Collection of ethnographic information on the Lisu emanated me to gather basic data on their language as well, because the Lisu language as spoken in India, has not been studied by any linguist. In writing the chapter on the Lisu language, I was inspired and



guided by the works of Shri K.Dasgupta, an expert in the study of Tibeto-Burman group of languages.

I am grateful to late Prof.L.P.Vidyarthi, my previous guide, who encouraged me to write this dissertation. I express my deep sense of gratitude and indebtedness to Dr.M.Jha, my present guide, who rendered valuable suggestions towards the improvement of the dissertation. Under his direct supervision the thesis has been written and successfully completed.

I cannot forget to record my debt to Ranjita, my wife, who inspired me at every level of writing this thesis and tolerated all the inconveniencies similingly. My debts are also due to Victor Syiemlieh who took all the pains to type out the manuscript.

My debt knows no bound to Phusa Lisu, the first under-graduate of the Lisu community who helped me from every possible angle. Without his willing co-operation and keen interest this ~~dissertation~~ would never come into existence. Thanks are also due to other Lisu informants- Tito Mafa (head priest), Onisifu, Khoyichey, Mathi Yobin, Khubhabo, Ngwadu (photographer), Youafu (photographer), Phuyedue, Chifuja (Gao-bura), Yesa (Asst.G.B.), Chopphahey (Ex-G.B.), Mrs.Somazi, Mrs.Chafu, Miss Chamahey, Simi, Mrs.Toumadue, Datiwo, Khuyefu Yelimi (Interpreter), Hase (Interpreter) and many others for their help and co-operation in the field.

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Asim Maitra

December, 1987

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#### A NOTE ON THE LOCAL WORDS

All the local words that have been used in the body of this thesis are underlined and begin with capital letters. Each local word, when no English equivalents are available, has been directly explained in the text of this study. Wherever possible, equivalent. English words have been given in parentheses. In order to facilitate the description, local names of different diseases and its classification have been used in the chapter on "Etiology and Medical System."

## INTRODUCTION

With her enormous diversity of cultures and vast heterogeneity of ethnic groups, India presents a fascinating field for anthropological research. But, ethnographic information are lacking in respect of many ethnic groups. In other words, there are still some ethnic groups or communities such as Miji, Aitonia, Khamyang, Sulung and so on in North Eastern India, particularly in the present state of Arunachal Pradesh, who are changing fast, but no ethnographic studies from the view point of social and cultural anthropology have been made yet. The Lisu are such an ethnic group amongst whom no systematic full length study has been conducted. According to Dr.Danda's categorisation of Indian ethnic groups, the Lisu are primarily an unstudies ethnic group, more precisely, this a scarcely researched ethnic group. British anthropologists switched to problem oriented studies and theoretical anthropology when they gathered a fair insight in the social system by ethnographic studies of a number of societies or communities in Africa and Asian continent. The same is the case with American Anthropologists. Hence, if desirable in the Indian context to gain a good ethnographic coverage of different ethnic groups or communities before venturing upon the theoretical understanding of the structure of their societies or culture. From

this angle, this ethnographic Silhouette of the Lisu sketching various aspects of their life is of immense importance. It provides the basic ethnographic materials for further analysis or research and building theories.

### Aims and Objectives

It is a pre-requisite to delineate clearly the aims and objectives of a research study. Firstly, this study aims at to provide a body of scientific knowledge on the culture of the Lisu. In other words, it aids to contribute to the growth and refinement of anthropological knowledge on the Lisu. This basic scientific knowledge may, ultimately, lead to the precise understanding of the problems of regionalism, ethnic isolation, regional characters and the different elements and broad patterns of Indian civilization.

This treatise on the Lisu will differ from the traditional monographs written by the missionaries, administrators and the tourists in that it intends to cover all the major dimensions of the Lisu culture-following a research methodology. Moreover, this study will try to conceptualise some of the notions on family, clan, kinship, religion, tribe and culture.

Besides, under the broad framework, the study will centre around the following enquires: 1) who are the Lisu

and what their origin? 2) how they interact and differ with other ethnic groups of Arunachal Pradesh? 3) how they adjust with the ecological setting? 4) what are the distinctive feature of their culture and its integrating aspects? 5) what is their world view and how they communicate with the supernaturals? 6) what are the problems or constraints- economic, social, political and religions for their all round development? 7) what are the etiologies of diseases and its treatment? 8) what are the changes that have come about? 9) what are the feature of their language and folklore?

#### Research Methodology

In the collection of information on the Lisu, the standard anthropological methods and techniques such as observations- participant and non-participant, individual and group interview (structure and non-structure), genealogical method, case study, and life history have been employed. For documentation of the various phases of their life cycle and other activities photographic aid is made use of. As a method of ethnoscience, the ethic and etic views of the culture have been delineated. The systematic approach and the field techniques, the scientific analysis of the data giving theoretical significance by explaining how the data support, modify or contradict the various concepts and theories in anthropology go to constitute the research methodology of the present treatise.



I collected the data on material culture by direct observation and direct question. Since I was living with them I observed everything done by the Lisu directly or indirectly. I used to pick up any domestic article then enquired its functions and utilities. Manufacture of hunting implements, domestic utensils, weaving of cloths and construction of houses were carried on before my eyes. Data on social organisation were gathered following genealogical method, the rules of inheritance, descent, succession, and kinship terms were collected with the help of genealogies. For collecting information on the life cycle rituals I had to depend entirely on structured interview, though I was fortunate enough to participate in the marriage ceremony and festivals. Similarly, for information on religious beliefs, world view, mechanism of social control, medical system, changes and language, folklore and economic system I had to depend mostly on individual as well as group interviews. I participated in fishing, collection of fire wood, dance and music and pounding paddy grains. My informants were mostly old men and women; side by side, young and middle aged persons were also interviewed. To know the past happenings of their life, the most suitable techniques were interview and life history.

Language formed the greatest stumbling block on my way of data collection. Fortunately, I found one undergraduate Lisu boy named Phusa who taught me Lisu language, who also acted as my interpreter as well as informant. I

used to communicate my question in Hindi and English to my interpreter. The informants replied in the Lisu language which was translated into Hindi and sometimes in English by my interpreter. At a sitting, interview was carried on for four or six hours which was cross-checked by another group of informants. For verifying relevant information non-Lisu school teachers posted at Lisu area i.e. Gandhigram village were also interviewed.

#### Duration of Field Work

The data on which this ethnographic study is based were collected in three terms between 1981 and 1986. Total period of stay in the Lisu village called Gandhigram was nine months for three different occasions (1981, 1982 and 1986). Owing to inhospitable climate and communication problem (see chapter-12) I could not cover all the months of a year which is of immense importance for a scientific ethnography. The selection of the unit or universe of the study was guided by the principle of major concentration of the population. Long stay helped me to win the confidence of the Lisu which made the collection of data more easier. The Lisu took me as a well-wisher of their society, but the local administration looked at me with an eye of suspicion. They told me that "The Lisu are ferocious people, no one can dare to move in the Lisu village in the evening. It is advisable not to go and stay there."

My stay in the Lisu village proved that statement wrong. The Lisu have a poisonous arrow, they use it for killing wild animals, and not for killing human beings.

### Organisation of Data

Every scientific research study has a purpose of goal. Through systematic organisation of facts or data collected this goal is fulfilled. Behind the accumulated facts there is some more important and revealing than the facts themselves. That well-marshalled facts or units when organised systematically and related to the whole study have a significant meaning from which valid interpretation can be drawn. The information attributed to the different aspects of the study have been organised as follows:

1. Language
2. Folklore
3. Material culture
4. Economic organisation
5. Life cycle rituals
6. Social organisation
7. Social control
8. Religious organisation
9. World view
10. Etiology and medical system
11. Transformations
12. Problems of development

I have tried to arrange these chapters systematically and to maintain a sequential link with the chapters. As a result, this has provided regularity and continuity in

in the study of life and culture of the Lisu.

### Previous studies

As the title of the study indicates, the Lisu are a least known ethnic group of the present state of Arunachal Pradesh. In India, anthropological literatures on the Lisu are not available. It is Shri D.K.Datta who for the first time published (1979) a short note on the mythological origin of the Lisu. That is all about the Indian scholars who studied the Lisu. I came to know through personal communication with the Director, Tribal Research Institute, Chiang-Mai, Thailand, that Dr.E.P.Durrenberger of Illinois University made a study on "The Ethnography of Lisu Curing" in 1971, and Dr.A.Y.Dessaint studied the "Economic Organisation of the Lisu" in 1972. Both of them conducted their field investigations in Thailand where about two millions Lisus are living. Unfortunately, I could not get those materials for consultation and comparison.

### Land and Location

Before peeping into the world of the Lisu, let us have a glimpse over the physical topography and natural condition of the land and location of the Lisus which have a direct bearing upon their way of life or culture. The Lisu are located mainly at the present Vijaynagar Circle (Daodi) in Miao subdivision in the Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh (N E F A ), the fascinating land of rising

sun. Vijaynagar circle is situated in an altitude of about 8000 feet in the extreme east of the Tirap district rather Arunachal Pradesh, and its three sides (west, east and south) are surrounded by international border and the hill tracts of Burma. Vijaynagar circle is the home of the Lisu. Almost the entire area of this circle is hilly and mountainous. The land region is covered with evergreen forest. High mountains and peaks are somewhat dry, rocky and snow-clad. Its valleys are covered by the long corridor of plain grassy land. There are rivers and rivulets that flow the land of the Lisu. Noteworthy of them are Noa-Dihing and its tributaries, Burma Nala etc. Inhabiting this part of the sub Himalayan region, the Lisu have gained varied experience of life which have enabled them to foster a life-style of their own. Nature in this part of the planet is vigorous and hostile. The rugged terrain, the high hills, the rocky mountains, sky piercing peaks, incessant rainfall, dense forest, slippery slopes, etc. stand against smooth sailing of human life. Killing of life by snow storm, rolling boulders, sliding land, falling trees, poisonous snakes, ferocious animals, dashing current of rivers etc. are the common happenings in the day today natural life of the Lisu. Nature reigns supreme here. One requires to live a life of adjustment and with the vigour of nature, otherwise, living becomes very hard and often miserable.

### The Name as an Identity

The name of this ethnic group is apparently controversial. They are identified with different names like Lisu, Lisaw, Yobin, Lishifa, and Khinu. The original name of community is Lisu and by this very name they introduce themselves to the outsiders. But the neighbouring communities (in Burma) such as Singpho, Khamti, Rawang never use the term- Lisu to call or identify them. Instead the Singpho use the term- Yawyin or Yoyin to designate the Lisu, similarly, the Khamti and the Rawang call them Khinu and Lishifa respectively. Likewise, the Lisu have their own terms to identify these communities. The Lisu term for the Khamti is Assamupha, for the Singpho is Afupha and for the Rawang is Chopha. It is said that the Lisu came in contact with the Britishers or British administration first through a Singpho interpreter who introduced them (the Lisu) as Yawyin or Yoyin, but not as Yobin as written in Census of India 1971, which is a bonafide scheduled tribe of Arunachal Pradesh. Incidentally, it was again a Singpho interpreter who introduced the Lisu as Yoyin to the Indian Military Officers, who first visited or made an expedition to the present land of the Lisu i.e. Vijaynagar. The term- Yobin is simply a spelling mistake or a mistake in the pronunciation of the word Yawyin or Yoyin. The word-Yawyin or Yoyin is derived from the Singpho language. The Lisu do not know the meaning of this term. But they conceive its meaning as something derogatory, something not

worth-mentioning which stands against their traditional social status. The Lisu do not like them to be called Yoyin because of its derogatory implication. Actually, the Lisu and the Yawyin or Yoyin are one and the same ethnic group or tribe. There is no separate community or tribe as Lisu and Yoyin as thought of by the public.

The literal meaning of the term Lisu is like this. Li- means four and su means fold or folding of clothes round the waist or belly in Lisu language. As per literal meaning, the people or the persons having four folds of a cloth around the waist are designated as Lisu. According to their myth, a male person adorned with sword (straight seythe), bow and arrow, foldings of a piece of cloth around the waist, who came out from the mythical pumpkin or gourd is called Lisu. Another line of interpretation of the term is this 'li' means four and 'su' means person gossiping or quarrelling. Hence 'Lisu' means four persons gossiping or quarelling. This indicates that the Lisu had the inherent tendency to gossiping or quarrelling. This tendency is not extant among the present day Lisus of Arunachal Pradesh. Rather they exhibit or display an opposite character. According to my informants or current investigation, this line of interpretation of the term- 'Lisu' is vague, and has no historical evidence or connection to the present day Lisus of Arunachal Pradesh. Again, it is said that the word for leather belt in Lisu language is also Lisu. The Lisu used to wear leather belt prepared by themselves, and as a result of which they have got the name - Lisu. In other words, this ethnic group might have derived or assumed the name Lisu from that peculiar custom of wearing belt. The Lisu have also got a nickname- 'monkey- people'. The Lisu are laborious, audacious and intelligent people. They can easily move or negotiate with the difficult hills, terrains and forest like

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a monkey, and that is why they are also known as 'monkey people'. The Lisu of Vijaynagar specially Gandhigram have recently acquired the names like Halipha, Mahalipha and 'Hindu-Lisu'. The Lisu following a particular religion or the Lisu who follow strictly the rules of Christian religion, and do not indulge themselves in drinking liquor are termed Halipha. The opposite group of Halipha is known as Mahalipha, 'ma' means no. That is the Lisu having or following no religion, the Lisu who do not follow the rules of Christianity and indulge themselves in drinking country liquor or rice beer are named Mahalipha. According to Halipha the position of the latter group of the Lisu (Mahalipha) is such that they neither follow the norms of Christianity nor the traditional Lisu religion as such. And because of this peculiar social or cultural position, the Mahalipha group of the Lisu are also termed 'Hindu-Lisu'; though they have no link either cultural or religious with the Hindu. Nepali Hindus of Vijaynagar circle are also habituated to drinking rice beer, and for this semblance in drinking, the Mahalipha are called 'Hindu-Lisu' by the Halipha.

### Cultural History

No systematic written records are available on the Lisu except the impressionistic views given by commodore R.N.Pareek, and Dugene Morse, an American missionary, who lived with the Lisu. The Lisu were first sighted in the present Vijaynagar circle (Daodi) by Major Sumer Singh of



Assam Rifles on the 7th May 1961, when Chaukan pass expeditions were made by the Indian Military. Then around November 1961, Major General A.S.Guraya visited Vijaynagar as a part of reconnoitering duties. It is said that Major General Guraya named Daodi as Vijaynagar after his only son Vijay, and a village Yibidi as Pritnagar after his only daughter- Priti. Major Sumer Singh named Sidhi, the old habitation of the Lisu as Gandhigram, because he occupied or brought the area under control without any confrontation or vendetta. Similarly, the area of the present Ramnagar was known as Achidudi, the present Phaparbari as Gamidi and Gahirigaon as Nwanale.

According to commodore R.N.Pareek, the Lisu originally lived on the both sides of the China-Burma border- with the Kachin group of tribes- Singpho, Rawang, Tanche etc. A large migration from there took place towards the Putao plains of Burma in the third decade of 20th century during the struggle between the Chinese communists and the Nationalist forces. Putao lies about 1200 K.M. north of Rangoon and 100 K.M away from Indian border. For long, the Lisu were concentrated there.

In 1965, General Ne Win took control of Burma in a coup and set up the 'Revolutionary Government of the Union of Burma'. To consolidate, he tightened his control over the tribal people in the hills of Burma as some of the tribes including the Lisu had formed the Kachin Independence

Army and frequently raided Putao. The Government of Burma therefore carried flushing out operations against them. This led to the Lisu movement or led migration from Putao on the eastern bank of Irrawaddy, down south through hills of Burma when they diverted their course to the west around the present district of Arunachal Pradesh, in the region below the foothills of Patkai range of mountains.

Long before their migration to India, most of the Lisu had already been converted into Christianity by the American missionaries, in the first two decades of the 20th century. Afraid of the military oppression after the coup *source* in Burma in 1965, the Morse family together with many Lisus left Putao in December 1965, in a stream of refugee till their exodus figure rose to about 5000 men, women and children. It is said, due to the spread of an epidemic and difficult terrain, about half of the number of the Lisu returned to Putao. It is again said that Eugene Morse tried in vain to get the permission from the Government of India to enter India. Already by this time in 1970-71, India and Burma were busy in negotiations to mark the Indo-Burma boundary. So the Morse family together with the Lisu continued their march around the Patkai hills till they reached the zi-yu-di valley in north west Burma. Long before this march, some of the pioneering Lisus from Putao had already migrated across the Himalayas into India sometime between 1950 and 1959.

This history of their migration does not fully tally with the oral history or the views of the majority of the Lisu living at the present village- Gandhigram. Although it is generally believed that the Lisu were the last batch of the mongoloid people who entered this part of India through Chaukan Pass during the time of second World War. According to Lisu informants they are the original settlers of this place and living there from the time immemorial which was till recently an unadministered territory. It is only around 1961 the authority of the Government of India was established as per the interpretation of the Lisu. But the Lisu agree that this area (Vijaynagar circle) was first inhabited by the Khamti, then by the Singpho who later on found the place unsuitable for living and left it. Then after a considerable lapse of years, the Lisu came and settled there permanently. But that time, as they interpretate, the natural and ecological conditions of the area were change completely, and the Lisu found the place suitable for living.

#### Distribution and Population

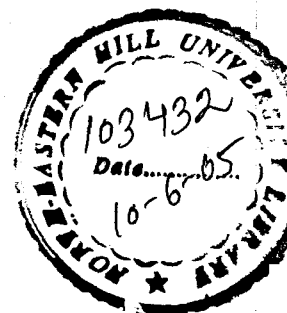
Opinions vary on the distribution of the Lisu. But according to present investigation, in India, the Lisu are mainly distributed at the Vijaynagar circle in the Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh, as stated early. Before 1961, the Lisu were scatteredly living in the places called Sidhi (Gandhigram), Daodi (Vijaynagar), Achidudi (Ramnagar), Yibidi (Pritnagar, a proposed village), Gamidi (Phaparbai)

and Nwanalo (Gahirigaon). In 1962, after the establishment of circle office at Vijaynagar for easy administration, the Lisu were asked to live in one area- the present Gandhigram, and the places vacated by them were distributed free among the ex-armymen in different phases. The majority of the ex-army men are Nepali-Hindus. Table-I shows the distribution and population of the Lisu in India.

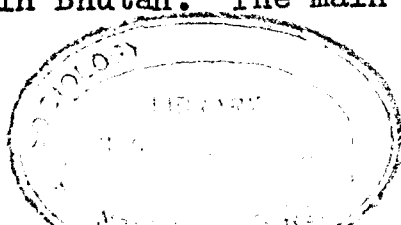
Table - I

Distribution and Population of the Lisu

| <u>Place</u>      | <u>Families</u> | <u>Population</u> |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Gandhigram        | 154             | 1016              |
| Hazolu            | 18              | 114               |
| Vijaynagar Proper | 13              | 86                |
| Pritnagar         | 4               | 25                |
| Ledo              | 8               | 52                |
| <hr/>             |                 |                   |
| Total             | 197             | 1293              |



Except Ledo, all other places in Table-I, are situated at Vijaynagar circle in Arunachal Pradesh. Ledo is a coal-field in Dibrugarh district, Upper Assam. At present only one Lisu family resides at Ledo, and the rest have shifted to Miao and Kharsang in Arunachal Pradesh. One family of the Lisu also resides at Mawlai in Shillong. The Lisu are said to be living in Bhutan. The main bulk of the Lisu live



in the Kachin and Shan states in Burma. They are said to be living also in China, Thailand and Japan.

In 1971 census, the numerical strength of the Lisus (Yobin) at Gandhigram was 929, the sex ratio was 908 females per 1000 males. In 1981 census, the recorded number is 971, but according to the household census of the present author, the figure is 1016. The difference is due to the fact that census investigator counted heads or persons present only during the period of investigation or census. According to current investigation, the total numerical strength of the Lisus is 1293.

#### Morphological Traits

The Lisu are good looking mongoloid people with prominent epicanthic fold and cheek bone. They have different types of skin colours like dark brown, brown, yellowish, yellow etc. Their stature is medium, with well built body. They possess good health. From their physical appearance, the Lisu seem to be a heterogenous population. Because some of their males and females are having curly hairs, very fine noses, and thin lips. Because there is less similarity and uniformity in their stature, skin-colour etc. although they speak the same language (Lisu) and follow the same way of life.

#### Language and Literacy

They speak Lisu language. Lisu language has not been studied yet by any Indian linguist. This language belongs

to Tibeto-Burman linguistic family (for details see chapter on language). English alphabet (only the capital form) written inversely are used as the script of the Lisu language.

It is said some American missionaries intensively studied this language and translated the Holy Bible into Lisu language. The Lisu have some words common with the Singpho.

But these common words like afu, achi, aba, etc. do not convey the same meaning. For example, in Lisu language aba means father, but in Singpho language abu means elder sister. Achi means 5 daughter to the Lisu but grandfather to the Singpho. The Lisu address first male issue as afu, but the Singpho address brother as afu. There may be some linguistic similarities between the languages of the Lisu and the Singpho but they cannot understand or follow each other's language. The Lisu know only the Lisu language, but they are trying to learn English, Hindi, Assamese and Nepali.

The Lisu, both males and females, are highly literate people. The percentage of literacy among the Lisu is 71.54% and the rest are illiterates. This rate of literacy excludes the children upto the age of six years. The Lisu are themselves running a night school to teach Lisu, English and Hindi to the adult illiterates, in addition, there is one government M.E.School. There were two matriculates and one under graduate at the time of this field investigation.

### Social Composition

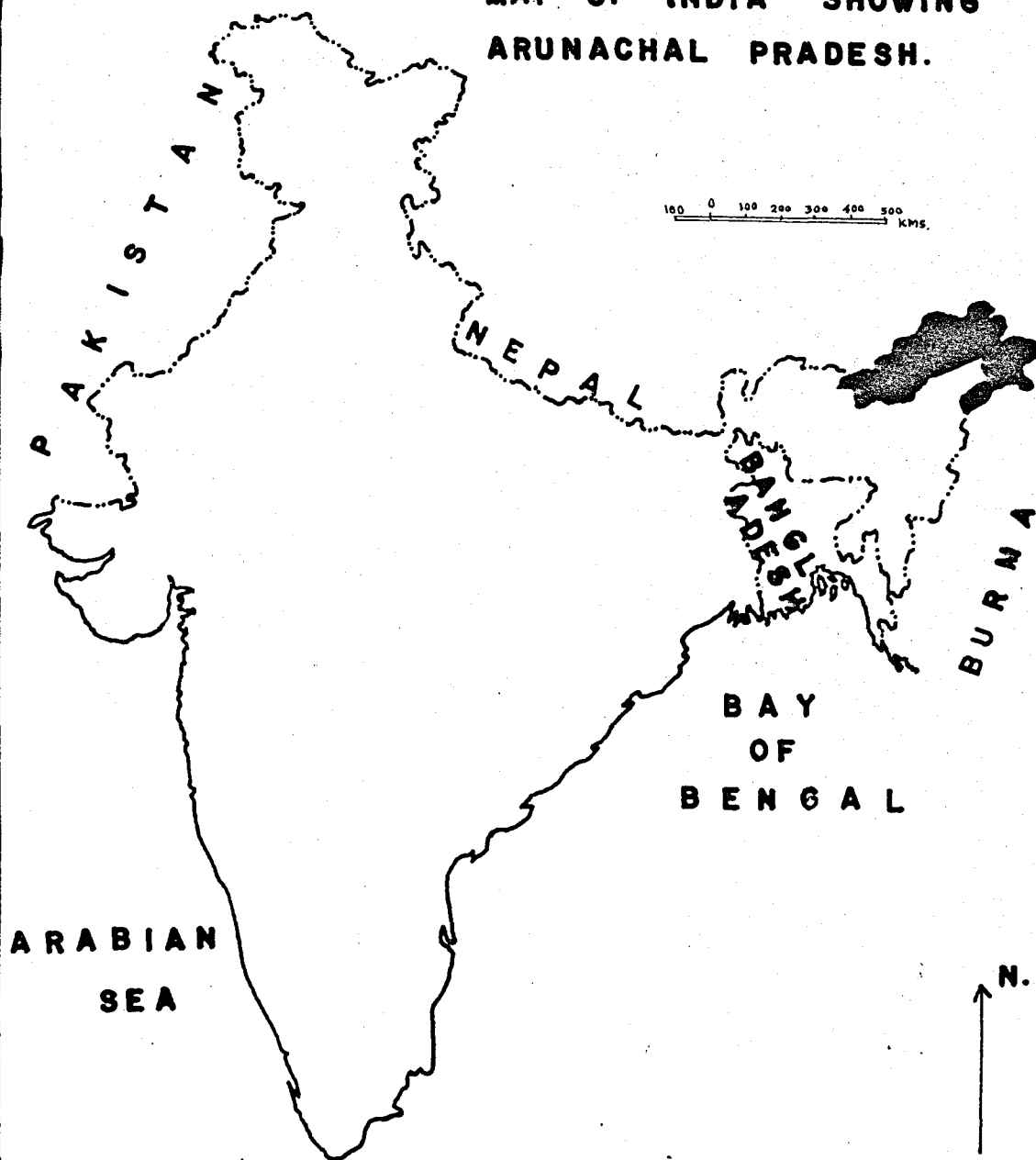
The present Vijaynagar circle consists of eleven villages besides Vijaynagar proper. Out of these villages, Gandhigram, Hazolu and Pritnagar are exclusively inhabited by the Lisu, and the rest are dominantly (numerically) inhabited by the Nepali-Hindus (Brahmans, Chetri, Rai and Magar) which include one Kuki and two Lusai families. During the period of second phase of field work in the year 1982, the author found no habitation of the Lisu at Pritnagar village, all the four families of the Lisu were compelled to shift to a place adjacent to Miao-Vijaynagar Road. The distance between the main habitation (Gandhigram) of the Lisu and the Nepali settlers is about 16 K.M.

The Lisu term for the village is Chokha. Chokha is a human habitation consists of minimum five chohis (families). The term Chokha according to the definition given by the Lisu, is limited to the human habitation of five to one hundred chohis. The Lisu habitation to be called Chokha must contain a Chowu (a leader of noble qualities) with his zijasus (helpers), Nifa (a kind of priest), Dashifa (a kind of doctor) and a burial ground. Human habitation consists of more than 100 chohis is termed Chokhadama or Chokhafa by the Lisu. At Gandhigram, besides the Lisu, few government officials employed in the departments of Education, C.P.W.D., A.P.P. and Assam Rifles, also reside. Two Marwari engaged in agar (a

kind of wood used for preparing cosmetics) business have set up a temporary camp at Gandhigram. The officials belong to different states of India- two from Kerala, one from West Bengal, two from Assam, one from Bihar and few Adis from Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh. They live in their respective allotted quarters, and only two of them (an Adi and an Assamese) reside with families. At Vijaynagar proper the Lisu are exposed to environment of different communities of India who are posted as government employees.



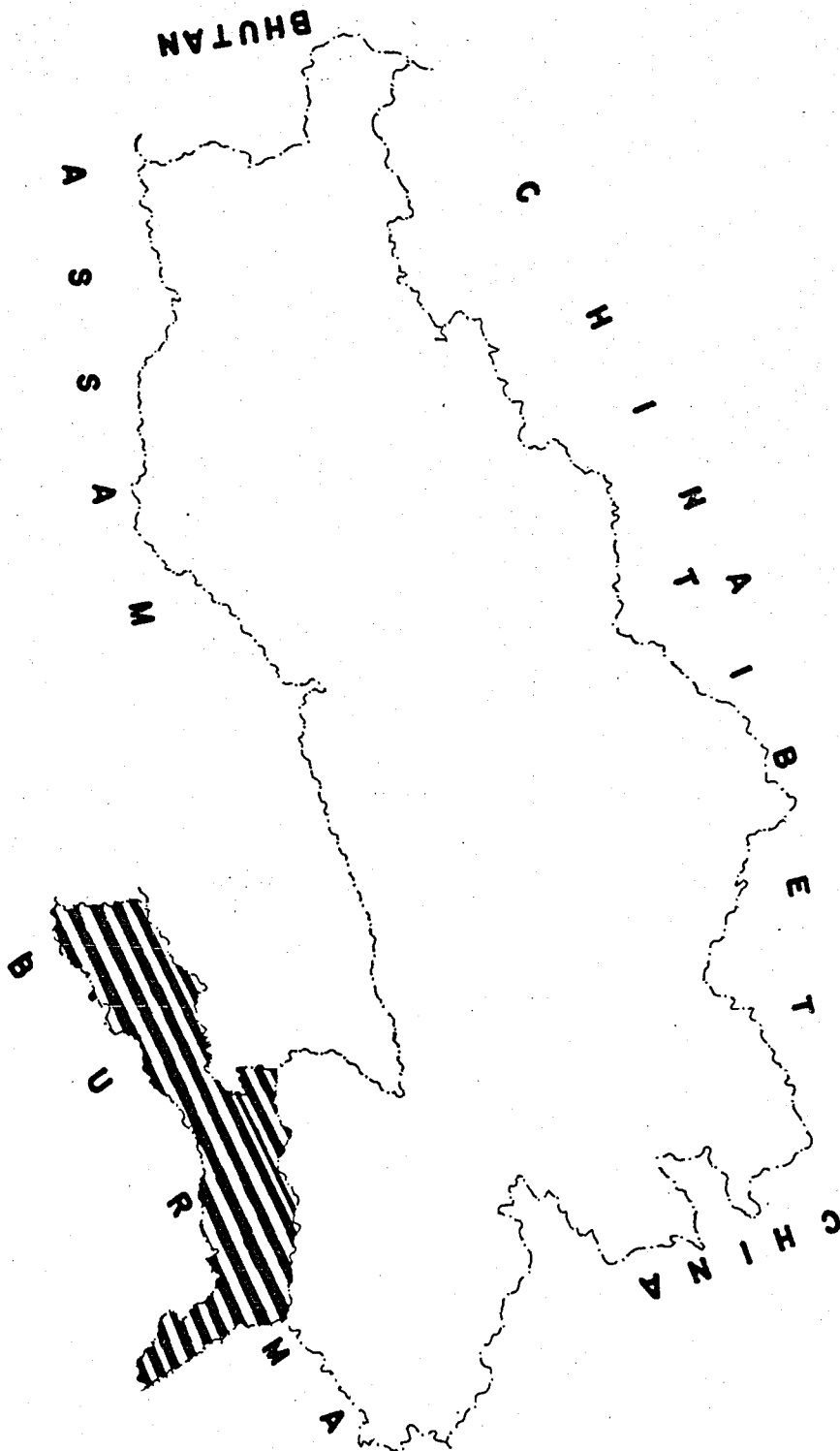
**MAP OF INDIA SHOWING  
ARUNACHAL PRADESH.**

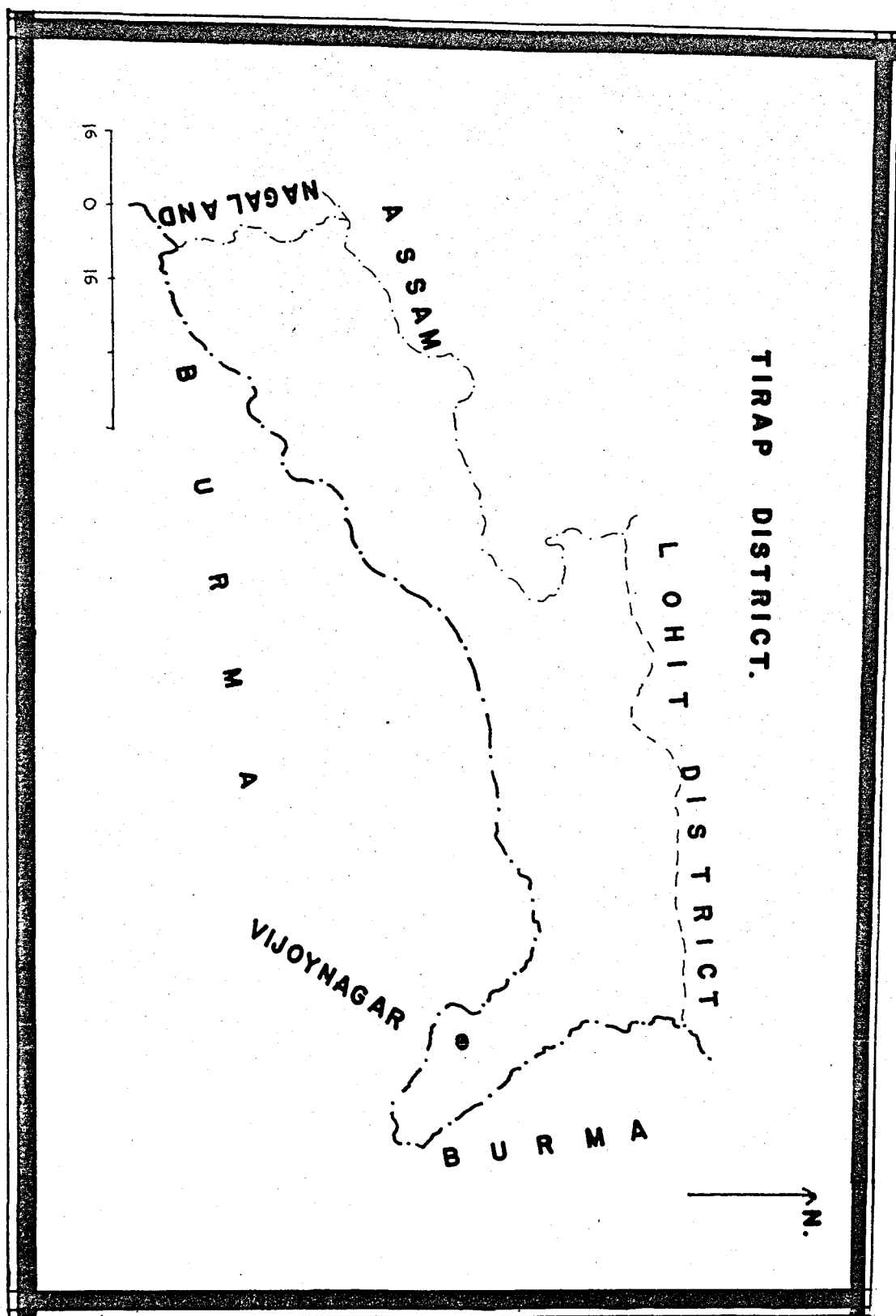


ARUNACHAL PRADESH SHOWING  
TIRAP DISTRICT.

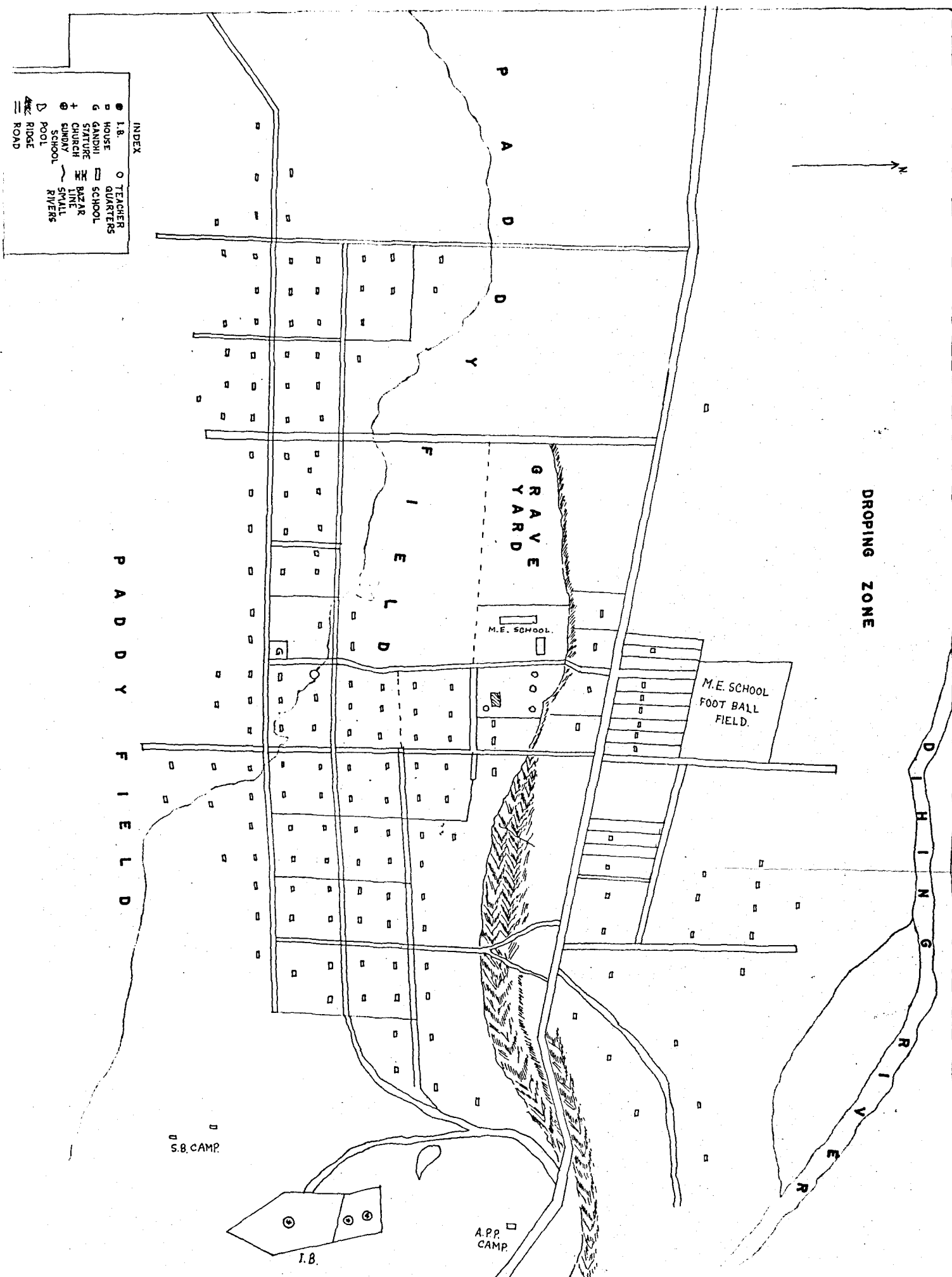
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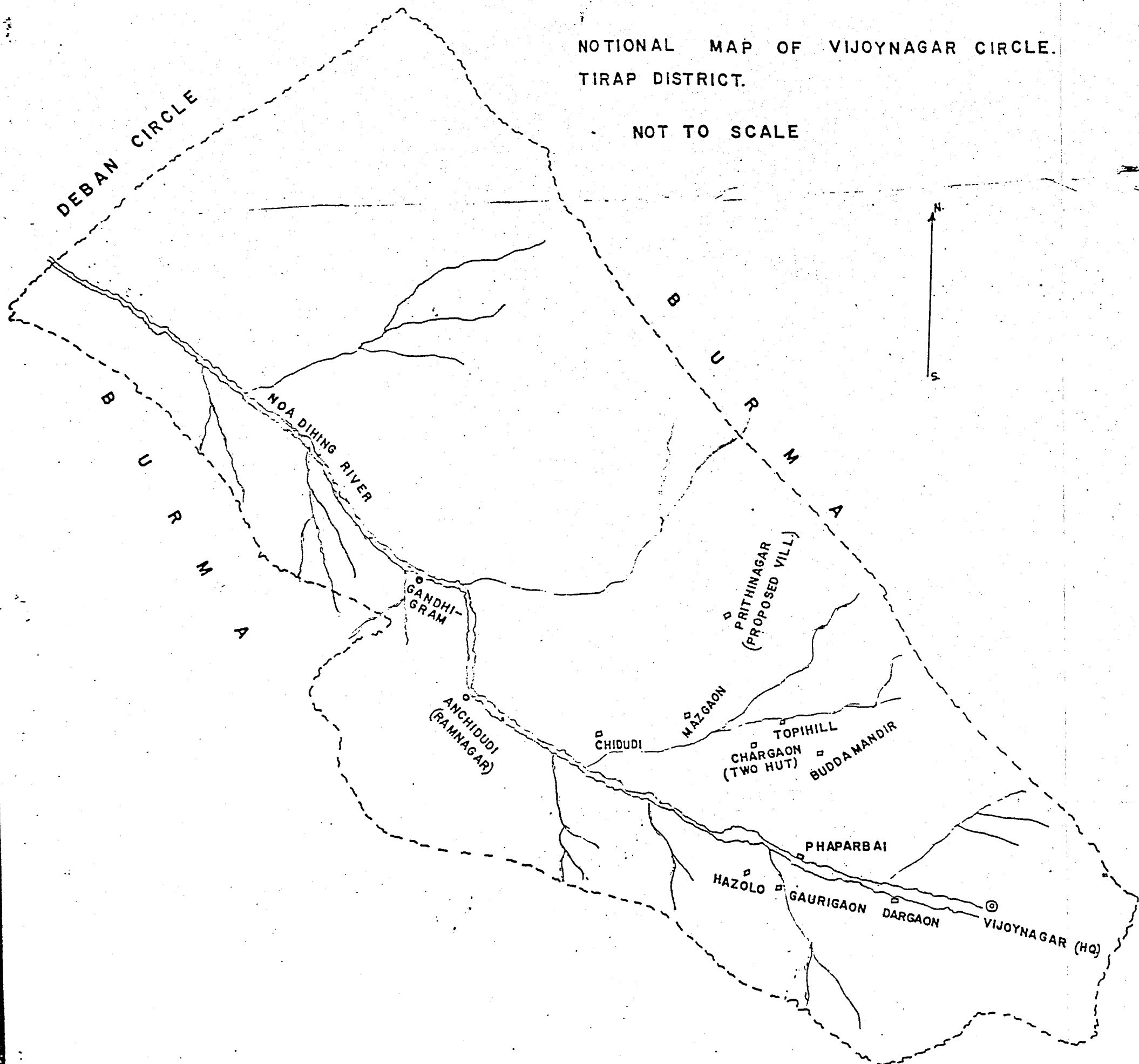


THE MAP OF GANDHI GRAM VILLAGE OR SIDI VILLAGE

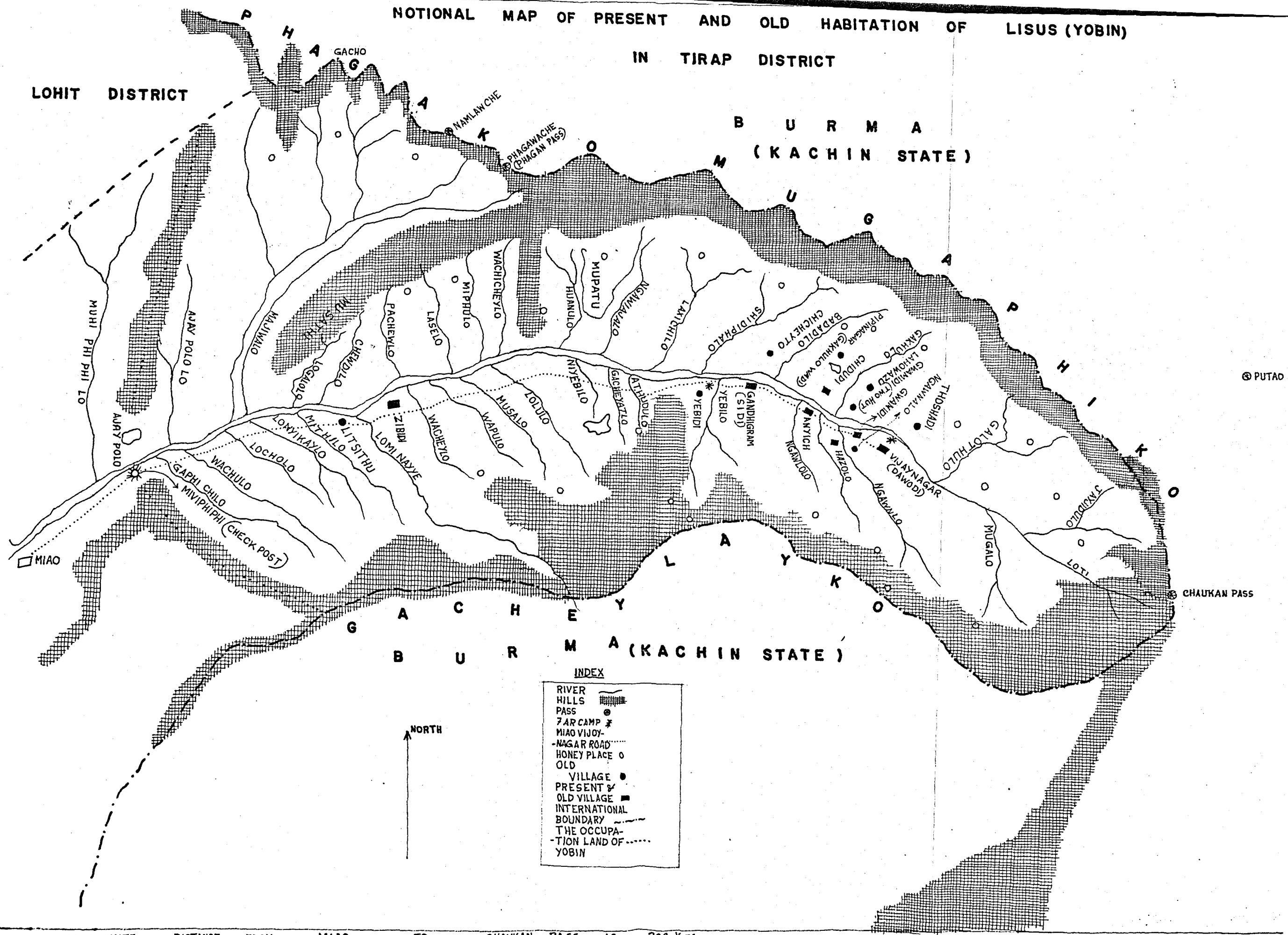


NOTIONAL MAP OF VIJOYNAGAR CIRCLE.  
TIRAP DISTRICT.

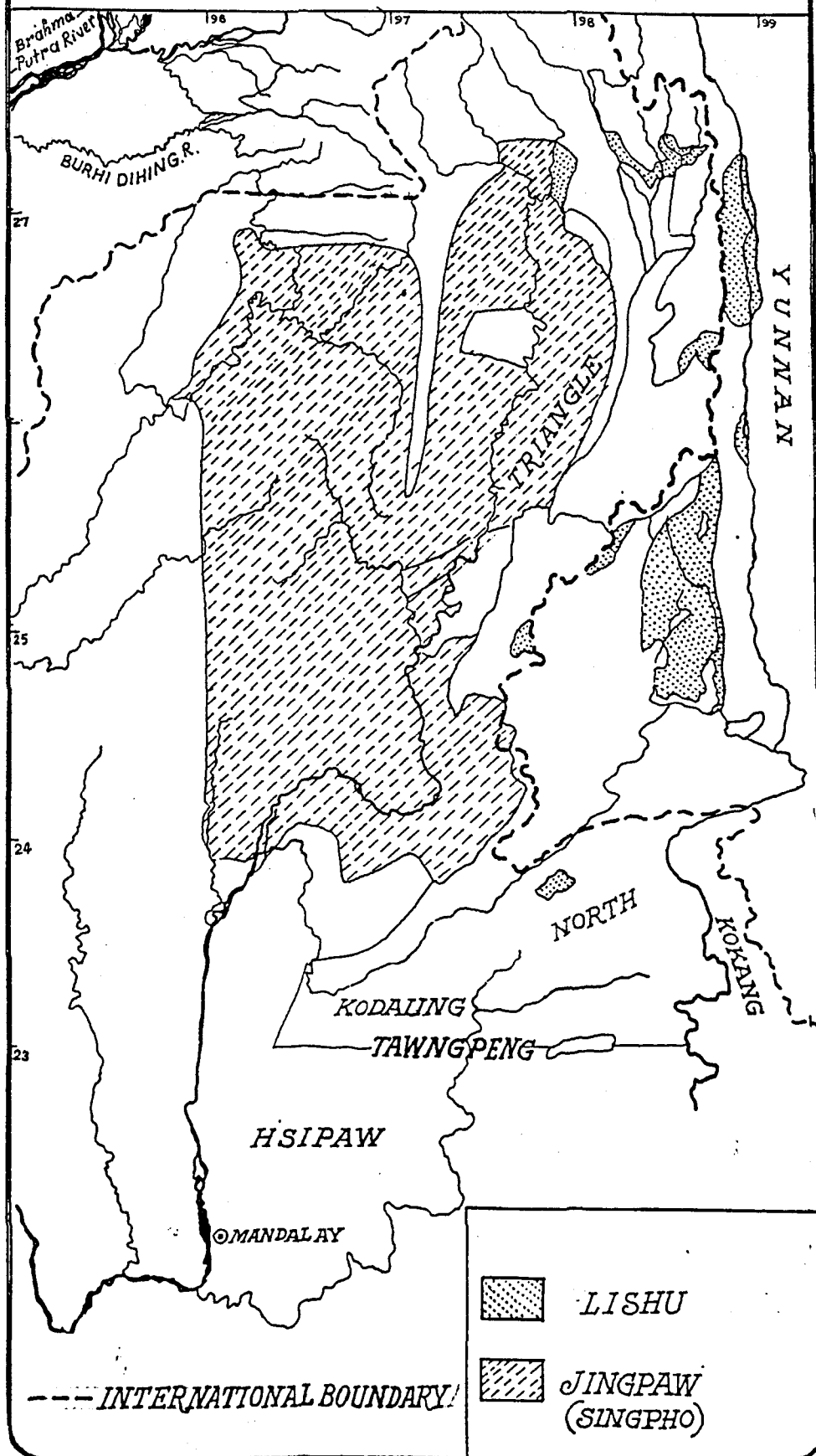
NOT TO SCALE



# NOTIONAL MAP OF PRESENT AND OLD HABITATION OF LISUS (YOBIN) IN TIRAP DISTRICT



*DISTRIBUTION OF THE 'LISUS' IN THE  
SHAN & KACHIN HILL STATES IN BURMA  
AS SHOWN IN MAP. NO-3. BY E.R. LEACH, 1954.*



## CHAPTER - I

L A N G U A G E

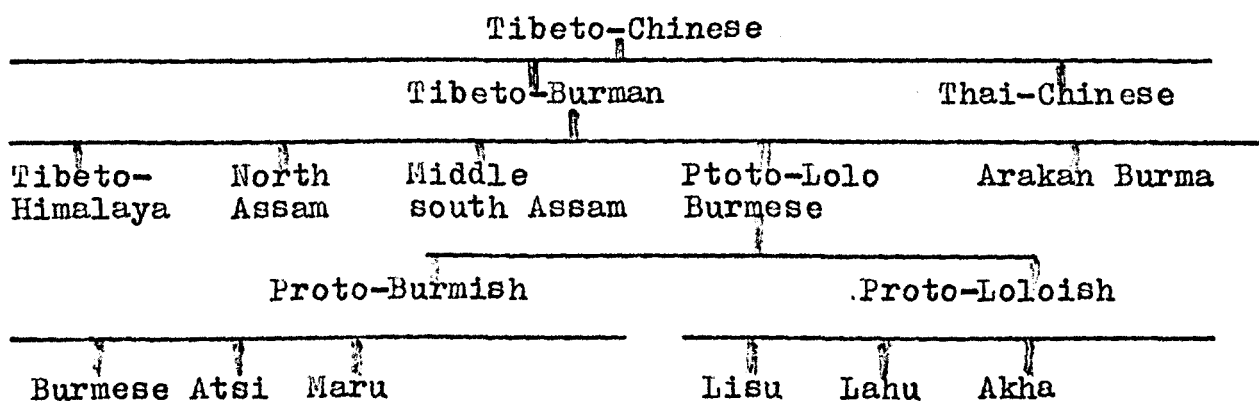
One of the most important and characteristic forms of human behaviour is language which is considered a vehicle of culture by the anthropologist. The sciences of man and language are mutually inter-dependent or inter-related for certain basic concepts and necessary data. While the linguist studies language mainly from the view point of its internal structure the anthropologist studies language not only for practical purposes- a thorough insight into a culture cannot be gained without a practical knowledge of its language, but for the fact that linguistic researches may often prove essential to a clear understanding of the deeper problems of personality, culture and society as well. The peculiar characteristics of language are clearly reflected in the views and customs of the peoples who speak it. To the anthropologist, the importance of the language lies obviously in the fact that all linguistic forms have meanings, and these meanings represent not single items of experience, but one or more categories of experience as observed by Boas (1911:73). All such classifications or categories of experience represent the end result of a long historical tradition and are indissolubly tied to a particular cultural milieu. It is therefore obvious that societies that differ in culture differ as well in the categories that attach to their linguistic form.



According to Sapir (1929:209) language acts far more importantly in a culture than simply as a neutral device to represent or symbolize the flow of experience. It provides the categories and divisions of experience in terms of which its speakers cope with the universe about them.

With this brief general introduction on the relationship between culture and language, let us have a brief look on the language situation and its classification in India. With her enormous diversity of culture and vast heterogeneity of ethnic groups, India presents an amazing collection of languages and dialects- with as many as 1652 mother tongues (Census, 1971). Very few of them possess written records with highly developed literature and a great many of them do not possess even the script and the rudiments of a literature. Out of them, only a few are recognised in Indian Constitution as regional or state languages. No Indian state or Union Territory is monolingual. Except Assamese, Oriya, and Kashmiri, all the major regional languages occur as either second or third numerically most important languages in one or more states or union territories, besides the states where they have a predominant position. Out of 360 districts (1971, Census), in 105 districts in the country, Hindi is numerically the most important first language. Urdu is the second numerically important language spoken in as many as five states in India, though not a predominant language in any state.

The linguists have classified the vast number of languages in India into four language families or groups namely; the Austrie, the Dravidian, the Indo-European (Indo-Aryan) and the Tibeto-Chinese. Only the Indo-Aryan sub-family of the Indo-European languages is found in India. Out of the 20 Indo-Aryan languages found in India, eleven (11) have been constitutionally recognised. Fourteen languages are included in the Dravidian family of which four have been recognised by the constitution. The Austro-Asiatic sub-family of the Austric family of languages is represented in India. Fourteen of these languages are spoken by seven million people. Twelve of these languages are in the Munda-group spoken in the central and eastern India by the tribal peoples. Of the Tibeto-Chinese family of languages only Tibeto-Burman sub-family are found in India which include as many as 51 languages that are distributed mainly in the north-eastern fringes of India. The language spoken by the Lisu is included in the Tibeto-Burman group of languages. Their phylogenetic relationship or the position of the Lisu language may be diagrammed as follows:



### Tibeto-Burman Languages

According to the linguists Tibetan proper is a language with a very considerable literature. A great deal of this consists of translations from Sanskrit works on Philosophy, Buddhism and kindred subjects; and many of these are of great value for the cultural history of India because the Sanskrit originals have been lost. These translations were made in the early centuries of the Christian era. The remaining languages of this group, except Burmese, are without any literature. The various branches of this group are connected in a rather complex manner which may throw a good deal of light on the migrations of the Tribes speaking these languages. Linguists are agreed on the view that original home of these languages was on south-west China. From there, following the courses of the two rivers- Yang-tsze-Kiang and the Hwang-ho, they went down into China proper; and down the Brahmaputra, the Chindwin, the Irawati, the Salwin, the Meanan and the Mekhong into India, Burma, Siam and Annam. It is assumed, in all these lands they found older inhabitants of the Mon-Khmer people. The original Tibeto-Burman stock is supposed to have reached the point where the Brahmaputra emerges from the mountain and there they split into three divisions. One followed the course of the same river downwards into Assam and the third branch followed the courses of the Chindwin and Irawati into Burma. The North Assam group is an amorphous collection of languages which represent intermediate stages between Tibetan and Burmese. According to Grierson, their territory

is supposed to be a kind of back-water over which various waves of Tibeto-Burman immigration have swept, each leaving its record in the speech of the inhabitants.

### Proto-Lolo-Burmese

Burling (1967) has constructed a new sub-group called Proto-Lolo-Burmese under Tibeto-Burman group of languages. Six representative languages- Burmese, Ata, Maru, Lisu, Lahu and Akha fall into this sub-group. All are spoken in Burma today and several of them overlap the borders of Yunnan, Laos or Thailand as well. These six languages are more closely related to one another than they are to most other Tibeto-Burman languages such as Jinghpaw, Karen or Chin in Burma, the Tibe-Burman languages of North-Eastern India or those of the Himalayan border regions of India, Nepal and Tibet. On the basis of their close relationship, these six languages are again divided into two co-ordinate sub-branches. Burmese, Atsi and Maru on the one hand, and Lisu, Lahu and Akha on the other. Basing on the linguistic evidence, Burling uses the term- Proto-Loloish to the forms reconstructed from Lisu, Lahu and Akha to which Shafer (1940:308) suggested the term- Loloish; and Proto-Burmish to the forms reconstructed from Burmese, Atsi and Maru to which Shafer suggested the term- Burmish. The scholars who have interested themselves in these languages are in general agreement about their phylogenetic grouping.

Lisu, known also as Yawyin, Lahu (Muhso) and Akha (kaw) are three representatives of the Lolo groups of languages.

They are spoken primarily in the northern Shan states in Burma and across the international borders in both China and Thailand.

According to Burling (1967) the three Loloish languages--Lisu, Lahu and Akha differ in a number of rather marked ways from the members of the Burmish group. Final consonant contrasts are reduced, for only Akha has any remnant of final nasals, and the glottal stop is the only final stop in any of the languages. The number of vowel contrasts is greater in the Loloish languages than in the members of the Burmish group. Speakers of the Loloish language have had close ties with the speakers of Shan-Thai, and it is worth noting that the complex vowels systems of the Loloish languages are typologically like the characteristics of Thai. The Loloish languages lack the weak syllables found in all the three Burmish languages. In all the six languages the syllable occupies a unique role. Morpheme boundaries and syllable boundaries generally coincide and the syllable is normally the shortest item that can be readily articulated in isolation. Each syllable has a vowel and a characteristic tone. In all the six languages, the array of syllable initial (pre-vocalic) consonants, is more extensive than that of syllable final (post-vocalic) consonants; and the phonological characteristics of the two sets are often quite divergent. Final consonants tend to be sharply limited in their distribution with respect to the preceding vowels.

With these stray information on the Proto-Lolo Burmese languages, let us begin the discussion on the Lisu language in particular on the basis of the present study.

### Phonology

The Lisu have recently adopted the English capita letters written as usual as well as reversely as their script. The Lisu language has twentynine consonants and eleven vowels.

### Consonants

The approximate Lisu sound system is given below:-

Velar-      | ga(G)   ka(k)   kha(>)   ya(R)  
               | zaa(ʒ)   nga(A)   haa(v)  
               | ha(H)   hah(ʈ)   wa(w)

Palatal-    | da (D)   ta (T)   tha (⊥)   za (z)  
               | tsa (F)   tsah (⊥)   sa (S)

Dental Alveolar-    ja(J)   cha(C)   chha(ʈ)   na(N)   ca(L)

Bilagial fricative-   fa(ɸ)   ka(X)   ye(Y)

Labial-    be(B)   pa(P)   pha(d)   ma(M)

It is very difficult to pronounce or sound the Lisu consonants with Bengali or English tongue, it is more so in the case of consonants represented by the English reverse letters. A rigorous practice and drill with a native speaker is necessary to get the correct sound. None of the sounds used in pronouncing the English capital letters is retained in Lisu consonants.

For example, 'V' is pronounced as 'haa', 'H' as 'ha', 'D' as 'da' etc.

### Vowels:

The eleven Lisu vowels are :-

ah (A) a(∇) e (E) ew(Ξ) ee(I) O Wu(U) ae (∩)  
gii (7) gun (Q) gah (⊗).

of these eleven vowels, only E and O sound like English vowels- O and e, and sound somewhat like English 'U'. According to the present data, no semi-vowels are there in the Lisu language. All the vowels of the Lisu language are nasalised. The Lisu vowels seem resolvable into five front and six back vowels, with high and mid vowels further-

### Tone

The Lisu may be said to be a tone language as it is having basically significant, contrastive, but relative pitch on each syllable. Significant pitch distinguishes the meanings of utterances and the meanings of words. These Lisu words have different meanings with different utterances or tones though the spelling of the words are same; though phonologically, it is not the stable feature of the language. Mainly, three distinctive tones- rising, falling and level occur in the Lisu language which split apart giving rise to a number of tones. With my untrained ear I am not able to record them properly which appears as seven tones. The splitting of tones in Lisu depends upon the class of syllable initial- whether it is voiced, voiceless or aspirated.

Some of these Lisu words are given below:-

|                   |                                 |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| Ngaw <sup>1</sup> | Fish                            |
| ngaw <sup>2</sup> | To borrow                       |
| ngaw <sup>3</sup> | I                               |
| za <sup>1</sup>   | practice                        |
| za <sup>2</sup>   | Food                            |
| za <sup>3</sup>   | To eat                          |
| za <sup>4</sup>   | To paint                        |
| za <sup>5</sup>   | To feel the gum by two fingers. |
| za <sup>6</sup>   | To try                          |
| sa <sup>1</sup>   | Three                           |
| sa <sup>2</sup>   | To swim                         |
| sa <sup>3</sup>   | To indicate                     |
| Sa <sup>4</sup>   | T please                        |
| Sa <sup>5</sup>   | To find                         |
| Sa <sup>6</sup>   | To fix something                |
| Sa <sup>7</sup>   | To choose.                      |
| Ley <sup>1</sup>  | To come                         |
| Ley <sup>2</sup>  | To fold                         |
| Ley <sup>3</sup>  | Aluminium                       |
| Ley <sup>4</sup>  | To try to touch something       |
| Ley <sup>5</sup>  | To remove something             |
| Lu <sup>1</sup>   | Round                           |
| Lu <sup>2</sup>   | a kind of evil spirit           |
| Lu <sup>3</sup>   | To jail                         |
| Lu <sup>4</sup>   | To loose the ground of a plant  |
| Lu <sup>5</sup>   | To look                         |
| Lu <sup>6</sup>   | To sink                         |
| Lu <sup>7</sup>   | To throw                        |



|                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Hi <sup>1</sup> | House                   |
| Hi <sup>2</sup> | To stand                |
| Hi <sup>3</sup> | When an animal is born. |

According to my learned informant an undergraduate, the highest qualified man among the present Lisu of Arunachal Pradesh, there are few Lisu words having a single meaning. In other words, every Lisu word has more than one meaning. Only the nouns of the Lisu language indicate one meaning only.

### Noun

Nouns and pronouns add the suffixes- 'tu' and 'fu' for denoting plurals. In case of animals and inanimate objects, the suffix- 'tu' is generally used or add for indicating plurality. But in case of human being the suffix- 'bu' is added.

|          | <u>Singular</u> | <u>Plural</u> |
|----------|-----------------|---------------|
| Elephant | mugu            | mugutu        |
| Tiger    | lama            | lamatu        |
| Dao      | atha            | athatu        |
| Girl     | Zamuza          | Zamuzabu      |
| Boy      | Zanuza          | Zanuzabu      |
| Woman    | amina           | aminabu       |
| House    | hi              | hitu          |
| Horse    | amu             | amutu         |

Nouns also add the suffix when the plurality is clear from the context itself. Big size animals when they are denoted by the fixed number like-

|            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| Ten horses | amu tsikha  |
| Ten cows   | anyi tsikha |

the suffix kha is added. But in case of small animals like dog, rat, cat, birds, etc. and household articles, the suffix 'ma' is added when they are denoted by the numerals. For example :-

|              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| Five dogs    | ana ngaw ma  |
| Ten birds    | nya tsima    |
| Ten rats     | hoypu tsima  |
| Ten radios   | leydio tsima |
| One elephant | muguthika    |
| One rat      | hoypu thima  |
| One radio    | leydio thima |

In the case of human beings, the suffix 'yo' is added when they are denoted by the specific number or numerals. For example :-

|           |              |
|-----------|--------------|
| Ten girls | Zamu tsiyo   |
| Ten boys  | Zanu tsiyo   |
| Ten men   | choza tsiyo  |
| One man   | choza tsiyo  |
| One girl  | zamuza thiyo |

The suffix- 'khew' is added in the case of clothings, dress, blankets, bag etc. For example :-

|             |                 |
|-------------|-----------------|
| One shirt   | beychi thi khew |
| Ten shirt   | bey chi tsikhew |
| One blanket | yi bu thi khew  |
| Ten blanket | yi bu tsikhew   |



|                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| Female teacher | - mama   |
| Cock           | - gaphew |
| Hen            | - gama   |
| Male dog       | - khupha |
| Bitch          | - khuma  |

The term- 'ma' is used to differentiate not only the female sexes of human beings but in almost every kind of species; and the term- 'pha' or 'yiphew' is used in a selected or restricted way.

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Boar            | aweypa or weypa |
| Sow             | aweyma or weyma |
| Bull            | labu            |
| Cow             | nyima           |
| Horse           | amupa           |
| Mare            | amuma or muma   |
| Tigress         | lamayima        |
| Tiger           | lamayipa        |
| Boy             | zanu            |
| Girl            | zamuza          |
| Mother          | ama             |
| Father          | aba             |
| Male elephant   | mugupa          |
| Female elephant | muguyima        |
| Male buffalo    | alopa           |
| Female buffalo  | aloma           |
| He goat         | achipa          |
| She goat        | achima          |

He cat anyapa

She cat anyama

In some cases, 'pha' or 'pa' instead of 'yiphew'; 'ma' instead of 'yima' is used. For example, 'alopa' is used instead of 'aloyiphew' only to ease the pronunciation. Moreover, it also depends upon the speaker's own choice.

### Pronoun

#### Personal

The personal pronoun has three persons having no gender.

|             |                            |
|-------------|----------------------------|
| I           | ngaw or nga ( $\wedge$ W ) |
| you         | nu                         |
| He or she   | yi                         |
| we          | ngawnu or nganu            |
| you(plural) | nuwa                       |
| They        | yiwa                       |
| My          | ngaw ( $\wedge$ W )        |
| Our         | ngawnu (AWNU)              |
| For me      | ngew tey ( $\wedge$ W TV ) |
| For us      | ngawnu tey (AW NU TV)      |

For English I and My, and we and our, ngaw and ngawnu is used respectively. For dual number xi is suffixed to the pronoun excepting the first person. For example :-

|            |                    |
|------------|--------------------|
| We two     | ngaw nu ngy nyi xi |
| You two    | nuwa nyi xi.       |
| They Two   | yiwa nyi xi        |
| I am alone | ngaw di            |

Demonstrative

|       |                   |
|-------|-------------------|
| This  | thew ma (L 3 M)   |
| That  | goma (Go M)       |
| These | thew tu (L 3 T 7) |
| Those | go tu (Go T 7)    |

Interogative

|             |                           |
|-------------|---------------------------|
| Who?        | ama or alima (AM or ALEM) |
| What?       | ashi (A xI)               |
| Who is he?  | yi alima ngaw (YI ALI MA) |
| Whom?       | alima tey (ALIM T V)      |
| Whose?      | alima tey (ALIM T V)      |
| My mother   | ngaw ama (NW AM)          |
| Your mother | nu ma (NU M)              |
| His mother  | yi ma (YI M)              |

Adjective

Adjectives generally follow the nouns qualified:

|            |                                  |
|------------|----------------------------------|
| Hot water  | yisa (YI 3 )                     |
| Good boy   | jama janu (JI M Y N 3)           |
| Broad Road | hew ma jagu (T I M Y N 3 )       |
| Tall tree  | mu ma sizi (MU M SI ZI)          |
| Green leaf | si chey ni chi (S I C Y N I C I) |
| Black dog  | Khu ney (K 7 N V )               |

Verb

In Lisu language time as indicated by tense in the English is the general rule, but the other form of tense is less in use; only the present, past and future forms are used

or distinguished mainly. These forms of tense do not indicate number and person. The order of a sentence is not always like subject, object and verb. Sometimes verbs come before the object or after the subject. The usual suffixes are 'nga' and 'ngo' for present action, 'wa' and 'lo' for the past action, and 'du-ngo' for the future action.

|             |                               |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| I eat       | ngaw za nga ( W Z )           |
| I ate       | ngaw za wa ( W Z W )          |
| I shall eat | ngaw za du-ngo ( W Z DU ʌ O ) |

### Imperative

To express order or command, the last letter or vowel or consonants of the verb or word is uttered forcefully. The Lisu do not add any letter for expressing command or order, but they add or suffix 'chi' (FI) to the root word, when its action or direction is implied to a 3rd person. For example:-

|                                  |                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| To go                            | gee (GE)         |
| Let him go<br>(command or order) | gee chi (GE FI)  |
| To carry                         | may ( M V )      |
| Let him carry(order)             | may chi (M V FI) |

### Negative

In the Lisu language negative is expressed by prefixing 'ma' (H) to the base.

|               |                                           |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------|
| I do not know | ngaw ma suta (AW M S T)                   |
| I did not go  | ngaw ma gee ( AW M GE)                    |
| I have no pen | Ngaw bo ka ma joa<br>( AW BO K M JO - A ) |

The imperative negative is 'tha' ( ) and preceds the verb.

|              |         |
|--------------|---------|
| Do not catch | tha yu  |
| Do not cry   | tha ngu |
| Do not go    | tha gee |

### Interogative

The interogative is expressed by adding the suffix- 'aay' to the root.

|              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| Do you hear? | nu pa ja aay |
| Will you go? | nu gea baaay |

### Continuity

For continuity of a state of action in the present- 'nya' is added to the verb.

|              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| I am eating  | ngaw za nya ngo  |
| I am joining | ngaw gee nya ngo |

### Possibility

Possibility is expressed by suffixing 'ba la' to the verb.

|             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| He may come | ye la bala |
| He may go   | ye ge bala |

### Certainty

Certainty is expressed by suffixing- 'nalo' or 'nata' to the verb.

|              |                         |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| He must go   | ye gee 'nata' or 'nalo' |
| He must come | ye la nata or nalo      |





Of time

|        |                         |
|--------|-------------------------|
| Again  | amu thi kwa (AM7 I HW)  |
| Now    | a mu ( A M7)            |
| Then   | gothey( GO 1V)          |
| Always | ataa mutha ( A 1 M7 1 ) |

Of manner

|            |                     |
|------------|---------------------|
| Quickly    | ni tsa (NI 3)       |
| Go quickly | ni tsa gi ( NI 3GE) |
| Slowly     | a za ( A 8 )        |
| Loudly     | wa wa (W W)         |
| Suddenly   | thi thua (1 I 10)   |

Interogative

|       |                  |
|-------|------------------|
| When  | a they (A 1V)    |
| Where | ali kwa (ALI KW) |

Where do you live? - nu ali kwa nya nga (NU ALI KW NY )

SentencesGreeting

|               |                                    |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| Good morning  | hwa kwa ney ney ( H WA H WA N N V) |
| Are you well  | nu hwa kwa nga (NU H WA H WA ^)    |
| Thank you     | samua (X MU W)                     |
| How do you do | nu ato nga wa (NU ALI ^W)          |

On the road

|                        |                                                    |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Please show me the way | ngaw tey ja gu ma gu ley<br>( W T V J GU M G L V ) |
| I have lost the way    | ngaw ja gu ngo ye wa<br>( W J GU ^O YE W = )       |

I shall show you the way ngaw nu tey ja gu ma gu di-ngo

( W NU T J GU M G DU ^ O )

I do not know the way ngaw ja gu ma su ta

( ^ W J GU M S 7 T = )

Please take me there ngaw tey ga-kwa ho je ley

( ^ W T ^ GO KW HO JE L ^ = )

Go to the right ley kho-tey mi je

( L ^ X O T S JE )

Go to the left ley gu tey si je

( L ^ 7 T ^ SI JE )

### Conversation

How are you? nu ali nga wa

( NU ALI ^ W )

I am well ngaw hwa hwa ngo

( W HW HW ^ O )

What is your name? nu mi ali mi a

( U MI ALI MI A... = )

My name is phusa ngaw mi phusa ngo

( ^ W MI ^ U S AO = )

Where do you come from? nu ali kwa cho la ngae

( NU ALI KW CO L ^ . . = ) -

I come from Gandhigram ngaw Gandhigram kwa cho la ngu

( ^ W D G 7 LM ^ KW CO L ^ O = )

Is your father alive? nu fa sey tay la

( NU ^ SV TY L )

Yest, he is living nga wa yi sey tey nga

( ^ W YI SV TY ^ = )

What is he? yi ashi ye nga

( YI A X 7 YE ^ = )

Food and Drink

|                         |                                                 |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| I am thirsty            | ngaw sa nga<br>( ^ W SI ^ = )                   |
| I am hungry             | ngaw he mua nga<br>( ^ W VE M 7 ^ = )           |
| Very hungry             | AKHU he mua nga<br>( A W VE M 7 )               |
| I am not hungry         | ngaw ma he mua<br>( ^ W M VE M 7 )              |
| I want food             | ngaw za nua nga<br>( ^ W Z N 7 ^ )              |
| I want hot water        | ngaw ye tsa nua nga<br>( ^ W YE 3 N 7 ^ = )     |
| I have finished my meal | ngaw za chi za do wa<br>( ^ W Z 3 I Z DO W = )  |
| Bring water for me      | ngaw be gu a jey tey gu ley<br>( W B A JY T L ) |
| Have you taken rice     | nu za za do wa<br>( NU Z Z DO W )               |
| Let us take rice        | za za ley<br>( Z Z LV )                         |
| I like meat             | ngaa kwa ni shia nga<br>( ^ W HW NI X 7 ^ = )   |
| I wish to drink tea     | ngaw la cha doa nga<br>( W L C DO ^ 2 )         |
| Taste                   | so (SO)                                         |
| Tasteful                | so a -nga (SO -A-)                              |
| Boiled rice             | cha ta ma za ( C T M Z )                        |

|               |                                |
|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Vegetables    | wo chey wo mi<br>(WO ㄅY WO MI) |
| Cake or Bread | na phu<br>( N ㄑN )             |
| Maize         | o sha ( O X )                  |
| Gourd         | a phu<br>(A ㄑU )               |
| Brinjal       | si ba su (SI B S )             |
| Sugar         | sa chi (ㄣ ㄅI)                  |
| Fish          | ngaw ( ㄱ W)                    |
| Meat          | hwa ( HW)                      |
| Hot           | cha (ㄣ)                        |
| Sweet         | chi ( ㄅI)                      |
| Chilli        | la zu (L Z 7)                  |
| Potato        | hu bi ( H 7 BI )               |
| Rice bear     | zi phu (JI ㄑ7)                 |
| Boiled water  | cha ta ma ajey (C T M A JY)    |
| Hot water     | yi cha ( YI ㄣ )                |
| Cold water    | ye chey (YE ㄅI)                |
| Garlic        | gulu (G O LO)                  |
| Onion         | shi khu lu (XI ㄱU LU)          |
| Food          | za (Z)                         |
| Soup          | yiye (YI YE)                   |
| Salt          | sha bo (ㄣ BO)                  |
| Oil           | HWA CHU ( HW ㄣ 7)              |
| Sour          | chii ( C 7)                    |
| Water         | a jey ( A JY)                  |

Paddy                      za ma zu ( Z M S(I)

Boil                        cha (C)

With a Physician

I am ill                    ngaw na nga

(ΛW N Λ)

I have headache            ngaw wu du na dua wa

(ΛW WU DQ N DO W )

I am not well                ngaw ga du ma sha

(ΛW GO D≡ M S =)

I am well                    ngaw hwa hwa ngo

(ΛW HW HW Λ O )

He has injured his leg      ye chi phea na du du ye wa

( YE CI Δ √ N DU DU YE W )

It is bleeding                yi shi du tay nga

( YI SI DO TY Λ=)

It is sweating                cha chey ye dua nga

( ≡ CI YE DO Λ -)

I have stomach pain        ngaw he ma na du joa nga

( ΛW VI M W DU JO Λ-)

Take this medicine        ney chi thew ma yu za

( N √ ≡ I ⊥ ≡ M RU Z )

Breathe deeply                sey pha ha

( S √ d √ )

Drink warm water            ye cha lu mu do

( YI ⊥ L ≡ M O DO )

Do not go out                ye ba kwa tha je

( YE B KW ⊥ JE )

|                              |                                                                         |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Did you take medicine before | hu they ney chi za wa<br>(# 7 L V N V = I Z W )                         |
| Let me see your hand         | nu lay pheyy nyi na chi ley<br>(NU L V d A NYI N FI L V)                |
| I shall give you injection   | ngaw nu tey ney chi thu gu du ngo<br>(A W NU T V N = I L U G 7 DU A O ) |
| Do not worry                 | tha ja sha<br>( L J X )                                                 |
| You will get well            | nu da ye la ngu<br>(NU D YE L A O )                                     |
| Take him to doctor           | yi tey ney chi sipha cha hoye<br>(YI T V NA = I SI d C HO YE )          |
| Take him to the hospital     | yi tey ney chi hia he ge<br>(YI T V N V = I HI HO GE )                  |
| Desease                      | na so ( N X A )                                                         |
| Small pox                    | na du ( W DO )                                                          |
| Diarrhoea                    | he ho ( VE HO )                                                         |
| Mouth                        | mu nu ( M Q ND )                                                        |
| Tongue                       | la chu ( L C 7 )                                                        |
| Eye                          | me su ( MY SD )                                                         |
| Breast                       | o mu ( O MQ )                                                           |
| Hand                         | ley pheyy ( L V d V )                                                   |
| Leg                          | chi pheyy ( C I d W )                                                   |
| Tooth                        | si chi ( SI C I )                                                       |
| Skin                         | ku ji ( KO JI )                                                         |
| Hair                         | wu chew ( WU = E )                                                      |
| Head                         | wu du ( WU DU )                                                         |

|        |                            |
|--------|----------------------------|
| Finger | ley ngi (LVΛE)             |
| Lip    | mu nu ko je ( M7 NQ KO JI) |
| Ear    | na po ( N PO)              |
| Nose   | na khu (N ʌ U)             |

Visit to a place

|                               |                                                              |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| I am a visitor                | ngaw tue ny su thi yo ngo<br>( ΛW TΞNYI SU ⊥I ROΛO )         |
| Where is the Gao bura's house | bey sey hi ali kwa nga<br>( BV SV VI ALI KW ʌ= )             |
| I wish to see the Gao bura    | ngaw bey sey tey zi ni shia lo<br>(ΛW Bʏ SV T ZI NI XI LO)   |
| I do not wish                 | ngaw ma ni sha<br>(ΛW M WI XI)                               |
| Let us go round the village   | cho kha kwa je cho ka ley<br>( ⊥O KW JE CO K LV)             |
| I shall go up to the house    | ngaw hi kwa chey ge du ngo<br>( ΛW VI KW ʘI GE DU ΛO )       |
| Come with me                  | ngaw ta fi ley<br>(ΛW T ⊥I LV)                               |
| Show me the office            | ngaw tey yo hi ma gu ley<br>( ΛW Tʏ RO VI M G7 LV=)          |
| The weather is fine today     | ni mi ma cha je nga<br>( NI MI M7 ⊥ JE ʌ=)                   |
| I shall come again            | ngaw a mu thi kwa la du ngo<br>( ΛW A M ⊥I HW L DU ΛO )      |
| I shall see you tomorrow      | ngaw nu tey sa gu zi la du ngo<br>(ΛW NU TʏS G7 ZI L DU ΛO ) |



|                            |                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| What is this?              | thew ma ashi nga<br>( $\perp \exists M \wedge X \cap \wedge =$ )                                                        |
| Who is he?                 | ye ali ma nga<br>( $YE \text{ ALI } M \wedge =$ )                                                                       |
| He is an interpreter       | ye sha wa tsa pha thi yo nga lo<br>( $YE \text{ X } W \text{ F } \supset \perp \text{ IYO } \wedge \wedge \text{ LO}$ ) |
| Do you remember me?        | nu ma tay su tai<br>( $NU \wedge M \perp \forall SQ \text{ T } =$ )                                                     |
| Yes, I remember            | ngawa ngaw su ta nga<br>( $\wedge M \wedge W \text{ SQ } T \wedge =$ )                                                  |
| He is my friend            | ye ngaw cho phey nga wa<br>( $YE \wedge W \supset O \supset \forall \wedge \text{ W }$ )                                |
| I will introduce you       | ngaw nu tey su li cha ngo<br>( $\wedge W \text{ NU } T \forall SQ \text{ LE } \text{ FE } \wedge O =$ )                 |
| Will you help me?          | nu ngaw tey ye ja ni shia la<br>( $NU \wedge W \perp \forall YE \text{ J } \text{ NI } \text{ X } \cap \text{ L } =$ )  |
| Village                    | cho kha ( $\supset O \times$ )                                                                                          |
| Guest                      | we za ( $WE \times$ )                                                                                                   |
| Opposite house             | tue tue ma hi ( $T \exists T \exists M \text{ VI}$ )                                                                    |
| Adjacent house             | thi tsey ma hi ( $\perp \text{ I } \text{ FA } M \text{ VI}$ )                                                          |
| New comer                  | ye shi la su ( $YE \text{ X } \cap \text{ L } \text{ SU}$ )                                                             |
| House                      | he ( $\text{VI}$ )                                                                                                      |
| Fever                      | chew hu phu ( $\supset \text{ F } \text{ H } \text{ 7dU}$ )                                                             |
| <u>At the craft centre</u> |                                                                                                                         |
| What are you weaving?      | nu a shi chi tay nga<br>( $NU \text{ A } \text{ X } \cap \supset \text{ I } \text{ TY } \wedge =$ )                     |

|                          |                                                                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| I am weaving blanket     | ngaw ye bu chi tey ngo<br>( ^ W YE B^I TY ^ O = )               |
| Blanket                  | ye bu<br>( YE B^I )                                             |
| Do you like weaving?     | nu ye chi ma ni shia la<br>( NU YV^I M NI X^ L = )              |
| Yes                      | nga wa ( ^ W )                                                  |
| The cloth is very nice   | yay nay a khu ja nga<br>( YV NY A X ^ I ^ = )                   |
| What is the price?       | ye phu a mia nga<br>YE d^ A M Y ^ = )                           |
| This cloth is ten rupees | ye thew ma ye phy tsi pheyy ngo<br>( YV T^ M YI d^ I d^ ^ ^ O ) |
| Coat                     | kho bey chi<br>( ^ O B V^I )                                    |
| Dress                    | ga wa du<br>( G W DU )                                          |
| Cotton                   | sa la (S-L)                                                     |
| Thread                   | wo chu (WO C7)                                                  |
| Needle                   | wu (WO)                                                         |
| To sew                   | su chu (WO-C7)                                                  |

### Shopping

|                   |                                         |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| What is the price | y^ phu a mia nga<br>( YI d^ A M Y ^ = ) |
| Will you sell?    | nu wu gua bey (NU WU GU B )             |
| I shall not sell  | ngaw ma wu gu (AW M: WU GU)             |



There are four teachers ga kwa mafa li yo joa lo

( GO KW Md LI RO JO-LO)

Do you like arithmetic nu so swa ni shia la

( NU SO SWNI X Q L = )

I find it very difficult ngaw thi ma akhi sha fa nga

( ^ W L I M Q X 7 X T ^ = )

I understand ngaw su leo

( ^ W S Q LEO)

I do not understand Lisu language-ngaw Lisu ngo ma su ta

( ^ W LI SU ^ O M S Q T = )

I know ngaw su leo

( ^ W S Q LEO)

I do not know ngaw ma su ta

( ^ W M S Q T )

Book tho gu ( L O 7 )

Teach ma ( M )

Teacher mafa ( M Q )

Read so or cho ( S O Or O O )

### Agriculture

Where is your cultivation field? nu wa ha mi ali kwa nga

( NU W V MI ALI KW ^ = )

Some are near, some are at a thi bu zu, thi bu gu ja kwa nga wa distance

( L I B E Z, 7 I B E 7 8 KW ^ W -- = )

What will you sow this year? chi ni nu ashi tua bey

( 7 I NI NU A X Q T Q B V = )

I will sow paddy ngaw za tu du a nga

( ^ W Z T Q DU ^ = )

|                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Paddy plant          | za zi ( Z ZI )         |
| Bush                 | mu ( MO )              |
| Dao(straight scythe) | atha ( A I )           |
| Spade                | cho pheý ( CO dV )     |
| Axe                  | a cho ( A d O )        |
| Bark                 | si koji ( SI KOJI )    |
| Flowers bloom        | si we bo ( SI WE BO )  |
| Jungle               | si nay ( SI NV )       |
| Tree                 | si zi ( SI ZI )        |
| Root                 | yi chi ju ( YI cI JU ) |
| Plant                | yi zi ( YI ZI )        |
| Leaf                 | yi cheý ( YI cY )      |

### Case

|                             |                                   |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Do not steal                | tha khu ( L 7 U )                 |
| Bimal has divorced his wife | Bimal li yi hi si ma teý ha ku wa |
|                             | ( BIMAL LE YI VI SIM T HK W )     |
| Speak the truth             | tue ma sha thew                   |
|                             | ( T V M X L E )                   |
| Who has beaten you          | nu tay ali ma ni dii la wa        |
|                             | ( NU T V ALI M NI D 7 L W = )     |
| Afuni has beaten            | Afuni du la wa                    |
|                             | ( A PU NI D L W )                 |
| Do not quarrel              | ta se ley kho                     |
|                             | ( L SE L V 7 O = )                |
| Gao bura will settle        | nu wa gao-bura bey ley kho ma bey |
| your disputes               | sey li sheý gu la du ngo          |
|                             | ( NU W GAO BURA B V L V 7 O M B V |
|                             | SV LE XY G 7 L DU 7 O = )         |

|         |                            |
|---------|----------------------------|
| Thief   | cho khu ( ㄔ ㄠ ㄍ ㄨ )        |
| Steal   | khu ( ㄍ ㄨ )                |
| Case    | shi ( ㄒ ㄩ )                |
| Witness | sa sey ( ㄙ ㄙ ㄝ )           |
| court   | shi khu tu ( ㄒ ㄩ ㄍ ㄨ ㄊ ㄩ ) |

### About time

|                           |                                                                  |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| What is the time now?     | a mu amia ji chia wa<br>( ㄞ ㄇ ㄩ ㄞ ㄇ ㄞ ㄐ ㄧ ㄘ ㄧ ㄨ ㄞ )              |
| It is ten O'Clock         | tsi ji chia wa<br>( ㄘ ㄧ ㄐ ㄧ ㄘ ㄧ ㄨ ㄞ )                            |
| Have you got a watch      | nu ma li thi su joa la<br>( ㄋ ㄨ ㄇ ㄞ ㄌ ㄧ ㄊ ㄧ ㄙ ㄨ ㄐ ㄠ ㄌ ㄞ )        |
| At what time will you go? | ali thi ji kwa nu go du nga<br>( ㄞ ㄌ ㄧ ㄧ ㄐ ㄨ ㄍ ㄨ ㄍ ㄠ ㄊ ㄨ ㄋ ㄍ ㄞ ) |
| I will go at 5 o'clock    | ngaw 5 ji kwa ge du ngo<br>( ㄋ ㄍ ㄨ ㄞ ㄐ ㄧ ㄐ ㄨ ㄍ ㄠ ㄊ ㄨ ㄋ ㄍ ㄠ )     |
| Time                      | yi ji ( ㄩ ㄧ ㄐ ㄧ )                                                |
| Clock                     | nali ( ㄋ ㄌ ㄧ )                                                   |
| Ten o'clock               | tsi ji ( ㄘ ㄧ ㄐ ㄧ )                                               |
| At what time              | ali thi jia ( ㄞ ㄌ ㄧ ㄌ ㄧ ㄐ ㄧ )                                    |

### About forest

|                                                                            |                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| What trees are there in the forest?                                        | si ney li kwa ashi si zi<br>joa lo<br>( ㄙ ㄧ ㄋ ㄝ ㄌ ㄧ ㄐ ㄨ ㄞ ㄕ ㄧ ㄘ ㄧ ㄐ ㄠ ㄌ ㄠ ) |
| There are various trees in the forest- go kwa si zi lo zi joa lo           | ( ㄍ ㄠ ㄐ ㄨ ㄙ ㄧ ㄘ ㄧ ㄌ ㄠ ㄘ ㄧ ㄐ ㄠ ㄌ ㄠ )                                         |
| These are chi chey zi, si ku tu etc.-go kwa chi chey zi si ku<br>tu joa lo | ( ㄍ ㄠ ㄐ ㄨ ㄘ ㄧ ㄘ ㄧ ㄘ ㄧ ㄕ ㄨ ㄊ ㄨ ㄐ ㄠ ㄌ ㄠ )                                     |

What are the animals in the forest- si ney ti kwa ashi hwa shi  
tya lo

(SI NV LI KWA XQ HW XQ TY LO =)

There are in the forest, si ney li kwa che, mugu, wo-pha  
dear, elephant, boar, tiger etc. tya lo

(SI NA LI KW E M G WO TY LO =)

Do you pay tax nu yi shu bua la

( NU YI XU B 7 L -- = )

We do not pay tax ngaw nu yi shu ma bua

(AW NU YI XU M B 7 )

Tree si zi (SI ZI)

Wood si (ZI)

Forest si nay li (SI N LI)

Tax yi shu (YI XU)

Animal hwa shi (HW XQ)

### Some Useful Sentences

I want an interpreter ngaw xa wa pha thi yo ye thoa lo

( W X W FdIROR E O L O )

Speak slowly a za sha thew

( A Y X L E )

Speak the truth tue ma xa thew

( T E M X L E )

Come back la ley ( L L V )

Go ahead mu jey ge ( M 7 JY G E -- = )

Never mind ni ma tha ku ( NI M L K Q )

Do not get angry tha ni si ( NI SI )

That does not matter go ma ashi ma chi

( GO M A X Q M C I = )

|                          |                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Possible                 | ba la ( B L )                                                                                         |
| It is impossible         | thew ma ma sa la ( T $\exists$ M M B L )                                                              |
| I do not agree           | ngaw ma wa ( $\wedge$ W M W )                                                                         |
| What do you think?       | Nu a shi du ja la<br>( NU A X $\wedge$ D $\cap$ J L $\dots$ = )                                       |
| I accept your suggestion | ngaw nu sey gu khu tey kho yua lo<br>( $\wedge$ W NU S $\vee$ G $\gamma$ T $\vee$ X O RU LO $\dots$ ) |
| I have nothing to say    | ngaw ashi li bey du ma joa<br>( $\wedge$ W $\wedge$ X $\cap$ LI B $\vee$ DU M JOA $\dots$ )           |

Are you sure  
(are you speaking the truth)

nu chi chi bey ba lae  
(NU CI CI B  $\vee$  B L  $\dots$  )

I am sure  
I am busy  
I am not busy

ngaw chi chi (  $\wedge$  W CI CI )  
ngaw ley ma thua (  $\wedge$  W L  $\vee$  M  $\perp$   $\exists$  )  
ngaw ley thua nga  
(  $\wedge$  W L  $\vee$   $\perp$   $\exists$   $\wedge$   $\dots$  )

Correct  
Wrong

zo ( Z O )  
ma zo ( M Z O )

### Glossary

|            |                                                         |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Abandon    | loku ( LO KU )                                          |
| Leave      | ha ku ( H K $\cap$ )                                    |
| Above (on) | they si ( $\perp$ $\wedge$ SI )                         |
| Abuse      | bay ( B $\vee$ )                                        |
| Add        | ta ( T )                                                |
| Ache       | na ( N )                                                |
| Headache   | wu du na ( WU D $\cap$ N )                              |
| Advance    | hu tey or mi jey ( H $\gamma$ $\perp$ $\vee$ or MI Jy ) |
| Advise     | ma $\gamma$ ( M $\gamma$ )                              |



|                 |                                 |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Afraid          | ju (JO)                         |
| Again           | a mu thi kwa (A M7 I LHW)       |
| Age             | chi or si ( ㄷ I )               |
| Agree           | wa (W)                          |
| And             | be (BE)                         |
| Angry           | ne si ( NI SI)                  |
| Annoy           | li (LI)                         |
| Answer          | phu khu ( ㄷ O > 7 )             |
| Aid             | we ja ( R ㄷ J )                 |
| Air             | mi hi ( MI VI)                  |
| Always          | athey mu they ( A L V M 7 L V ) |
| Annual          | hwa shi ( HW X ㄱ )              |
| Arise           | du la ( DO L )                  |
| Around          | choo (CO)                       |
| Arrest          | cho wo ( ㄷ O )                  |
| Arrow           | chey chu (CY C 7)               |
| Ask             | di ( D )                        |
| Ashamed         | sha to (X TO)                   |
| Assault         | sha chi (X FI)                  |
| Assemble        | zi ( Z I)                       |
| Astonish        | du ja mu ( D ㄱ J M 7 )          |
| Attempt         | sey thu ( S V L ㄱ )             |
| Back (of body)  | ka ney si ( K NY SI )           |
| Bad             | ma ji (M JI)                    |
| Bamboo          | wa chu (W C U)                  |
| Bark            | lu (LU)                         |
| Bark ( of tree) | yi koji (YI KOJI)               |
| Basket          | ha jo ( H JO)                   |

|                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Bathe          | go du chi ( GO D3HI)   |
| Boast          | sey shi (SY X^)        |
| Beat           | due or ti (D7 or TI)   |
| Beautiful      | lobi (LO BI)           |
| Bed            | yi ta gu (YI T GU)     |
| Bee            | jey (JY)               |
| Beer (of rice) | ji phu (JI 47)         |
| Before         | hu tey si ( H7LV SI)   |
| Begin          | wu tu (WU TU)          |
| Behind         | ka ney si (K N^ SI)    |
| Believe        | jue (J^)               |
| Below          | yi chi khaw (YI 3I KW) |
| Big            | wu (WU)                |
| Bind           | hue (H7)               |
| Bird           | nya (NY)               |
| Bite           | kho (XO)               |
| Black          | nay nay (N^ N^)        |
| Blind          | mia tu (MY T7)         |
| Blood          | si (SI)                |
| Blue           | ni chi ( NI 3I)        |
| Bill           | cha (C)                |
| Book           | tho gu (LO7)           |
| Bow            | chey ( 3Y)             |
| Boy            | za nu ( 3 N 3)         |
| Brave          | za kha (3X)            |
| Brain          | wu nu (WU NQ)          |
| Bread          | na phu ( N 3U)         |
| Break          | khew (X 3)             |

|                   |                                        |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Breathe           | sey ha ( Sʏ ʏ )                        |
| Bridge            | da gu ( D GU)                          |
| Bright            | bew lu or jew lu ( BY ɤ L ɤ or Jɤ Lɤ)  |
| Bring             | tey la ( ɿ ʌ L)                        |
| Broad             | hew ( H ɛ )                            |
| Brother (elder)   | a yi (A YI)                            |
| Brother (younger) | ni za (NYI ʏ )                         |
| Build             | shey (X Y)                             |
| Bull              | la bu ( L B ʊ )                        |
| Burn              | jei ( J Y)                             |
| Bury              | tu ( T ʊ )                             |
| Bush              | mo or sipo (MO or SI PO)               |
| Buy               | wu ( W U)                              |
| Call              | khu ( ɤ U)                             |
| Cake              | na phu (N ɔ U)                         |
| Calf              | a ni za za ( A NYI ʏ ʏ )               |
| Cane              | go mi (GO MI)                          |
| Carry             | chue or mey (C ɤ or M ʏ )              |
| Catch             | yu ( R U)                              |
| Case              | bey mu or shi (Bʏ MU or X ʊ )          |
| Certainly         | cha cha ( C C )                        |
| Cheap             | tey (ɿ ʌ)                              |
| Chest             | o mu (O M ɿ )                          |
| Child             | za nu za ( ʏ N ɛ ʏ )                   |
| Baby              | cho shi za ( O X ʊ ʏ )                 |
| Clear             | shey shey or pha tey (XY XY or ɔ ɿ ʌ ) |
| Cloth             | yey ( Y ʌ )                            |
| Cloud             | mu ku ( MU KU)                         |

|              |                                 |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Cliff        | ga phi (ㄅ ㄘ I)                  |
| Climb        | dey (D ㄩ )                      |
| Coat         | kho bay si (ㄒ O B ㄩ ㄆ I)        |
| Cold         | jey (JY)                        |
| Come         | lay (L ㄩ )                      |
| Comfortable  | sa sa ( S S )                   |
| Cotton       | sa la ( S L )                   |
| Country      | koe (K U Q)                     |
| Cow          | ani (A NYI)                     |
| Coward       | cho chi (ㄘ O ㄘ I)               |
| Cry          | ngu ( ㄱ U)                      |
| Cut          | du or chi (D 7 or ㄘ I)          |
| Dark         | nay chi ( N ㄩ ㄆ I)              |
| Damage       | lue yee ( L ㄷ YE )              |
| Dance        | wa khi (W- ㄱ E)                 |
| Dao (scythe) | a tha ( A ㄱ )                   |
| Dawn         | nay nay shi shi (N ㄩ N ㄩ XI XI) |
| Day          | yi nyi (YI NYI)                 |
| Deaf         | na bo ( N BO)                   |
| Dear         | ni nu ma (NI N ㄱ M)             |
| Deer         | chi or chee ( ㄘ I or ㄘ E)       |
| Defend       | lo (LO)                         |
| Descend      | shue (X Q)                      |
| Die          | shi (XI)                        |
| Dig          | chuu ( CU)                      |
| Difficult    | sha ta ( X T )                  |
| Discuss      | gwa jew (GW J ㄷ)                |
| Disease      | na shi (N X ㄱ)                  |

|            |                                                                          |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Disobey    | ma na lo ( M N LO)                                                       |
| Divorce    | phi ku ( ρ I K ρ )                                                       |
| Doctor     | nay chi si pha ( N V ρ I SI ρ )                                          |
| Dog        | a na ( A N )                                                             |
| Dream      | o mia ( O MY)                                                            |
| Door       | ka khu ( K > 7 )                                                         |
| Dry        | ju ( JU)                                                                 |
| Dumb       | cho mu ( ρ O M ρ )                                                       |
| Ear        | na pu ( N PO)                                                            |
| Earth      | mu ( M ρ )                                                               |
| East       | bu du ( B7 DO)                                                           |
| Eat        | za ( Z)                                                                  |
| Elephant   | mu gu ( M7 G 7 )                                                         |
| Enemy      | chu jo su ( ρ U JO SU)                                                   |
| Enter      | du jee ( DU JE)                                                          |
| Escape     | che li jee ( ρ E LI JE)                                                  |
| Everywhere | ali kwa chi chi or thi ga li thi ga<br>( ALI KW ρ I ρ I or LI G LI LI G) |
| Eye        | mia su ( MY S ρ )                                                        |
| Exact      | ka ( - K)                                                                |
| Except     | ngo lo ( ^ O Lo)                                                         |
| Face       | phew mia ( ρ Y ρ MY)                                                     |
| Faithful   | ha lu bo ma ( V L ρ BO M)                                                |
| Fall       | chee yee ( ρ E YE)                                                       |
| False      | ku ( K ρ )                                                               |
| Far        | ooza ( 78 )                                                              |
| Fasten     | hu tee ( H7 LE)                                                          |
| Farmer     | mi yee pha ( MI YE ρ )                                                   |

|              |                          |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| Fat          | khaw ( > W )             |
| Father       | aba ( A B )              |
| Fear         | ju ( JO )                |
| Fever        | chee hu phu ( ㄔㄞ ㄏㄨ ㄆㄨ ) |
| Field        | wa di ( W DI )           |
| Finger       | lay ngi ( L V ㄤ )        |
| Find         | jia nga ( JIA )          |
| Fire         | a tu ( A TO )            |
| Fish         | ngaw ( A W )             |
| Fly          | jew ( J ㄟ )              |
| Flood        | ajew mu ( A J Y M7 )     |
| Floor        | ji ma ( J I M )          |
| Flower       | si wee ( SI W ㄟ )        |
| Food         | za ( Z )                 |
| Forest       | si nay li ( SI N LI )    |
| Forget       | mi yee ( MI YE )         |
| Friend       | cho phay ( ㄔㄛ ㄆㄞ )       |
| Fuel         | si cho ( SI CO )         |
| Give         | za muza ( ZI M7 ㄗ )      |
| Give         | gu ( GU )                |
| Glad         | ka chi ( K ㄔㄞ )          |
| God          | wu sa ( WU S )           |
| Good         | ji ( JI )                |
| Go           | gee or je ( GE or JE )   |
| Gourd        | a phuew ( A ㄆㄞ )         |
| Granary      | ka hi ( K VI )           |
| Grand father | a paa ( A P )            |
| Guest        | wu za ( W ㄗ )            |

|          |                                                  |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Gun      | la chu (L ㄅU)                                    |
| Hair     | wu chew (WU ㄟㄟ)                                  |
| Hat      | na ho ( N V O)                                   |
| Halt     | na or ha (N or ㄏ)                                |
| Hand     | lay phay (L ㄞ ㄞ )                                |
| Hate     | ni zo ( NI ZO)                                   |
| Have     | wa or jo (W or JO)                               |
| He       | ye (YI)                                          |
| Head     | wa du (WU D ㄛ)                                   |
| Hear     | paja (PJ)                                        |
| Hearth   | ka biku ( K BI KU)                               |
| Heavy    | li (LI) (this is similar with the Sing-<br>pho). |
| Help     | yi ja (YI J)                                     |
| Here     | thi kwa ( ㄌI KW)                                 |
| Hide     | chey or pia ( CY or PY)                          |
| Hill     | wa chi (W CI)                                    |
| Him      | yi tay ( YI T ㄞ )                                |
| His      | yi tay ( YI T ㄞ )                                |
| Hope     | ngo lo ( ㄤO LO)                                  |
| Horse    | a mu ( A MO)                                     |
| Hospital | nay tsi hi (N ㄞ I VI)                            |
| Hot      | tsa ( ㄗ )                                        |
| House    | hi (VI)                                          |
| How      | ali (A LI)                                       |
| Hungry   | hA mu ( VI MO)                                   |
| Hunt     | hwa se ( H W SE)                                 |
| Husband  | hi sipha ( VI SId)                               |

|             |                                            |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Important   | ya chi ( Y CI)                             |
| Impossible  | ma bala ( M BL)                            |
| Inform      | su chee ( SQ FI)                           |
| Insult      | sha tsi (X FI)                             |
| Interpreter | sha wa tsa pha ( X W F d)                  |
| Into        | yi khu kwa ( YI > U KW)                    |
| Invite      | khua ( > U)                                |
| Iron        | ho (HO)                                    |
| Judge       | shi ku pha (XI > 7 d)                      |
| Jump        | tu tsu ( T d FU)                           |
| Jungle      | si nay mi (SI N > MI)                      |
| Just now    | thew thi pa ( d > LI d )                   |
| Keep        | sha ta ( X T )                             |
| Kill        | see (SE)                                   |
| Kind        | she za (X > > )                            |
| Knife       | atha li (A d LI)                           |
| know        | su a lo ( SQ LO)                           |
| Lake        | yi bew (YE B > )                           |
| Ladder      | kho zew ( > O Z > )                        |
| Late        | shi ku or mu shi<br>( X d K d or M 7 X d ) |
| Latrine     | hi do or khi ( VI DO or > E)               |
| Laugh       | wa say ( W S > )                           |
| Leaf        | si chey (SI > Y)                           |
| Learn       | so ( SO)                                   |
| Lightning   | mu gu pew (M 7 GU P > )                    |
| Leg         | chi phay ( d I d > )                       |



|          |                                                   |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Lie      | ku or do ( KQ or DO)                              |
| Like     | ni shi (NI XQ)                                    |
| Lip      | mu no koji (M7 NO KO JI)                          |
| Live     | tey (T Y)                                         |
| Love     | ni nu ( NI NQ)                                    |
| Mad      | tso mu ( TQ MQ)                                   |
| Maize    | so sha (O X)                                      |
| Make     | shay ( X Y)                                       |
| Man      | za ( Z )                                          |
| Many     | a may (A MY)                                      |
| Marry    | tay phay tsa (LY PY T )                           |
| Mat      | kho do ( KQ DO)                                   |
| Match    | a to chi tu or chey jew<br>( A TO CILU or CY JQ ) |
| Heat     | hwa ( HW )                                        |
| Medicine | nay tsi ( NY TI)                                  |
| Mithun   | cho anyi ( CO A NYI)                              |
| Mother   | ama ( AM )                                        |
| Money    | phu ( PU)                                         |
| Morning  | nay nay ( NY NY)                                  |
| Moorn    | ha phu ( VPU)                                     |
| Mosquito | ha tho ( VV TO)                                   |
| Mourning | ni sha ( NI X)                                    |
| Mouth    | mu nu ( MQ WQ)                                    |
| Mouse    | hay pu ( VV P 7)                                  |
| Mud      | new chi pha la or nizi<br>( NE CI PL or NI ZI)    |

|          |                               |
|----------|-------------------------------|
| Mind     | ni ma ( NI M)                 |
| Naked    | e jey lay (E JY L )           |
| Name     | mie (MY E)                    |
| Nail     | lay sew (LV S ㄟ)              |
| Near     | pha thi (ㄑ ㄥ I)               |
| Net      | ngaw pew ( ㄆ W P ㄟ)           |
| New      | yi shi ( YI XI)               |
| Night    | mu ku (M ㄱ ㄱ)                 |
| Noon     | mo lo li shi (MO LO TI XI)    |
| North    | lo wu du (LO WU DU)           |
| Nose     | na khu (N ㄱ U)                |
| Not      | ma (M)                        |
| Now      | a mu (A M ㄱ)                  |
| Obey     | na lo (N LO)                  |
| Oil      | hwa tsu (H W ㄷ ㄱ)             |
| Old      | mo (MO)                       |
| One      | thi (ㄥ I)                     |
| Onion    | go lo (GO LO)                 |
| Only     | di (DI)                       |
| Open     | phu (ㄑ)                       |
| Opinion  | chi chey khu (CI ㄷ Y ㄱ ㄱ)     |
| Orange   | hwa ko (HW KO)                |
| Order    | thu wa (ㄥ ㄱ W)                |
| Outside  | yi ba ( YI B)                 |
| Outsider | yi ba su (YI B SU)            |
| Paddy    | za (Z ) or za ma su ( Z M S ) |
| Plant    | zi (Z I)                      |

|                |                                                              |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Plain          | na sha ( N X )                                               |
| Plant          | tu tu ( T T )                                                |
| Pepper         | zew ( Z ㄗ )                                                  |
| Pig            | away ( A W ㄞ )                                               |
| Pipe (smoking) | yay kwa ( YA KW )                                            |
| Place          | zi tu ( ZI T ㄒ )                                             |
| Plate          | si ku ( SI K ㄒ )                                             |
| Play           | lo gwa ( LO GW )                                             |
| Please         | ni kwa shi ( NI ㄗ W X ㄒ )                                    |
| Plough         | ma ( M ) or ha mima ( V MI M )                               |
| Poor           | tso sha ( ㄗ O X )                                            |
| Pork           | a way hwa ( A W ㄞ HW )                                       |
| Porter         | cho pa or u may pha ( CO P or ㄗ M ㄞ ㄒ )                      |
| Poisonous      | yi do ( YI DO )                                              |
| Pour           | hoa ( HO )                                                   |
| Price          | yi phu ( YI ㄒ ㄒ )                                            |
| Promise        | bay tse ( B ㄞ ㄗ E )                                          |
| Punish         | maja ( M J )                                                 |
| Purchase       | wuza ( W U Z )                                               |
| Quarrel        | say lay kho or bay lay kho<br>( S ㄞ L ㄞ ㄗ O or B ㄞ L ㄞ ㄗ O ) |
| Quick          | ni tsa ( NI ㄗ I )                                            |
| Quickly        | ni cha ni ho or tsa tsa<br>( NI ㄗ NI HO or ㄗ ㄗ )             |
| Quiet          | si le ( SI LE )                                              |
| Quiet          | si lee li or si lu bee<br>( SI LE LI or SI LE BE )           |
| Quote          | bay khu yu ( B ㄞ ㄗ 7 R U )                                   |
| Question       | na nyi khu ( N NYI ㄗ 7 )                                     |

|                 |                                    |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| Queen           | wa ti ma (W TI M)                  |
| Quarter (4th)   | lifu tifu (LI ㄟ U ㄥ ㄟ U)           |
| Rain            | mu ha (MU V)                       |
| Reach           | chi yee (ㄑ I YE)                   |
| Read            | cho or so (ㄑ O or SO)              |
| Red             | chi chi (SI SI)                    |
| Remember        | duja (D ㄢ J )                      |
| Rest            | wu hu na (WU H ㄣ N)                |
| Request         | di (DI)                            |
| Return          | la (L)                             |
| Rice (unboiled) | za phu (Z ㄑ U)                     |
| Rich            | tso bo (ㄗ O BO)                    |
| Ripe            | mi (MI)                            |
| Road            | ja gu ( J GU)                      |
| Roof            | hi wu du (VI WU D ㄢ)               |
| Room            | yi ko ( YI KO)                     |
| Root            | yi chee (YI CE)                    |
| Round           | lu lu or cho lu (LU LU) or (CO LO) |
| Rug             | yi bu ( YI B ㄢ)                    |
| Run             | tu (T ㄑ)                           |
| River           | nay yee (N ㄩ YE)                   |
| Ring            | lay tu (L ㄩ T ㄢ)                   |
| Relief          | pa su (P SU)                       |
| Relieve         | pa ma ( P M)                       |
| Sad             | ni ma sha ( NI M X)                |
| Salt            | tso bo (ㄗ BO)                      |
| Say             | bay (B ㄩ)                          |

|          |                                  |
|----------|----------------------------------|
| Secret   | ma wo (M WO)                     |
| See      | mo (M O) common with the Singpho |
| Seedling | diza ( LI ZI)                    |
| Sell     | wu ( W U)                        |
| Sale     | wu ma ( WU M)                    |
| Servant  | ch pa ( CO P)                    |
| Sharp    | tse or thay ( ㄟE or ㄟV)          |
| Shoot    | bu (B7)                          |
| Shut     | tsi or chi (FI)                  |
| Silver   | phu ( ㄑU)                        |
| Sit      | nya (N V)                        |
| Seat     | nya gu (NY GU) or nya tu (NY T)  |
| Sister   | nyi ma ( NYI M)                  |
| Skin     | koji ( KO JI)                    |
| Sky      | mu wu (M 〓 WU)                   |
| Sleep    | yi ta (YI T)                     |
| Slow     | a za (A Z)                       |
| Slowly   | a za za (A Z Z )                 |
| Small    | a tia ( A TI)                    |
| Smith    | ho du gu (HO D7 GU)              |
| Smoke    | chi ( ㄟI)                        |
| Snake    | lifu (LI ㄱU)                     |
| Snow     | wa (W )                          |
| Sow      | gii (7)                          |
| Speak    | sha thew ( XㄟE)                  |
| Spoil    | bya lee ma (BY LE M)             |
| So       | pil du (P 7 DU)                  |
| Soft     | na nu (N NU)                     |

|           |                                    |
|-----------|------------------------------------|
| Sometimes | thi ju jue (ㄒㄧ ㄐㄩ ㄐㄩ)              |
| Son       | za (Y)                             |
| Song      | mu gwa (MU GW)                     |
| Sorry     | jya sha (JY X)                     |
| Sour      | chu (C 7)                          |
| South     | lo mu (LO Mㄒ)                      |
| Stand     | tu or hie (TU or VI)               |
| Star      | ko ma (KO M)                       |
| Steal     | khu (ㄒU)                           |
| Stick     | jya ngo or si ka ( JY ㄋO or SI K)  |
| Stomach   | wu so (WU DO)                      |
| Stone     | lo di (LO DI)                      |
| Story     | anew ngo or ma mi ( ㄋㄢ ㄍO or M MI) |
| Stool     | khi (ㄒE)                           |
| Stream    | yi tsu (YI FU)                     |
| Strong    | say jo (Sㄢ JO) or Zee (ZE)         |
| Suddenly  | thi thua bee (ㄒㄧ ㄒㄩㄝ BE)           |
| Sugar     | tsha chi (ㄒㄧ ㄔㄩㄟ)                  |
| Sun       | mi mi ( MI MI )                    |
| Sunrise   | mi mi do (MI MI DO)                |
| Surely    | chi chi bee (CI CI BE)             |
| Sweet     | chi (ㄔㄩㄟ)                          |
| Sick      | na (N)                             |
| Seek      | hwa (HW)                           |
| Sea       | yi lu bew ( YI LU B )              |
| Share     | ba za (B Z)                        |
| Shore     | yi khu (YI ㄒㄩ)                     |
| Sing      | gwa (G W)                          |

|          |                                 |
|----------|---------------------------------|
| Sorrow   | ni sha nya sha ( NI X MY X)     |
| Take     | yu (R U)                        |
| Talk     | thew ( L E )                    |
| Tall     | mu (M U)                        |
| Taste    | so (SO )                        |
| Tea      | la cha ( LC )                   |
| Teacher  | ma pha (M d )                   |
| This     | thew ma ( L E M)                |
| These    | thew tii ( L E T D )            |
| That     | go ma ( GO M)                   |
| Their    | yi wa ( YI W)                   |
| Then     | gu tay or o tha ( GU Lvor O L ) |
| They     | yi wa (XI W)                    |
| Thief    | cho khu ( J O X U)              |
| Think    | du ja ( D A J)                  |
| Thirsty  | si ( S I)                       |
| Tiger    | la ma (L M)                     |
| Time     | yi ju ( YI J A )                |
| Tired    | wu hu (WU H7)                   |
| Today    | ni mi (NI MI)                   |
| Tomorrow | sha nay (X N V)                 |
| Tongue   | la chii ( L C 7)                |
| Tooth    | si chi ( SI C I )               |
| Tree     | si zi ( SI ZI )                 |
| Trial    | shu khu ( X A X 7)              |
| Trouble  | sha ( X )                       |
| True     | tew ma ( T E M)                 |

|            |                                                |
|------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Trust      | si jya ( SI JY )                               |
| Try        | say thu (SV ㄥ)                                 |
| Ugly       | lo ma bi (LO M BI)                             |
| Umbrella   | kho ji (XO JI)                                 |
| Uncle      | a wo ( A WO )                                  |
| Under      | yi khu ( YI XU )                               |
| Understand | su or chawa (SQ or C W )                       |
| Urine      | ji shi (JI XI)                                 |
| Us         | ngaw nu tay or yo tay<br>( AW NU TV or RO TV ) |
| Valuable   | phuma (q U M)                                  |
| Vegetable  | wo cya (WO CY)                                 |
| Varandah   | ka jo ( K JO)                                  |
| Very       | a mya or a khu ( A MY or A )                   |
| Village    | cho kha ( ㄟ O X )                              |
| Villager   | cho kha su ( ㄟ O X SU)                         |
| Visit      | tew nyi ( T ㄟ NYI )                            |
| Vomit      | phi (q I)                                      |
| Wait       | lo tya (LO TY)                                 |
| Walk       | gee cho (GE CO)                                |
| Want       | ni shi ( NI XI)                                |
| Wash       | tsi ( ㄟ I)                                     |
| Waste      | phya (q 7 )                                    |
| Water      | a jya ( A J Y )                                |
| Water pipe | a jya thu ( A JY ㄥU)                           |
| We         | yo or ngaw nu ( RO or AW NU)                   |
| Weak       | say ba ( S VB)                                 |
| Weather    | mu tsa ( MU ㄟ )                                |



|            |                              |
|------------|------------------------------|
| Weave      | chie (ㄔㄧ)                    |
| West       | bu du ( B 7 D ㄒ )            |
| Wet        | pha yee (ㄔ YE)               |
| What       | a shu ( A X ㄒ )              |
| When       | a thay ( A ㄌ ㄗ )             |
| Who        | ali ma ( A LI M )            |
| Where      | ali kwa ( ALI KW )           |
| Where from | ali kwa chu ( ALI KW CO )    |
| Which      | ali shi ( ALI XI )           |
| White      | phu a ma ( ㄔ U M )           |
| Wife       | hi si ma ( VI SI M )         |
| Why        | a shu pu du ( A X ㄒ P 7 DU ) |
| Wind       | mi hi ( MI VI )              |
| Wish       | ni phua ( NI ㄔ U )           |
| Wine       | ji phu ( JI ㄔ 7 )            |
| Winter     | jya chi ( JY FI )            |
| Woman      | zi mu ( ZI M 7 )             |
| Wood       | si ( SI )                    |
| Work       | mee ( MI )                   |
| Worker     | mi yee su ( MI YE SU )       |
| Write      | bo ( B O )                   |
| Wrong      | ma zo ( M Z )                |
| Yes        | nga wa ( ㄒ W )               |
| Year       | yi kho ( YI ㄗ O )            |
| This year  | tsi ni ( ㄗ I NI )            |
| Last year  | a ni ( A NI )                |
| One year   | thi kho ( ㄌ I ㄗ O )          |
| Two years  | nyi kho ( NYI O )            |

|           |                                      |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|
| Yellow    | shi shi ( XI XI)                     |
| Yesterday | ami (A MI)                           |
| Yet       | a mii (A M7)                         |
| You       | nu ( N U)                            |
| Young     | tsi yo (ㄣI RO)                       |
| Zig zag   | gu gu ( GO GO)                       |
| Zeal      | ni wu ( NI WU)                       |
| Zealous   | ni gu or my a na ( NI GO or MY SQ N) |
| Zoo       | hwa shu sho tii ( HW XQXO TQ)        |
| Zebra     | a mu gay lay ( A MO GVLV)            |

### Numerals

|             |                           |
|-------------|---------------------------|
| One         | thi ( ㄣI)                 |
| Two         | nyi ( W YI)               |
| Three       | sa (S)                    |
| Four        | li (LI)                   |
| Five        | ngwa (A W)                |
| Six         | cho ( ㄣO)                 |
| Seven       | shi (XI)                  |
| Eight       | hee (VE)                  |
| Nine        | ku (KU)                   |
| Ten         | tsi ( ㄣI)                 |
| Eleven      | tsi thi (ㄣIㄣI)            |
| Twelve      | tsi nyi ( ㄣI NYI)         |
| Twenty five | nyi tsi ngwa ( NYI ㄣI ^W) |
| Thirty      | sa tsi (S ㄣI)             |
| Forty       | li tsi ( LI ㄣI)           |

|                                          |                                                    |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Forty nine                               | li tsi ku ( LI ㄣI KU)                              |
| Fifty                                    | ngwa tsi (ㄱW ㄣI)                                   |
| Hundred                                  | thi ha (ㄣI V)                                      |
| Hundred and one                          | thi ha thi (ㄣI V ㄣI)                               |
| Two hundred                              | nyi ha (NY I V)                                    |
| One thousand                             | thi tu (ㄣI TU)                                     |
| One thousand three<br>hundred sixty five | thi tu sa ha cho tsi ngwa<br>( I TU S V ㄣO ㄣI ㄱW ) |
| Half                                     | thi bu (ㄣI B7)                                     |
| One third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ rd)            | sa bew thi bew ( S BㄣI Bㄣ )                        |
| One tenth ( $\frac{1}{10}$ th)           | tsi bew thi bew ( ㄣI BㄣI Bㄣ )                      |

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## CHAPTER - 2

### F O L K L O R E

In anthropological usage, the term 'folklore' has come to mean myths, legend, tales, songs, dances, proverbs, riddles and variety of forms of artistic expression, whose medium is the spoken word. Generally, the term 'folk' denotes a group of people and 'lore' means a body of traditions. But, opinions vary as to the definition of 'folk'. One school limits the term to the people of a certain state of culture and the other identifies it as members of peasant society or rural community. Folklore is defined as a body of traditions which is transmitted orally from one generation to another, from one individual to another. But, this definition leads to theoretical complications to the student of folklore. Because, in an unlettered community, everything is transmitted orally—language, techniques of hunting, weaving, rules of marriage etc. These cultural materials are not considered folklore, because, there is some question as to whether folk dances, games, and gesture are passed on orally or not. So, the criterion of oral transmission by itself is not sufficient to distinguish folklore from non-folklore. Any how, folklore is treated here as a part of culture, as a mirror of culture. It reflects the culture of a people and brings solidarity, continuity and consistency in a cultural group. Legend, tales, songs, dances and proverbs of the Lisu are described here under folklore. The discussion begins with their origin.

### The Legend

According to Datta (1979) the legend of origin of the Lisu goes that in the remotest past human beings were all equal and there was no caste and creed and difference of position among men. There were less people than at present, and 'Mother Nature was bounteous to her sons.' Love for fellow beings and the urge to help the needy were deep in their feelings, and they all lived happily in compact villages. But, as is stated, "the peace and tranquility of human life is always short-live." There occurred a heavy down-pour which continued for days and nights and submerged the entire village underneath the water. Only a brother and sister could survive the calamity and took shelter on a peak of a mountain. They met a jungle cat there who told them that the rain water would turn deluge and submerge the entire earth and there would be no living beings. However, they could, he suggested, save their lives by taking shelter in a cave and close its entrance by covering it with logs and sealing its gaps with wax. A cock who also had saved its life from the water, came to assist the brother and the sister. Accordingly, they along with the cock took shelter inside the cave and closed its entrance. As was speculated, the rain water increased and submerged the peak and with it the cave. The brother and the sister could hear the roaring sound of the massive waves of the water which rolled down above their shelter. But as days passed on, the level of the water decreased gradually. To ascertain whether they were out of

danger, the boy sent the cock out of the cave asking him to indicate whether the downpour had actually ceased. The cock, after it had come out, fluttered its wings and gave along crow saying, "Come out man, it is a fine dawn."

Cheered by the call of the cock's crow both the brother and the sister came out of the cave. They could see the receding of the water level all around but, to their surprise, the entire area appeared to them as all barren and desolate. They walked around and gripped by the feelings of loneliness, they started crying. The feeling of the loss of their near and dear ones, their own heart and home, overwhelmed them with sorrow, but there was none to give solace to them. At last they decided to go around the earth in search of any living being who had survived the great deluge. They started their journey from a point, in directions opposite to each other and went on and on. Months rolled into years and their journey continued. At last to their great surprise, they arrived at the spot from where they had started their journeys. They greeted each other out of joy and told of their experiences. Neither of them could come across any living beings during their exploration. They thought that with their death life would come to an end on the earth. They discussed whether they could live as husband and wife so that they could produce children, and maintain the continuity of the human race but the sister abhorred the idea as that would be against the norm of social behaviour. As they could not come to any decision

on this issue, they left it entirely into the hands of God saying "it is He, who makes and feeds life and it is His business only."

As food is needed for survival, they set themselves to agriculture and planted the seeds on the earth. To their surprise, they could see the rich growth of a creeper which produced a gourd in due course. The gourd assumed a huge size gradually. While looking at the gourd one day, they could hear some sounds coming from inside of it. Out of curiosity the brother broke open a part of the gourd. To his surprise he could see the emergence of a group of human beings who wore black robes. After greeting them with words of pleasure, they went away to the east. They were the Chinese. The next batch of human beings who emerged out of the gourd wearing woollen clothes went towards the north. They were the ancestors of the Tibetans. The batch who followed them went towards the south. They were the forefathers of the Adi and Nishi people of Arunachal Pradesh. The fourth batch of human beings was the forefathers of the Burmese. The last batch of people who came out of the gourd wore long belts and small daggers at their waists. They did not go anywhere and stayed with the brother and the sister. They were the forefathers of the Lisu. In the end, came out evil spirits called Ni, and they were given specific places to live; and the last Ni called Hikhoni was directed to live in the Diti (corners of the house).

### Anungo (Tales)

There is no dearth of tales in the Lisu society, but it is difficult to collect them. Because of problem in communication, in the whole community only two persons are capable in communicating in English and Hindi; moreover, they are always busy in domestic work, when the interpreter is available story teller is not. It is a matter of luck to find them together. Anyhow, I manage to collect thirteen tales, they are described here. The Lisu tales cover almost all aspects of life. In most of the stories, supernatural deities, birds and animals play a paramount role. Their stories are dominated by the narration of an orphan boy.

#### Tale No.I

##### Jachi-mami-I (An orphan boy-I)

There was an orphan boy. To catch fish was his hobby. One day he caught a big fish by a net and kept it in a big pot (Bathu) made of wood in the house. Next day, early in the morning, the boy went to jungle for collecting firewood. On returning home he found with surprise that somebody had cooked his food. In his absence, the incident of preparing food began to occur every day. Then, one day on pretension of going to the field, the boy hid himself in the roof of his house. The boy became amazed to see a very beautiful girl emerging out of the pot (bathu) and started preparing food for him. When the girl was about to finish the preparation of food, the boy jumped from the roof and he caught the girl suddenly, and prevented her to regain the shape of a fish.



Subsequent incidents revealed to him that the girl was the daughter of a deity, known as 'Lo', who entered the house in the shape of a fish. The boy married that girl and began to live peacefully as husband and wife. The boy became rich, and owned good number of cows and pigs, and plenty of food grains, due to intellegency and hard work of his wife. Then out of jealousy one of his distant maternal aunt, insisted him to divorce his wife who is nothing but a fish. Moved by the advice of his aunt the boy divorced his wife to marry his aunt's daughter. The wife left the house with all the pigs, cows and food grains, and as a result the boy became poor again. Then, he went to marry his aunt's beautiful daughter, but with surprise he found neither the girl nor his aunt, instead, he found excreta of a hen in a basket in the house. He came back with great sorrow in mind, and repented for the shameful act and injustices done to his wife. Finding no other way, he left the home weeping and arrived on the bank of a river. Sitting on the river's bank the boy began to weep playing a flute. Then a jackal came and asked about his sorrow. The boy narrated the whole story and jackal went away. In similar fashion, a tiger, a cat and a bird came and went away. A jungle bird took away his flute and he got it back with the help of an ant who bit the anus of that bird. Then a toad came and took him to his wife who was weaving sitting in the river. By magical power, the wife made her husband a needle and put it in her chest, and arrived in the

house. Her father Lo got the smell of a new comer and tried to kill the boy who was cleverly saved by his wife. Then her father to test the capability or worthiness of the boy sent him to clear the jungle, to hunt animals with bow and arrow and to fight with the enemies. The boy passed all these tests successfully with the help of his wife. Then only her father recognised the boy as his son-in-law who began to live peacefully again.

The tale reveals the following customs or behaviour of the Lisu:

1. Cross-cousin marriage
2. Intelligency of the Lisu wife
3. Shifting type of cultivation
4. Fighting with enemy.
5. Existence of supernatural power.

#### Tale No.2

##### Jachi-Jamu-mami (An orphan girl)

Once upon a time there was an orphan girl named- Animi who used to live with her mothers' sister. The girl was very beautiful. Her mother's sister had a daughter, she was not beautiful, and her name was Anoma. Both the girls were of same age. Then there came an announcement that a very rich young man designated as Kha, whose status was like a king, was going to select a girl for marriage, and hence all the parents of marriageable girls should appear before the Kha. And accordingly all parents with their girls appeared before Kha. Anoma also reached there with her parents. They cleverly

engaged Animi in some urgent domestic work so that she could not present herself before Kha. But the fact of choosing a bride by the Kha was disclosed to her by a crow named Anno, who provided her with beautiful dress. And the orphan girl Animi appeared before Kha very late. When she was entering the room, young Kha was very much attracted by her beauty, and selected her as his wife or queen. Marriage ceremony was performed with gorgeous style. A son was born to them. Then one day, Animi with her son went to visit her mother's sister's house. But her aunt had dirty plan in mind. One day while combing her daughter's hair, she deliberately glided the comb beneath the bamboo floor, and requested Animi to collect it back. While gathering the comb below the bamboo floor of the house, her aunt killed Animi by throwing a bucket of hot water on her. Then sent her own daughter as wife with the baby to the king. The king was reluctant to accept her as his was wife. He said- "you are not my wife, my wife had a mole on the forehead." To impress upon the king, the girl replied, "I have rubbed it off." The king was not satisfied with the reply, and hesitantly accepted her. Nect day, as usual, the king sent one of his labourers to the field for cultivation who came back without doing any work and reported to the king that a very beautiful blue bird is chirping and saying repeatedly in a mournful tune- "How is my son- Afusoché?, How is my son Afusoache?." Next day as directed by the king the man (labourer) caught and brought the bird to king's house and put in a cage for domestication. One day when the king along with his men went out for hunting

in the jungle, her queen Anoma killed that beautiful blue bird and ate its meat roasting on fire. On that day an old woman with vision difficulty came to queen for taking ember to ignite her hearth. The queen by mistake gave one leg of that bird left over beside the hearth. The old woman took that leg, but she could not ignite her fire wood and threw it away which by chance fell into a pitcher filled with water. After few days the old woman noticed a peculiar sound emanating from the pitcher. On investigation, she found a very beautiful scissor and put it on the wall of her house. Next day after returning from the field, she found with astonishment that someone has prepared the food for her. She was living alone. She told the incident of preparation of food to her neighbours; that mysterious deed also surprised them. Then, next day, she hid herself behind the wall to detect the mystery. She was overwhelmed to see a very beautiful girl preparing food for her. She silently came from behind and caught that girl and stopped her converting to original shape of a scissor. The old woman became very happy to find that girl. One day, the girl requested the old woman to invite the king for a dinner, the old woman followed the instruction. But the king refused the invitation, and said to old woman "if you made a golden road for me, still then I am not going there." She came back with sorrow and relayed to her the conversation she had with the king. Then the girl brought some plants from the jungle, and told the old woman to arrange those plants on the road just like a rope which would reach

to the gate of the king's house; the girl then converted it into a golden road, by the tricks of mystic power. Out of curiosity, the king with his son at the back reached the old woman's house. The king was entertained with a grand feast. He released his son from his back who was telling- "My mother is here, my mother is here." His son searched out his mother from a big basket. Then they all returned home. As a rule, Kha is not entitled to keep two wives at a time. To find out his real wife, the king set a big sharp dao (Atha) on the door of his bed room, and requested his two wives to cross it one by one. The real wife crossed it successfully, and the false wife fell on the sharp-dao and died. The king got his wife back and began to lead a happy life again.

### Tale No.3

#### /Jawo and Zadi (Eldest son and youngest son)

In the remote past, there used to live a married couple. Husband's name was Fophafa and wife's name was Fophama. The couple had three sons, eldest son was designated as Jawo and the youngest son as Zadi. Both Jawo and Zadi got married. Jawo was physically weak and docile in nature, and Zadi was physically strong, and aggressive, expert hunter, and a good cultivator. They lived separately. Jawo had many children, and his wife used to give birth of a baby almost in every year; and he was not efficient cultivator. His economic condition was very bad, hardly able to manage two square meals in a day. For his laziness and inefficiency, his youngest brother used to hate him, used to talk ill of him to

any person whatsoever he or she may be. Youngest brother i.e. Zadi established friendship with many person and used to help them by labour and money. He would like to tell them "It is better to give food to a dog (Ana) than to his eldest brother; it is better to help friend in need than his own eldest brother." One day Zadi met with an old village headman (Bechey) and deliberately told him against his brother- "My eldest brother is good for nothing, a hopeless person, only produces babies, but cannot feed them. I do not like my eldest brother, I hate him." Then the old man replied "Don't say like this, don't speak ill of him, after all he is your brother; he has Blood ties with you; you will find many friends in good time, but nobody will come to help you at your crisis period, but a brother always comes. In our village not a single person hates his own brother or speak ill of his brother. In future, you should not do it again." Zadi silently swallowed the advice given by that old man, and a bit of change or softness came about in his mind. Few days after, he met with an old woman and started telling ill of his brother again. The old woman rebuked him and went away. Zadi thought in his mind that he had something wrong, otherwise why should that old woman rebuke him? Then again he tried to tell it to an young man who went away without paying any heed to his words. Once Zadi sought the help of his close friend who did not arrive, and gave no satisfactory answers for absence. One day, again, Zadi told one of his bosom friends- "I am going for hunting wild animals, you come and meet me after ten days in the jungle for taking meat." He

casually intimated his eldest brother on hunting, but did not invite him for meat. Zadi hunted a bear (Wupha). He cut and took out its stomach (yeyu) and intestine and hung them on a branch of a tree, and hid the flesh in a place. He smeared his body with bear's blood and assumed the posture of a dead person. His friend arrived on the stipulated date and time; and noticed that alimentary tract of a bear, and also the dead body of his friend. His friend became very angry not finding any meat and spat sputum on his body and went away. His bossom friend communicated his death news to his eldest brother who came crying; expressed deep sorrow for the death of his brother. He was weeping and telling "His youngest brother was a very kind hearted man, always used to help others, feed others without eating himself i.e. 'Maja sutey gosoma mado sutey muchoma.'" On hearing that proverb, Zadi came out from behind and embraced his eldest brother with tears in his eyes; and prayed to pardon him for his misbehaviour. Jawo pardoned him and said "His brother is a very good man and loves him very much." Then Zadi gave all the meats of that hunted bear to his eldest brother. They returned home, and began to live co-operatively and peacefully. Zadi began to respect and help his eldest brother in all spheres of life.

#### Tale No.4

/Kolo-bini-mimi-tey gwanga(a dog and the sun)

In good old days, there was a family husband (Hisifa), wife (Hisima) and two sons. Husband fell ill seriously, and there was no chance of his survival. He was suffering from a

fatal disease called- Nizo. In the dying stage, husband was removed in a cave in the forest. Before removing him, his wife gave him a stick and a half of a comb (Ophu) which she broke purposefully as a remembrance. Husband was waiting in the cave for the final stop of his life. Then on the third day there appeared two snakes- a male and a female, (Nifo) before him. He killed the male snake by the stick when tried to bite him. Then he noticed with surprise that the female snake brought a piece of root called- Suphaxhi by mouth and placed it on the dead snake. Immediately, the male snake survived. Husband managed to collect that piece of root by driving away the snakes with his stick. He placed that piece of root on his body, and immediately he recovered from that fatal disease. Instead of returning home, he went on to see the world around. On the way, he met a dead-dog. The man touched the dead body of the dog with that Suphaxhi and the dog became alive and followed him. Then wandering about for few more days, husband arrived in his house with the dog. His wife could not recognise him. Then he requested her to allow him for a night halt. Wife complied with the request. In the morning, the man asked for a comb to comb his hair. She gave him that broken half. He brought out the other half from his pocket and joined it to a full comb. Seeing it, wife could able to recognise him as her husband. Husband, then narrated the entire story of his survival and coming back to his wife. He handed over that piece of root having medicinal value and magical power to his wife requesting her to preserve



it carefully and not to tell anybody about it. But after few days, when neighbours asked about her husband's survival, she unthinkingly narrated the whole story and promised them to show that piece of root. Next day while showing it the sun (Mimi) suddenly came down and took it away. With deep sorrow in mind, the wife came back home and told the incident to her husband who became angry. Then, he tried to reach the sun with his dog by making a kind of ladder named-Mutozi with wooden posts and requested her wife to pour hot water (Jicha) in the bottom of the post constantly. When the man was about to catch the sun, he fell down and died, as his wife poured cold water by mistake. But the dog reached and ate the sun and complete darkness prevailed in the earth. Finding no other way, the sun requested the Lisu to drive away the dog who did by throwing arrow, and making loud sound and playing husking machine (cidu). The non-Christian Lisu, still believe that total or partial eclipse occurs rather the sun loses its brilliancy of light when the dog starts to eat the sun; and they still try to drive away the dog.

Tale No.5

/Yechima-tey hapho ni tezima (Moon took away a  
beautiful girl engaged in weaving)

This story is generally told to the children (Jaru) who cry unnecessarily. Once in a moonlit night, a beautiful Lisu girl was working in her weaving apparatus. Then all on a sudden, the moon (Baba) appeared before her in the shape of a man and asked her for a glass of water. Then the girl said-

"Sorry, there is no water here, you go to the river nearby and quench your thirst; to drink water from the river (Eje) directly, you have to bend your body." Following the instruction of the girl, Baba quenched his thirst and was moved by the intelligency of the girl. Suddenly, he caught the girl from behind and took her away in the sky (Mieu). The girl lived there as his wife happily. When in the moonlit night, a child begins to cry, aged person pointing towards the moon says- "Don't cry, the moon has taken away your sister who is weaving there, moon will also take you there if you do not stop crying" The child stops crying then and there.

#### Tale No.6

#### /Wopa and Leme (A frog and a tiger)

One day a tiger (Leme) was passing along the bank of a river in search of prey. While he came across a big frog (Wopa) who was also in search of food. Tiger was happy to see the frog as he could easily kill him and satisfy the hunger. The frog thought that the tiger will definitely kill him, and there was no chance of his survival. The tiger asked the frog- "Where are you going?" In a tone of gravity the frog replied "I am going to find out a tiger, whose meat my forefathers used to take!" In similar fashion, the frog asked the tiger "where are you going?" the tiger replied "I am also searching for an animal or a frog to eat." Then the frog said "we want to eat one another, let us evolve some strategies to test our strength, i.e. a sort of competitions, and he who will win it, will have the right to eat other."

Tiger agreed to the proposal of the frog. They decided to cross over the river by jumping. Before the start of the competition, the frog gave two conditions of jumping. First condition was that the tail (Emu) of the tiger should be in straight posture while jumping; and the second was that the tail should reach the opposite bank of the river first. The tiger agreed to the conditions immediately. Before the actual start of jumping the clever frog silently caught few tail hairs of the tiger by mouth. The tiger reached the opposite bank of the river by a jump and placed his tail on the ground as per agreement. The tiger then found with astonishment that the frog had already reached there. Not satisfied with the performance, the tiger requested the frog to repeat the competition once more. The frog agreed. Adopting the same trick, the frog then reached the bank earlier than the tiger. The tiger acknowledged his defeat. Then they decided to vomit to know the food eaten by them. The tiger vomited few pieces of flesh. Seeing it, the frog remarked "It is true, you ate flesh that has come out from your stomach". Then came the turn of the frog. He vomited few tail hairs of the tiger. Noticing that, the tiger fled away to save his life. On the way he met a wolf (Chhiwodo). When asked, he narrated the entire story to wolf. The wolf could not believe it, and consoled the tiger telling that a frog can never eat a tiger. Then both of them decided to reach there to kill the frog. Before starting, they agreed to tie their tails firmly. Both of them reached there. The tiger realised that the big frog

was becoming ready to kill him. The tiger ran away as fast as he could. Reaching a safe place, the tiger noticed that the face of the wolf was very badly injured, as their tails were firmly tied. Then both the tiger and the wolf decided not to make any friendship with a frog. The frog save his life.

Tale No.7 / Jachimami-II (An orphan boy-II)

An orphan young boy left home and began to ramble. On the way, he met another young and beautiful boy who was also wandering. Both of them arrived in dilapidated house. Out of curiosity, they entered the house, and found an old man weeping sitting on the floor. When they asked about the cause of sorrow, the old man said- "My two daughters have been taken away by a python (Bhula); please bring back my daughters." Hearing the pathetic story of the old man, they went to the forest to search out the girls. To identify the girls, the old man gave two pair of shoes to the orphan boy. After searching for three days, the orphan boy found the elder daughter sitting on a stone inside a deep cave-where he reached with the help of a rope and saw the snake sleeping on her lap. The elder daughter asked his whereabouts. The orphan boy said- "I have come to take you back from the clutches of the snake." "Come next day when the snake goes to sleep" said the girl. As directed, the boy came in time and cut the snake into two pieces with a sharp straight scythe (Atha). The boy took away the girl and helped her to cross over a high wall with a

ladder made of rope. After coming out, the girl met the other boy who was very much impressed by her beauty and took her away. Before departing, he cut down the other end of the rope treacherously. As a result, the orphan boy could not come out of the cave. In a pensive mood, the boy sat down on a stone when he heard a human voice coming out from a covered big pot made of stone. The boy threw few stones on the pot. Then a loud voice directed him how to break and open the pot. As per directive, the boy opened the pot and a very beautiful girl emerged i.e. the younger daughter of the old man, who possessed tremendous magical and supernatural power. The girl requested the boy to hold her firmly from behind, and to close his eyes till she directs to reopen them. One boy followed the directives of the girl and said. "Please do not deceive me." The girl smiled. The boy opened his eyes when guided and found with surprise that the place has been levelled by destroying rocks. Requesting the boy to wait the girl went to the jungle. She brought meat and fruits; both of them ate it. The girl then requested the boy to take rest. Within few hours, the girl made two storey-house, who was nobody else but a daughter of Lofa, the deity of earthquake, flood, rain, thunder and lightning. The girl then said- "I am tired, and would like to take rest." After taking rest, the girl appeared before the boy with a nice dress combing her hairs carefully. While combing, a long hair of the girl reached to an unmarried king. The king thought "it must be the hair of a very beautiful girl." The king sent his men to search out the girl

and to bring before him. The king's men, searching here and there, ultimately arrived before the owner of the hair. They verified by measuring it with the head hair of the girl. They took away the girl. Before departure, she said to the boy-

"Don't think otherwise, everything will be set alright, I am yours, I will be yours as long as I survive. You must meet me in the king's court after three days." The king was very happy to see the girl and made up his mind to marry her. Next day, he arranged dance to honour the girl. The king himself participated in the dance removing his colourful dress made of animal's skin. He was fully drunk. When the dance was at its climax, the orphan boy entered the king's court silently. Then the girl, advised him to wear the king's dress and sit down on the king's place. The boy obeyed the advice. The girl as queen ordered to throw the bare body king into fire. He protested and said "I am the real king." Pointing towards king's place, the girl said "See, the real king is sitting there." King's people then threw the real king into the burning fire. Then the girl with husband came to her father's house. The orphan boy saw the boy who deceived him and took away the elder girl. By showing the shoes, the orphan boy narrated the whole story of how he was deceived by that boy. Hearing the story, girls' father killed that boy, and married his two daughters to the orphan boy. The boy with his two wives became the lord of that area, and lived peacefully.

Tale No.8

7 Jachi-mami-III (An orphan boy-III)

A boy named Afu lost his mother at young age. His father had little time to look after the boy. The boy was doing

nothing, taking food early in the morning, he used to go in the forest and returned in the evening. This was his everyday routine. Being vexed with the behaviour of his son, one day father followed his son in the jungle in disguise. He found that his son entered a courtyard where few rich boys were juggling with cane balls called- Gomi-pilu. Then his son's turn came who also juggled ten cane balls very efficiently, none of them slipping to the ground. Satisfied with the deeds of his son, father returned home. One day Afu told- "Father, I would like to go to school, please bring for me a set of new dress (Betchi).". Father provided the new dress to Afu. Afu started attending school with the boys of rich fathers. The school run by an old man who would teach to the students the language (Nye-Chi-Nyeji-ngo) of the birds and animals. Afu passed the examination with distinction conducted by that old man. After completing the school education, Afu started for home. On the way, he came across an old man (Shomu). The old man asked "Hallo boy, are you married?" "No", answered Afu. The old man said- "Two beautiful girls (Lo-jamley) swim in a lake (Jibo), while sun shines; in the forest you may marry one of them. Girls are the daughters of Lofa." "How to catch them" said Afu to the old man. The old man then gave Afu a casting net (Sague). Afu was silently waiting at lake's side. He found that the girls were swimming far away in the lake. And it was impossible for him to throw net on them. Then suddenly, a girl came nearby, and he imme-

diately threw his net on her and caught her who was constantly changing her shape into different types of fishes. The girl told the boy- "why have you caught me. I would like to marry you" said Afu. The girl agreed, and gave Afu a ring (Langeto-du) as a symbol of marriage. Afu came home with his wife. His father was happy to see them. Next day father sent Afu out for some urgent domestic business. Before going, Afu told his wife that "he will be coming back after three days." In her husband's absence, other girls of the village, out of sheer jealousy harassed her which she could not tolerate and left the house out of anger. Before departure, she wrote a letter (Thouwalaxu) to her husband. Husband arrived after three days, and read that letter. He left home to search out his wife. Crossing forest after forest, he arrived on the bank of a blood-river (Siye-zaylo). There he found a letter written by his wife wherein she advised her husband not to cross the river by swimming; he will be perished if he did so. Then he heard a crow (Aney) inviting another crow to attend a marriage feast across the river next day. By a magical trick, Afu converted himself into an ant (Bolo) and caught the hackle of the crow and reached a tree of the girl's father's house. There Afu observed that the girl was given bath forcefully by the men of her father to purify her body before marriage. Re-gaining his original figure, the boy threw the ring into the water of the drum, where the girl was taking bath. While picking up the ring, the boy jumped from the tree and appeared before her. The girl then requested her father- Lofa to arrange her marriage with the boy named Afu. Denying her request, father



said "We are supernatural beings, and cannot give my daughter's marriage to human being." When insisted again by her, Lofa agreed to give her marriage with that boy provided he passed the tests conducted by her father. When requested by the girl, the boy agreed to appear for tests. Lofa directed the boy to walk on a wire (Khochu) hung over the burning fire. The boy passed the first test successfully with the guidance from the girl. Then in the second test, Lofa directed the boy to sit upon a thorn bed (Khocho) placed on the back of an elephant who will wildly move in the dense forest as per directives. The boy took the shape of an ant and sat down in between the thorns very safely. The elephant rambled very quickly in the forest for a day. Next day, the elephant appeared before Lofa and the boy regaining his original figure got down safely from elephant's back. Lofa was very satisfied with the capability of the boy and gave her daughter's marriage with the boy. After marriage, Lofa placed three types of dresses- white (FoFo), red (SoSo) and yellow (SiSi) before the boy to choose to reach his house. The white will take him by air, yellow dress by trees and red dress by foot. The girl prompted him to select the white dress, and the boy did accordingly. They reached home flying through air.

#### Tale No.9

#### / Sa-jo-bha (A proud wrestler)

There lived a mighty wrestler with robust body and very tall stature in a village. He used to eat seven big pans of rice at a time, and used to carry a big tree alone by his neck.

He was very proud of his strength and energy. He used to say frequently to his wife "There is nobody in the world who can defeat me in wrestling." In reply his wife used to say "Don't be so proud of your strength, there may be a man mightier than you." "where is that man? bring him before me, I will fight with him, otherwise I shall kill you." Said her husband in an angry voice. This was every week's arguments between them. One day, being very annoyed with her husband, wife left home to search a man mightier than her husband. She tried in vain and in desolation sat under a tree. Then she heard a mysterious voice, some body was telling. "Are not you the wife of the wrestler?" 'Yes', said she. That mysterious voice guided her to bring her husband; owner of that unknown voice expressed his desire to fight with her husband. Before went to bring her husband, she requested that unknown voice to remain there, otherwise her husband will kill her. Accordingly, she brought her husband. Husband found nobody there, except a tree and the sound of a squirrel (Hayni). In frustration, the wrestler gave a blow on the tree. Then the squirrel said in a tone of disregard "what a mighty wrestler you are! The tree does not move an inch, not even a jerk is produced on the trunk of the tree." In anger the wrestler said "You bloody squirrel come down, I will convert you into powder." "Don't be so angry, you may kill me at any moment you desire" the squirrel came down and requested the wrestler to tear out her tail (Yemo). The wrestler tried in vain. The squirrel then jumped a little above the tree and firmly set her tail on its trunk.

Then the squirrel requested the wrestler to hold her body as firmly as possible. The wrestler silently complied with the request. With a sudden mighty jerk the squirrel threw the wrestler through air on the bank of a river in a dense forest. There he remained senseless for two days. When his sense came he met a jackal (Hila) who asked his whereabouts. The wrestler narrated the entire incident. The jackal guided the wrestler to meet an old man who was blocking river to catch fish. When he reached there, the old man directed the wrestler to meet a sleeping giant. As directed, the wrestler carried five pieces of big logs to break the sleep of the giant. Encountering a lot of difficulties, the wrestler reached the place of sleeping giant. The giant was in deep sleep. To awake the giant from sleep, the wrestler introduced two logs to ears and two to nostrils, and one to the mouth of the giant. The giant awoke from sleep with peculiar loud sound and the wrestler found himself flying with the help of four logs, and reached under the same tree where his wife and squirrel were waiting for him. The wrestler then looked at his wife and the squirrel in a very submissive way and recognised the strength of the squirrel. The squirrel then advised the wrestler- "Never be proud of strength and energy, you have strength not to boast of, but to help the weak who needs it. Don't misbehave and quarrel with your wife in future." Saying this the squirrel vanished. The wrestler with his wife came home back.

Tale No.10

/ Ye-chi (Origin of smoke)

There lived two rich men (Sobo) in a village. One had a

son named- Lotuphu, and the other had a daughter named Siona. Lotuphu and Siona loved one another. Their parents agreed to arrange their marriage. And only after marriage, they will sleep together, their parents decided. Both the boy and the girl agreed to the proposal of their parents. The girl-Siona was junior to boy. They were sent to a residential school for study. There the girl fell in love with a poor boy. Lotuphu left the school, after passing the school final examination. After two years, the girl passed and returned home. The poor boy passed next year and returned to his village. They all belong to the same village. The marriage ceremony of Lotuphu and Siona took place with pomp and grandeur, in spite of the serious opposition made by the girl to marry Lotuphu. After marriage, the girl was in a fix, she could not live with her husband nor she could go to live with her poor lover. The girl refrained from taking food and drinks, and passed sleepless night. Then on the third day of marriage she committed suicide by hanging herself with a rope, in the forest. Her husband, searched her out after ten day's of suicide and communicated the death news to his relatives who were very much annoyed instead of feeling sorrow. They hated her, and it was decided not to touch her body during burial as she did not obey the order of her parents and relatives. No sympathy was shown to her, they forgot her completely. The poor boy could not forget her, hearing the news he went to the graveyard and sat down there crying. He could not believe her death. She was alive in his heart. The boy could hear her voice emanating from the grave (Lizu)- she was laughing, singing and crying

inside the grave; but could not see her physical feature. The boy used to visit the grave once in every week. One day, a voice came from the grave- "I am your Siona, I love you, I am alive, I can see you, but you can't see me. Please come here after six months." The boy appeared there on the stipulated time. He became amazed to see grave very clean and a plant with beautiful leaves and attractive fragrant. The boy plucked one leaf and brought it home, and began to inhale it frequently. When asked the cause of inhaling a leaf by a friend, the boy narrated the entire story. Then his friend also began to inhale it. In this way, all the young boys became inhalants of the leaf. In the meantime the plant, produced flowers and seeds which in turn produced innumerable plants with leaves. When the leaf got dried by constant inhalation, they rolled it and ablazed its one end with fire and then smoked it. In this way, smoking originated in the Lisu society. They smoke only to remember that illfated girl whose love was disregarded by the society. A smoker cannot stop smoking because the soul (Nibu) of that girl enters into the body of the smoker. It, is, still, believed by the Lisu.

Tale No.11

/ Chohi Tihi Mami (A Lisu Family)

In a village, there lived a Lisu family peacefully. The family (Chohi) consisted of father (Abba) mother (Ama) and a son (Zati). Taking food early in the morning, all the members of the family used to go to forest (Simey) for collection of firewood, tubers and fruits and vegetables.

In the forest they used to move or work separately, they were accustomed to return home together. There prevailed profound love and affection between the members of the family. One day mother alone went to forest for collecting vegetables. She met a jungle deity named- Nima. In the twinkle of an eye the deity, with her super-natural power converted the woman into a bird (Nye). And the female deity Nima herself taking the shape of that woman (mother) returned home as wife. The son got smell of the incident, and he did not recognise her as his mother. But he was not in a position to impress his father. Whenever the son used to move in the forest that bird Nye appeared before him and would say repeatedly "The woman in the house is not your mother." One day the son told his father about that bird. Then father accompanied the son to hear from that bird. They could hear nothing nor could see the bird. The bird happened to chirp when the boy was alone in the forest. Father was convinced by his son ultimately. And in order to verify the truth, he evolved a trick. Father set a sharp straight scythe (Atha) on the entrance of the house when the woman in disguise of his wife was out. When the woman was returning from the jungle, she was requested by her husband to cross over the Atha. Husband told "Nothing will happen to you, if you are my real wife, otherwise you will die." She was unprepared to face the trick, and finding no other alternative while crossing over the Atha, she fell down on it and died. And the husband got back his real wife, and the son his real mother.

Tale No.12/ Ooley mufa nyo mami (Two business men)

There lived in a village two business men (Ooley-mufa). One was honest and the other was greedy and dishonest. Actually, they were pedlars or hawkers. They used to travel from one village to another to sell ornaments necklace, beads, and bangles in exchange of household goods, i.e. barter type of exchange. One day after crossing a river the dishonest business man reached a village where lived a very old and poor woman with her grand daughter. On seeing the hawker, her grand daughter insisted on to buy a necklace (Lewu). But they were too poor to buy them. Finding no other way, the old woman brought out a bowl (Sikuphu) covered with dust lying uselessly in a corner of the house, and offered it to the hawker. The hawker removed a little bit of dust from the bowl. He was surprised to know that the bowl was made of gold. In order to deceive the old woman, he told- "I cannot exchange any of the necklaces with this valueless bowl." Saying this he threw the bowl in a place carefully marked and went away. His intention was to get the bowl without giving any of his ornaments. The grand daughter began to cry, and the old woman collected the bowl and kept in the places it was before. Few hours after, the honest hawker arrived in the village. In similar fashion the small girl insisted on to get ornaments. Then the old woman said "we have nothing in the house to be exchanged with ornaments." The girl then requested her grand mother to show the bowl to the new hawker. As per the request she showed the dirty bowl to the new hawker. After a preliminary

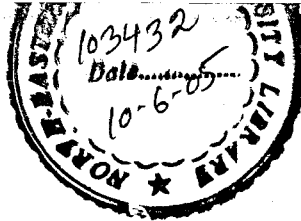
test, the second hawker also discovered it as a golden bowl (Shisiku). And frankly told to the old woman "The bowl is too costly to all my ornaments, and I cannot take it, I cannot deceive you." When insisted on by the old woman, the second hawker took the bowl and gave her all the ornaments and went away. The small girl was very happy to get all the ornaments. After sometime, the wicked hawker arrived and asked for that dirty bowl. The old woman said "It has been taken by a hawker, who has just left the village." With profound grief in mind, the dishonest hawker ran after the honest hawker who had already crossed the river by a boat. He was shouting and calling him back at the top of his voice- all through the road. With disappointment and exhaustion the wicked business man died vomiting blood on the bank of the river.

### Tale No.13

#### / Ninu mami (Love story)

There lived a newly married couple husband (Hisifa) and wife (Hisima), in a village. There prevailed eternal love between them. Absence of either for a few days was intolerable to them. They used to earn their livelihood mainly by food gathering and hunting. As their stock of food was about to finish, husband planned to go for hunting and gathering. But his wife was not in a mood to allow him go. She said "if anything happens to you, I shall die, please don't go." Husband assured her "nothing will happen to me, I will come after one week, no need of anxiety." Saying this her husband went away in the forest for hunting games.





Wife could not bear upon the separation of her husband. She fell ill. Her condition was deteriorating. A local medicine man was called in by her neighbour. He gave medicine to cure her, but in vain. She died suffering five days. Her neighbours buried the deadbody in the forest. Husband came back home with lot of foods and games after ten days. He was in profound grief hearing the death news of his wife. Leaving behind all food articles he immediately left for the place where his wife had been consigned to grave. He place his head and palms over the grave and began to weep continuously. His neighbour brought him back and tried to console him, but without any effect. Every day he used to go to the grave and weep. Then one day while he was weeping a snake (Lifu) came from grave and bit him to death. Neighbour said "he has reached to his beloved; his wife has taken him in her."

### Mogua (Song)

The Lisu term for the song is Mogua. Songs of the Lisu are broadly divided into two categories. This categorization depends on the age of the singers, not on their sex. These categories or divisions are Moguabu and Oyii. Moguabu are the songs sung by the old men and women, and Oyii are the songs sung by the young men and women, and boys and girls including children. Moguabu is further sub-divided into four types. They are- Weshamogua, Hishoymogua, Shichamogua and Miyimogua. House construction, shifting cultivation and marriage are the three most important occasions in the life of the Lisu- and their songs are categorised accordingly. The songs sung

during the ceremony of marriage are known as Weshomogua. Hi means house and shoy means to construct. Hence the songs sung at the time of the house construction is named Hishoy-mogua. In similar way, the songs the Lisu sing at the time of shifting cultivation is called Miyimogua. Origin and migration of the Lisu find expression in the songs of Shichamogua. Shichamogua is also sung when the Lisu meet an unknown person, or a group of persons foreign to them.

The second category of songs i.e. Oyii has two varieties; Nichioyii and Chichooyii. Nichioyii is actually love songs sung by the young boys or girls standing at the top of a hill. Chichooyii is sung sitting face to face inside a room in a competitive way. Its themes include- love, hunting, wrestling, marriage and so on. There is another category of songs sung in the praise of evil spirit known as Nima. The Lisu live in constant fear of dread of evil spirits- (Ni). They try to satisfy them by singing Nima. Nimanaoyii is sung by a young boy or girl when he or she is in pensive mood or in profound grief. Song means vocal music competition in the Lisu society; no competition, no song. In the traditional society, a Lisu never sings song alone for recreation, enjoyment or entertainment. If a person sings alone, it means she or he is in deep sorrow. The Lisu song is characterised by the absence of musical voice; that is, there is little tune in their songs. It hears like conversation, when one group ends the conversation, the other group begins it. It is like Gawwali, a variety of Indian vocal music, as they say, but it lacks tune. With the adoption of Christianity, the concept of song has

undergone profound change in the Lisu society. Nowadays, no Lisu sings their traditional songs. I failed to collect the specimens of the songs because of the non-availability of the concerned informants.

### Wakhi (Dance)

The Lisu term for dance is Wakhi. This performing art of the Lisu is of two types. They are Wakhikhi and Cheyngo. Wakhikhi is a group dance performed by the Lisu irrespective of sex and age. Here they dance encircling a male person who acts as a director playing a musical instrument. They dance rhythmically with the music produced by an instrument, no song is sung during this dance. Wakhikhi has six rhythms- thithowa, nyithowa, nyipi-thithiwa, thiba-sapi, nado-tha-wakhi and thibalipiwa. In thithowa, the legs of the dancers move one step forward then backward giving one stroke on the floor. Two strokes are given at a time on the floor, then followed by backward, and forward movements. This style is known as nyithowa. In nyipithithiwa also two strokes are giving on the dancing floor by both the legs alternately, then move one step forward and backward. In thibasapi, three forceful strokes are given on the floor by the dancers, no backward and forward and movement of the body. In nado-tha-wakhi, the dancers gently touch each other's hip moving forward and backward; female touch's males hip and vice versa. Movements of the body become slow in this style of dance. In thibalipiwa, four strokes are given simultaneously on the floor alternately by both the legs, then move forward, backward and sideward:

Wakhkhi is performed during the ceremony of marriage; which is known as Yisho, at the time of hishawa, i.e. party given to construct a new house; at hishope or hidupe, the party given after constructing a new house; when a new field is opened for swidden agriculture which is known as Khumi-khuwa; when the seeds are sown in the field, it is called Zatuwa. Besides its recreating function, wakhikhi is also arranged to test the durability of the floor of a new house. In Wakhikhi, a peculiar sound is produced while the legs of the dancers strike against the floor.

Cheyngo is a competitive dance, here the dancers are divided into two groups. Steppings, body-movements, and style are same as in Wakhikhi. It differs from Wakhikhi in that it produces no sound, there is nobody to direct the dance, no music is needed. There is no fixed occasion for this dance, Cheyngo, can be arranged at any time, on any occasion depending upon the mood of the dancers. To welcome and to receive the dignitaries, cheyngo is performed by old Lisu women separately or combined with men, nowadays. After Christianization, these two traditional dances have lost its importance in the life of the Lisu. They have completely stopped wakhikhi dance; and cheyngo is on the verge of existinction.

### Ngozu (Proverb)

The Lisu have numerous proverbs covering almost all aspects of life. My learned informants and the interpreter could not explain them neither in English or in Hindi properly.

The speciality of the Lisu proverb is that they are composed in a pair of word, and told in couplets. The Lisu term for the proverb is Ngozu. These proverbs have tremendous role in maintaining social equilibrium in the community. It also plays a great role in the socialisation process of the Lisu children. Moreover, the old men or women get their work done telling suitable proverbs to the young boys and girls. Some of the proverbs which they could recollect and explain properly are as follows:

thicha chiny thi mu du

thikhu thuny thi to so

One should be very careful while in conversation. One should not talk carelessly. A wrong word spread from one mouths to another very fast. If a branch of a tree is pulled down the whole tree moves; if a tree is felled, the entire forest shivers.

2. baba makhu nana  
mama pukhu beja.

Children should obey their parents to prosper in life.

3. nanasu u chu  
beja su shicho.

One who obeys the order of the parents gets blessings from heaven or God.

4. mayi za mado  
mati zama lo

Nothing can be obtained without work or without any labour. One can get rice after husking paddy grains only.

5. nga le machi kwa shi do  
nga le chi ma kwa za do.

Crops of paddy can be obtained by cultivating the land properly and sowing the seeds of paddy, and clearing the weeds. Otherwise weeds will grow in the field instead of paddy.

6. Sese Li su hwa  
kuku leme hwa.

To show bravery or courage, one should fight face to face or front to front. To kill people from behind is a treacherous deed. The Lisu are a great soldier, they never loose a battle fought face to face.

7. jama shi nya  
fu ma shi.

When there is a life, there is a hope. This proverb is told when a Lisu has lost everything by an accident of fire, or by flood. As a way of consolation, they say, when a Lisu survives there will no problems or difficulties, every kind of problem will be overcome.

8. maja sutey gu  
mado sutey tho.

To feed others without eating yourself, to offer drinks to other before drinking yourself. The Lisu take keen interest to give comfort to the guests.

9. cho sey za tey zo  
za sey mu tey zo.

Man survives on food grains which are grown in the earth or field, plants or trees draw their sustenance from the earth. Therefore, it is of immense importance for a Lisu to know the method of cultivating the land.

10. gawdu majo sha pheu

zadu majo shi pheu.

The physical appearance of a man or woman and the type of cloth he or she wears indicates opulence or poverty. This proverb is told to the young boys and girls to emphasize the need of producing food grains and cloths by which a person can be identified as poor or rich.

To conclude this discussion, it is emphasised that the folklore materials of the Lisu reflect different aspects of their culture and character. It indicates the social personality of the Lisu which is more expressive of happiness and honesty than unhappiness, melancholy and dishonesty. Their life is unseparable from the supernatural deities and evil spirits. They are a good and brave fighter. The Lisu are a poor community, they desire to become rich and aspire to achieve high status.

### CHAPTER - 3

#### M A T E R I A L   C U L T U R E

It is an anthropological findings that peoples whose material culture is simple or crude are highly dependent on their environment. This is true in the case of the Lisu, though their material culture is not so simple like that of the Nuer. The study of the material aspects of the Lisu is of great interest and significant not only from the interest or intrinsic interests of the artifacts themselves, but for sources of invention and of diffusion of cultural traits. Moreover, the study of the artifacts and the <sup>techniques</sup> ~~teachings~~ involving for its preparation have great significant by virtue of their relation to the whole social organisation of the Lisu particularly from the view point of their religious beliefs and practices. With these brief introductory words, let us begin the discussion on the material culture of the Lisu-as ~~per guide line.~~

#### Dwelling:

##### Chokha (Village)

The Lisu have their own settlement pattern. The Lisu villages are situated generally on the valleys, i.e. the plain area between the hills and on the bank of the river Noa-Dihing. A Lisu village is called Chokha. The Lisu village is established on the basis of availability of arable land, sufficient water supply throughout the year, plenty of forests in the



vicinity and cool climatic conditions. The Lisu villages are generally nucleated ones, and its boundaries are well defined, and the hillocks demarcate the boundary lines of the villages. All the sides of a village are generally covered with jungles and high hills, and each village has got its own land for shifting and settled cultivation and also fixed area of fishing and hunting games. Each village has at least two main approach roads and several tracks leading towards the cultivation fields. In each village houses are built in a systematic way. Each house has its own shape and a sufficient space is left between the two houses. The Lisu generally prefer wide compound. Generally, there occurs no assembly house or dormitory house in the village, but a common place for worship. For defence purpose, no village fortification is constructed by the Lisu. The village burial ground generally occurs on the western side of the village outskirts. In the Lisu villages, no other ethnic groups reside with them except few government officials.

#### Hi (Dwelling house)

The present dwelling house of the Lisu is the product or amalgamation of so many designs evolved by themselves. Each family designs her house according to her liking. The Lisu build their house by themselves. No professional house constructor are there. Generally, the young men of the village learn or acquire the skill of house construction from the elderly men who are more skilled or proficient than others. The Lisu follow more or less a systematic way for constructing their houses, and the type of house is uniform, more or less,

throughout the village and generally oriented in a north-south direction though some variation is found in the use of building materials however. The materials used for house construction are weed (Siphi), cane (Gami), bamboo (Makhua), bamboo leaf (Chala) and thatch (Shi). The main structure of the house i.e. posts, beams etc. are made of wood; and walls floor and roof, are made of split bamboo. Sometimes long wooden planks are also used to build the floor of the house. Leaves of a special variety of bamboo called Dijichey are used for roofing the house. Thatch, small wooden plank and tin are also used for roofing the house. Tin is a very recent introduction to the area by the government. Out of all the Lisu households, I came across only one tin-roofed house. All these building materials are sufficiently available in the nearby forest from where they collect them without any hindrance. Sometimes, trees felled and kept for drying and seasoning for two to three years. The roofs made of thatch and leaves generally last for four years.

A house for the purpose of dwelling is called Hi. Besides the residential house, there are other houses such as the granary house called Ka-Hi, pig house called Awe-Hi and farm house named Miyi-Hi. Generally, each room of the dwelling house is called yi-ko, though other names are also there. For example, drawing cum-kitchen cum bed room is named Nisiko, and the room where the head of the family sleeps is named Hikogo. A dwelling house is generally divided into two to three compartments.

Like most of the ethnic groups of Arunachal Pradesh, the Lisu houses are of the usual chang type built on a platform of a height of four to six feet from the ground. The width of the house is usually eighteen to twenty feet but length varies depending upon the number of rooms, the house is made of. The walls of some of the houses, are fitted with racks (Chaje) for keeping household goods. Sometimes, such articles are suspended from pegs inserted into the wall. Houses are provided with doors, made of split bamboos, which can be bolted. For the entire house, one or two windows are fitted, but no chimneys for the outlet of smoke, hence the interior is often sooty and smoky.

There is no particular season for the construction of the dwelling house, yet the months from November to February are regarded as the best period for house construction as they become free from all the major household works after finishing the harvesting of crops. Small huts like granary, pig-house, farm-house and latrine are constructed in any suitable month of the year.

Practically no cash amount is required in the construction of the Lisu dwelling house. Generally, one cow or two hegs, fifteen tins of rice (about 150 kg.) and forty labours are required for constructing the present type of dwelling house of the Lisu. The labourer, the carpenter and the designer of house are the Lisu themselves. They help each other in constructing a dwelling house or in any job where a large number of labours are needed at a time. The houselord is required

to entertain them with a feast of cow's or heg's meat. Three to four days are needed for constructing a dwelling house though finishing touch is given gradually.

### Hearth (Kabiku)

Almost every room of the traditional Lisu house has a fire place situated at its middle. A square area in the centre of the bamboo floor is marked out and covered with thick sticks and earth. The perimeter of the demarcated area is made of a kind of fire proof wood to prevent the bamboo floor from catching fire. In the good old days, three stone slabs used to be fixed vertically in the earth of the centre of the hearth for supporting cooking vessel. Nowadays iron triped stands have replaced the stone slabs.

Over the fire place, there are generally three trays (Jina) suspended one over the other. All the trays are made up of bamboo splits. Corn, chillies, meat, fish, arum, etc. are put over the trays for drying. The Lisu sleep by the side of the hearth on bamboo or grass mats, which are spread on the floor.

### Dress

The traditional Lisu dress both male and female is made of a kind of jute's fibre called Zi. They weave their dress or garments by themselves on the loom which they set up in a small area in a corner of the dwelling house. In the olden days, the foremost duties of the Lisu women were to prepare the threads from the zi's fibre. Nowadays they get readymade thread from the market for preparing the dress of their own

choice. The traditional upper dress or garments of the Lisu women are called chito-betsi (skirt) and chidu (jacket). Chito-betsi is like gent's modern full shirt, but collar is small and round, and both sleeves remain loose. Chidu is a type of black jacket <sup>worn</sup> wears over the chito-betsi. Zabech is another type of upper garment for the ladies, the two borders of the Zabech overlap to close in front. The lower dress of the Lisu women is named ye-gaw and Sikaji. Yegaw is like very loose peticoat whose border reaches well below the knees. Sikaji is a long piece of cloth which is worn under the yegaw by the ladies. Another extra long cloth called kata use by the married women that hungs over the peticoat in front from the waist, and it serves as a sort of covering. The kata is also used by the mature girls during their menstrual period.

Both the ladies' skirt and gents' shirt of the Lisu is called chieto-betsi. Gent's chito-betsi is more loose than the chito-betsi of the ladies. Its sleeves are black at the ends and its fronts are open. Over the chito-betsi, a long coat like dress reaching the ankles is worn by the Lisu gents while taking rest at home or at the time of marriage. This long overcoat like dress whose sides are open is called Betsi-Jala. A piece of cloth about fifteen feet long and seven inches wide is wrapped round the waist over chito-betsi or Betsi-Jala which serves as a kind of belt is known as ye-Jihu. It is made of zi's fibre, over the ye-Jihu, the Lisu gents wear a kind of leather belt made of cows skin in which small conch discs are fitted. This leather belt is known as Lapu-Jilu,

its length varies from five to seven feet. A sword or dao in a sheath is tucked in the ye-Jihu or Lapu-Jihu when the men go out for hunting. A cross bow and a cluster of arrows inserted in a skin bag or bamboo pot is often hung from the shoulder. The lower dress of the Lisu male is known as Muchie. It is a type of long pant made locally by them. It is black or whitish in colour, and its borders generally remain just below the knee and sometimes much below the knee. Sometimes, the Lisu gents wear a band of long cloth around the head like a turban which is known as Oth. The Lisu do not possess any traditional ceremonial costume. They have no special dress for the priest and their leader (chowu). Sometimes, they wear cap made of animals skin on the head. Traditionally, the Lisu used to move without any foot-wear. But now they have adopted the modern foot-wear like leather and plythine or plastic shoes both ladies and gents, hawai chappal etc.

School going girls wear skirt and the Burmese type of lungi. School and college going Lisu boys are using all the modern types of dress like full pant, 'T' shirt, coat, woollen garments etc.

### Ornaments

The ornaments used by the Lisu ladies mainly consist of stone beads, conch discs, silver, aluminium and iron which they prepare by themselves. Some parts of the ornaments they buy from the market. All these ornaments are regarded as a great assets of the housewife which are handed down from one generation to another. The following are the ornaments use by the Lisu:

Wulu

This is the name of the head-dress or head ornaments of the Lisu women (both married and unmarried) made of stone beads of different colours and conch discs. It looks like a crown from which the strings of stone heads hang around the head. The Lisu women keep two plaits of hair above the ear upon which wulu is worn.

Nakho

It is a big ear ring made of silver or aluminium worn by the women and girls.

Ooty

This is a string of stone beads which connects the two ear-rings.

Lewo

This is a big necklace of stone beads of different colour worn by the Lisu women like sacred thread, across the left shoulder.

Lewu-Lewo

This is a small bead-necklace white or red in colour worn round the neck only by the Lisu women.

Wooja

It is a big necklace made of conch discs set in a piece of cloth. This is worn together with Lewo. It is white in colour.

Leju

This is a wrist ornaments or bangles made of silver or aluminium or iron or wild creepers.

Solo

It is a precious red stone bead worn in the ear lobes by the Lisu women as well as men. This is a very costly stone which is an insignia of well-to-do family or richness. The total weight of all these ornaments do not exceed more than one kilogram. Because of the non-availability of materials, the Lisu have abandoned the use of the ornaments- Leju and solo.

In the olden days, the Lisu men had a distinctive way of hair cutting. They used to shave all the hairs of the head except at its top where a tuft of hair was allow to grow from the time of their birth till to death. The Lisu men used to make plaits out of their hair and decorated the plaits with different kind of flowers. After embracing Christianity, they have abandoned the practice of that hair-style. The Lisu women make two plaits out of all the hairs of the head which are folded above the ears on the head. This style of hair by the Lisu women is considered auspicious for the family, other styles are bad omen.

The Lisu do not have the custom of tattoing their faces or any parts of their body. I find only one instance of tattooing on a left hand of a retired soldier of the second world war. A sword and a beautiful girl have been tattooed only to satisfy the curoosity of tattoeing the body.



### Food and Drink

At present rice is the staple cereal food of the Lisu. But in the olden days, when they had to depend solely on the products of shifting cultivation, millet as well as maize was their staple cereal food. When the stock of rice is exhausted, arum, maize or local potato are used as food. Arum (Bi) is available during its season only. Green vegetables such as mustard and arum leaves, young or tender bamboo shoots are taken with rice. Tender bamboo shoots <sup>are</sup> ~~is~~ favourable to the Lisu which are pounded, boiled with meat and served. There are varieties of bamboo shoots available in the forest around their habitation, and the Lisu cultivate them also. One such variety of bamboo shoots are cut into pieces and buried them under the ground. After one month they are taken out and used as vegetables. The meat of almost all animals is taken by the Lisu except their pet animals like dog (Ana) and cat. The Lisu take all kinds of fishes, wild animals and birds. Their most favourite is bog's meat, next in order of preference comes fowl's meat and beef. All the members of the family irrespective of sex and age are allowed to take all kinds of meat.

During acute scarcity of their normal food, the Lisu depend on the wild trees called Athu and Sweay. One tree of Athu or Sweay can feed a family of seven members for one year. These trees look like palm-trees. After removing its outer bark, the stem is cut into pieces, then dry them on sun or on fire. Then applying a series of process, they prepare a kind of bread out of them. Besides these trees, they also consume wild ferns, leaves, fruits, flowers, shoots, roots and tubers.

### Meal times

The Lisu take two major meals a day, early in the morning and just after sun set or before sun set. During agricultural season, in addition to normal two meals, one extra meal is taken at noon in the farm house in the field. Their meals consist of rice, vegetable and meat. All the food items are boiled with common salt and then served. No condiments are used generally in the preparation of their food. Food is cooked and served by the females. All the members of the family dine together, though male members are served first. In between the two major meals, the Lisu take mainly fried-arum, maize and potato, boiled eggs and rice beer (Jiphue) and raw tea (Lacha) without sugar and milk. The Christian Lisu supplement rice beer with raw tea.

Before embracing Christianity the Lisu used to throw out a very small portion of food or drink in the name of evil spirit (Ni) before consuming them. At present they pray to Jesus Christ before taking any food.

### Agricultural Implements

The agricultural implements of the Lisu, according to their functions and purpose, may be divided into two categories- i) implements and equipments associated with the shifting cultivation and ii) implements and equipments associated with the settled paddy cultivation or wet paddy cultivation.

#### I) Implements of the Shifting Cultivation

##### i) Atha (Dao)

This is a straight seythe made of iron having a wooden

handle. This is used for clearing the bush of the field for shifting cultivation. They prepare it by themselves or sometimes purchase it from Dibrugarh and Tinsukia markets of Assam.

ii) Acho (Axe)

This is a kind of axe having thick iron blade and long wooden handle. This is used for felling trees of the field selected for shifting cultivation as well as to size firewood and bamboos.

iii) Ago (Hoe)

This is a small and special kind of hoe made of iron and wood. This is used for loosening soil and scrapping up weeds etc. of the field for shifting cultivation.

iv) Jangwo

This is a kind of digging stick with a pointed end made of wood. This is used for sewing paddy grains in the field of shifting cultivation. This is done by the women folk only. By striking the stick against ground, a hole is made where few paddy grains are thrown out by the left hand.

v) Natu

This is a type of big cylindrical basket made of bamboo split and cane. There are different types of Natu. Natu is used for carrying the products of the shifting cultivation.

All the implements and equipments require for the shifting cultivation are made by the Lisu themselves. It is said that during the Second World War large quantities of war weapons including parts of fighter planes were left out in the

forest around the habitation of the Lisu. The Lisu collected them and made the needed implements out of them and some of the materials or metals they are still preserving for future use. The Lisu knew very well the art of working in metals.

## 2) Implements of the wet Paddy Cultivation

Implements of permanent or wet paddy cultivation were supplied by the central government free of cost with the introduction of permanent cultivation among the Lisu. These agricultural implements were plough (Lakhu) hand hoe (Agu), rakes, spade and bullock cart. Later on, the Lisu acquired the techniques of preparing all these implements except a special kind of spade made of iron called chufe. There are two kinds plough go by the same name (Lakhu), one is run by a single buffalo and the other is pulled by a pair of bullock or buffalo. Besides all these iron made implements, a big indigenous basket called Nathufa is considered very essential for wet paddy cultivation.

## Hunting and Fishing Implements

The hunting implements of the Lisu consist mainly of cross-bows called Hwasiche with different kinds of arrow. The ordinary cross-bow is termed Chey and the war-bow is known as Mechey. The cross-bow is made of wood. This cross-bow is a speciality of the Lisu; and it is said to be found in no other ethnic groups of the Arunachal Pradesh. These cross-bows are handed over from one generation to another. Similarly, the ordinary arrow is term cheehu. Chechuphi is a kind of arrow made of small and slender bamboo split with

a very pointed end. Chechuphi is exclusively used for killing different kinds of bird. Nye is another kind of arrow used for killing wild big animals like tiger, bear etc. Its pointed end is fitted with a triangular piece of iron which is smeared with poison (Do) made from the roots of a kind of herbs. Dobi is also a kind of poison arrow a little bigger than che-chuphi. Dobi is used for hunting small wild animals. All these arrows are again used to fight against the enemies. Besides the cross-bows, the Lisu have innumerable devices for trapping birds and animals. They are known as Wapeu, Wapu, Puesheley, Watu, Howa etc. Some of the fishing instruments of the Lisu are as follows:-

#### Ngawtholulu

This is a round basket made of bamboo split with a trapping deer called yikabu situated at its bottom and its top is open and covered with a lid. This implement is kept under water on three stone slabs for one to two weeks for trapping fishes. Here food particles are used for trapping fish.

#### Shika

This is also a fish trapping instrument used in current water without using food particles. It is made from a portion of splited bamboo having a node. One end of this basket is circular and the other is tapering.

#### Khopu

This is a fishing net having two flexible bamboo rods tied with a long rope. It is used like eusting net for catching fishes from a shallow river where water is muddy.

Depu

This is a long net used for trapping fish in the stagnant water of the river. The upper portion of this long net tied with a number of small wooden blocks which float in the water, lower side is tied with stone chips at regular interval. The length of net varies from 10 feet to 100 feet. It is kept under water for one night.

Ngawthu

This is almost like Ngawtholulu, it is made up of two baskets. This is also used in the current water for trapping fish.

Besides all these fishing instruments, the Lisu also catch fish by angling, iron spears of different shape and sizes, setting series of iron hooks against a big rope which are kept under water.

Other Household ImplementsBasket

The Lisu use a number of baskets which have different size and shape, and different functions also. The names of the different baskets are; Natu, Sa, Nachu, Nakhu, Kathu, Kathu Daga, Lephe chidu, Hajo, Dago, Pake, Sikha, Daguzaza, Wachee, Nakhwa, Dachi, Madu, and Amakhu. The common name of the basket of the Lisu is Natu.

Adeythu

This is a small and slender bamboo tube of one node used for drinking tea and liquor in a large gatherings.

Nyegu

This is a crude type of wooden log used for sitting. The term Nyegu is used to define all the articles or implements that are used for the purpose of sitting.

Dako

This is a kind of wooden rake made of two pieces of wood one is long used as handle and the other is flat blade like. It is used for levelling the ground.

Yitagu

This is an indigenous cot made of wood or bamboo for sleeping. This is meant for the young married couple.

Teju

This is a hanging platform made of bamboo slits rectangular in shape prepared above the hearth. This is used for drying different food articles like paddy, meat, arum, etc.

Lecheumu

This is a long wooden rod used for crushing or pounding or grinding food grains placing in the Lecheu. Its length varies from 4' - 5', and it is used by hand.

Chewu

It is like small spade with long wooden handle used for making hole in big trees for the cultivation of honey-bees.

Athali

This is a small iron knife with a wooden handle. This is an important household implement used for sharpening and smoothing bamboo splits, cane fibres etc.

Chewlu

Chewlu is small iron needle with a wooden handle used for making small holes while preparing baskets, mats, bamboo-walls and floors.

Muche

This is the name of the Lisu sickle used for harvesting crops, cutting grass, fodder of hog etc.

Huchi

This is the name ~~bfatha~~ hearth of the Lisu. It is a circular triped iron stand. It is purchased from the markets in Dibrugarh or Tinsukia. The Lisu also can prepare it.

Zachathu

This is a big one node bamboo tube specially prepare for cooking rice. Rice is packed longitudinally in a leaf called Legichey which is kept inside the Zachathu. Then the Zachathu is filled up with water, and the rice is boiled up by applying heat in its below. Zachathu can be used once only.

Lachachathu

This is a medium size raw bamboo tube of one node. It is used for the preparation of tea, it serves the purpose of modern kettle. Outer green skin of the raw bamboo tube is removed and smoothen. Lachachathu lasts for one month only.

The Changes

Change is an universal phenomenon in the human culture. No aspects of human culture can escape the wind of change. As



a natural consequence, a profound change is perceptible in the material culture of the Lisu, particularly in the use of cooking utensils, wooden furniture and dress. They are using almost all the cooking utensils, furniture and dress used generally by lower middle class or middle class urban family.

Some of them are given below:

### Utensils

| <u>Name of Article</u>                                             | <u>Name given by the Lisu</u> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Kettle                                                             | Lebu                          |
| Mug (Tin or aluminium)                                             | Kuju                          |
| Plate (Tin)                                                        | Aku                           |
| Milk pan or rice pan                                               | Jiche                         |
| Frying pan                                                         | Alu                           |
| Small frying pan                                                   | Aluyicha                      |
| Drinking glass (steel)                                             | Ley - Kaju                    |
| Drinking glass (glass)                                             | Nyabu Kaju                    |
| Tray (tin)                                                         | Lacha-teydu                   |
| Jericane*(Plastic)                                                 | yet to name it                |
| *The Lisu are thinking to name plastic jericane as <u>sizibe</u> . |                               |
| Jug (plastic)                                                      | Azey-hodu (temporary name)    |

Azey-hodu is actually the name of a jug made of big bamboo tube for distributing drinking water. The function of new plastic jug and the indigenous jug of the Lisu is same; and that is why they give the same name to the new plastic or polythene jug.

|                                |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Bucket (Iron)                  | Hotaka       |
| Bucket (Plastic)               | Sizitaka     |
| Tin pot (big size)             | lebo         |
| Tin pot (small Amul milk tin)  | Lethu        |
| Small spoon (steel)            | Aju          |
| Big spoon (steel or aluminium) | Agu          |
| Big glass pot                  | Sizi-Nyababe |
| Glass bottle                   | Wika         |
| Big plastic tumbler            | sizi-bey     |

#### Wooden Furniture:

|         |              |
|---------|--------------|
| Table   | Sala         |
| Chair   | Nyagu        |
| Cot     | Siyi-tagu    |
| Bench   | Nyagu-chashi |
| Steel   | Nyagululu    |
| Almirah | Jebu         |
| Box     | Sika         |
| Window  | Nyimuphi     |
| Rack    | Siku-chagu   |

#### Dress and Beddings

|                                     |            |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Long pant                           | Muchi      |
| Short pant for small boys and girls | Muchi-tadu |
| Lungi                               | Daga       |
| Ladies lungi                        | Zamu daga  |
| Gent's lungi                        | Za-daga    |
| T.Shirt                             | Betsi dadu |

|                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Full shirt         | chiley - Ajashi |
| Baniyan            | sechey          |
| Gent's under wear  | Ajey-tsimuchi   |
| Warm overcoat      | Lawa-betsi      |
| Sweater            | Hwamu-betsi     |
| Socks              | Chitu           |
| Hat                | Navo            |
| Shoe               | Chini           |
| Bed sheet or cover | ye-khedo        |
| Woolen blanket     | Hwamu-yibu      |
| Pillow (cotton)    | Wugolô          |
| Cotton blanket     | Laba            |
| Woolen cap         | Hwamu-navo      |

#### Other Articles

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| Umbrella       | Kheji       |
| Photo          | Chejew      |
| Camera         | Chejew-dudu |
| Radio          | Ledie       |
| Sewing machine | Yethe-du    |
| Tape Recorder  | Sey chudu   |
| Lock           | Sothu       |
| Key            | Sothu-phidu |

It is not that the Lisu have completely abandoned indigenous articles. Both modern and indigenous articles are used side by side.

Food habits of the Lisu are gradually changing. The Christian Lisu have completely abandoned the drinking of country-liquor, they are now very much addicted to the drinking of raw tea i.e. without milk and sugar. But when they serve tea to any government officials or dignitaries from the plain they try to make tea with milk and sugar. In the preparation of food also gradual change is noticeable. They have started using mustard oil, chillies, turmeric etc. in cooking their food, specially when they invite government officials, for lunch or supper. Otherwise, in the preparation of food, the indigenous method of boiling with salt is still followed.

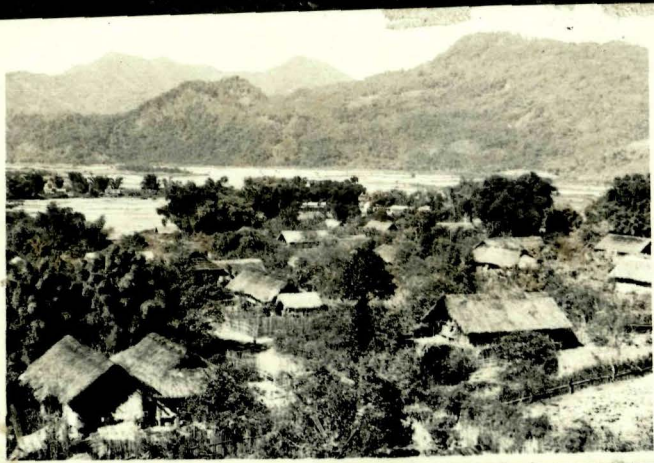
In the construction of house change is also noticeable. The houses made of wooden wall and tin-roofed are becoming evident in the Lisu villages. The use of radio and sewing machine is now common among the Lisu. Some of the young Lisu women have already acquired the art of knitting the modern woollen dress like sweater, socks, blouse, caps etc. They have started wearing leather and polythene shoes, chappals etc.

### Arts

There are no societies or ethnic groups that lack artistic activities although all of arts are not equally developed, or even represented in every culture. Art is a part of culture. Artistic activities apparently satisfy some deeply rooted psychological needs that are common to all human beings. Art is defined as an activity that, over and above its practical or utilitarian values, brings satisfaction both to the artist and to those who participate in his work as beholders, audience,

or collaborators. It is this esthetic element that separates art from other aspects of culture. Artistic productions of the Lisu are baskets, bags, shawl, clothes and cross-bow. In other words, their artistic applique is exemplified in textile designs, hunting impliments and basketry. Lisu women weave beautiful side-bags, hand-bags and shawl of different sizes with attractive designs and colour combination. Their men prepare very beautiful cane and bamboo baskets (Natu) of different designs and shapes which also prove their efficiency in those crafts.

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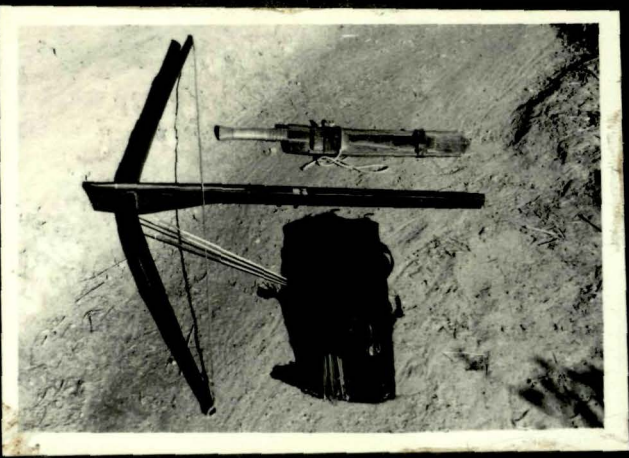
1. Aerial view of a Lisu village



2. A Lisu hut (old)



3. A Lisu hut (modern)



4. A Lisu Cross-bow(chey)



6. Back view of a Lisu woman's dress cut ornament.



5. Lisu women wearing traditional dresses and ornaments.

## CHAPTER - 4

### E C O N O M I C    O R G A N I S A T I O N

Economic organisation of the Lisu consists of all such activities as are required for their existence or physical survival. In short, it is their arrangement of economic activities. The economic organisation of the Lisu is of subsistence type, that is, it falls into the broad category of production-consumption economics. Broadly speaking, Lisu economy is a mixed type. The Lisu do not follow a particular occupation; they are engaged in different kinds of occupations to supplement their subsistence. The Lisu are food gatherers, hunters, fishermen, agriculturists both shifting and settled cultivators, business men, service holders and so on. They are at various levels of economic development. It is interesting to note that the Lisu do not abandon one occupation or economy to adopt another. Let us now discuss the means of livelihood of the Lisu. Land (Dajemi) and forest (Simimi) are the two major economic resource of the Lisu. Every household owns land for permanent and shifting cultivation. The Lisu enjoy the right of ownership only, they cannot sell or dispose the land.

#### Agriculture

Agriculture is at present the basic means of livelihood of the Lisu. This is done by two different methods- slash

and burn method i.e. shifting cultivation and plough method for wet rice cultivation in a permanent or settled way. Land used for shifting cultivation is called Dajemi, and the land used for wet rice cultivation is called Puxumi by the Lisu. Besides, there are houstead land and land for growing vegetables or land used as vegetable garden.

### Shifting Cultivation

The Lisu have free access to the forest. They are allowed to exploit nature in accordance with their will. In Dajemi, a patch of forest land is cleared of its bushes and shrubs, trees are cut down, then leave it for some days for drying or rotting by natural process. Then at a suitable time all these dried bushes, shrubs, leaves, of trees, etc. are burnt. The soil is then stirred up with a wooden stick in order to cover the land with uniform layer of ashes. In this way, land (Dajemi) for shifting (jhum) cultivation is prepared by the Lisu. The Lisu Dajemi or the land for shifting cultivation, the so called jhum cultivation is of four types:

### Simemi

The forest land first prepared for shifting cultivation is named ~~as~~ Simemi. It means new acquisition of forest land, the land where the shifting cultivation is done for the first time. It produces good crops. This may be used for a maximum period of two years.



Khumi

When a patch of land is used for second time for shifting cultivation is named Khumi. Simply, second time use of simemi is called khumi. The gap between the first and second time of cultivation is approximately ten years. In khumi, production of crops becomes less than that of Simemi.

Chemi

Third time use of the same land (simemi) after a gap of thirty years approximately is called chemi. In chemi, there will be no big trees, only small grass. Chemi produces less than Khumi does.

Bujemi

Fourth time cultivation of the same land (simemi) after a gap of about forty (40) years is called Bujemi. There will be no grass in Bujemi, and the land becomes barren completely. After finishing cultivation in Bujemi the Lisu leave the village and search for a new forest for simemi, and a new place for living. The Lisu prepare Dajemi in such a way that can be cultivated for 40 to 50 years in a cyclic order or in a rotational way. In other words, the Lisu live in a particular place constantly for about 40-50 years depending upon the nature of the fertility of the land. That is in every 40 - 50 years, the Lisu migrate from one place to another to find out the better quality of land. And if they can find out such plain or flat land where fertility never decreases, the Lisu settle permanently in that place, and practised settled agriculture.

The Lisu rarely own properties jointly. Ownership is of individual type. Every chehi, headed by a male Lisu has its own land for shifting cultivation, wet paddy cultivation, reserve area of hunting and fishing, bee-keeping, trees etc. Besides, there are some places for common use (hunting, fishing, etc.), go by the name of a village. For example, a Lisu village has its own area for shifting cultivation as well as wet paddy cultivation. People from other village or outsiders are not allowed to use that land. Dajemi fields of the Lisu, are generally situated within the range of one day march (both going and coming).

#### Period of Shifting Cultivation

Generally, clearing of jungles, i.e. cutting down of trees, bushes and shrubs, and levelling the earth by hoe are done during the period from December to February. These dried bushes, shrubs, leaves, trees etc. are set on fire between March and April. Seeds are sown during the period between April and May. In July, they clear the weeds of Dajemi fields. Within November, the Lisu finish the harvesting of Dajemi crops. Harvesting of Dajemi crops is usually done by hand.

#### Dajemi Crops

The Lisu grow a variety of crops (vegetables as well as paddy) on the Dajemi fields. Some of these crops are- Bi (arum), different varieties<sup>of</sup> Hubi (potato both sweet and common variety), Afu (pumpkin), Usha (maize), Anu (bean), Apu (cucumber), shuew (millet), pakka (a variety of millet), Nu (gingilee), Kake

(no equivalent English word is found) and wild variety of paddy.

### Implements of Dajemi Cultivation

The Lisu use different kinds of implements made of iron, wood and bamboo. Some of these are:-

#### Atha

This is a sword like implement made of iron with a wooden butt, whose distal end gradually becomes broad. It is straight type of scythe or dao.

#### Ache

An implement made of iron with a long wooden butt or handle is called Ache; equivalent word in English is axe.

#### Agu

This is a special type of hoe made of iron.

#### Jangwo

This is the name of a long wooden stick used for sowing paddy by the Lisu women. One end of this stick is pointed. The Lisu women make hole in the earth with the pointed end of the stick and throw few seeds of paddy into it by the left hand.

#### Natu

This is a type of basket made of cane and bamboo-slits, round and cylindrical in shape.

All these implements are made by the Lisu. It is said that the Lisu got considerable quantities of different kinds of metals like iron, copper, aluminium etc. from the forest. These metals

were fallen in the forests as a result of air-fights and land fights during the second World War. The Lisu converted and still convert all these metals into different kinds of agricultural and household implements. They have preserved some of these metals for future use. Some of these implements have already been described in Chapter-II.3

Puxumi (Wet paddy cultivation or Panikhethi)

The Lisu have adopted or learned this type of cultivation very recently. Only in 1964, the government (Central) introduced this type of wet paddy cultivation through V.L.B. posted at Vijaynagar, but the Lisu claim that they knew it long before. Paddy seeds, plough, bulls etc. had been supplied by the government after giving them proper training. Government also encouraged the Lisu to develop the fallow land for wet paddy cultivation giving rupees one hundred per acre. They got the ownership right of the land they developed for wet paddy cultivation. Officially, four acres of paddy land, and one acre of houstead land per family have been allotted to them by the Circle Officer, Vijaynagar, government of Arunachal Pradesh. But no written documents for ownership right for the aforesaid land have been given to them.

The Land is very fertile and it is situated in the valleys. The soil of this land consists of an alluvial deposit of clay except near river banks, where it is sandy loam sometimes mixed with gravels. On the whole, the soil is favourable for summer paddy. Cultivation of wet paddy entirely depend on the natural rain. The land is broken in April or May and ploughed as soon

as the soil is softened by the rain. The Lisu repeated the process again and again till the soil is reduced to a rich puddle of mud. Then little embankments intended to retain water are prepared. Before this, in the month of May or June, the paddy seeds are sown broadcast in little beds near the paddy fields. When the paddy seedlings grow about 6" - 12" in height, they are taken from the nursery bed and planted in a bunch to the fields prepared for the purpose. Transplantation goes on generally in the month of July. Within December the crops are reaped. Production of crops per acre varies from 3 to 4 quintals. The Lisu are self-sufficient in rice production. Threshing is usually done in the field. The Lisu, practically observe no ceremonies or festivals in connection with agricultural operations.

### Implements

Generally, the following implements are used by the Lisu for wet paddy cultivation:-

#### Lakho

It is the name of plough. It is of two types- one type is used with the help of a single buffalo, the other type is used with two bulls.

#### Agu

It is a big size hoe.

#### Chufe

It is a kind of spade.

Muche

This is the name of sickle. It has different shapes.

Nathufa

This is a big basket.

Anche

This is the name of a bullock cart.

The Lisu can prepare all the implements needed for wet paddy cultivation except-chufe. Sometimes, they purchase all these implements from Dibrugarh, and Tinsukia markets of Assam. Some of these implements have already been described (see chapter-<sup>3</sup>~~11~~).  
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Food Gathering

The Lisu, though economically self-sufficient, still they pursue the work of food collection, honey etc. from the forest.

Cultivation of Bees

Cultivation of bees and collection of honey is one of the main occupations of the Lisu. Almost every Lisu family, specially the families of Jayja clan, has reserve area of trees and rocks in the forest where they cultivate honey bees. The area for cultivation of bees for honey bees, is called Jejidu, which means rock-area. And the trees in which honey bees are cultivated are called Jesu; and the term- Hwaje is used for honey. Early in the morning or before sun set, following the direction of flights of the bees against the sun rays, the Lisu search out the area of their habitation i.e. Jejidu and Jesu. It is

really a tiresome job, it takes days together to find out the area. He who first discovered the area, it belongs to him. The area is demarcated by making a hole or a small cut in the body of a tree, or putting few stone chips on the concern rock. Then nobody can collect honey from the area without taking necessary permission. Generally, during winter season, honey is collected from the area. The Lisu consume honey in a number of ways- boiling, mixing with other- edible things, and drinking it as such.

### Hunting and Fishing

In a strict sense, fishing and hunting are the forms of food gathering. The Lisu are proficient in hunting and fishing. They have also reserve area for fishing and hunting where nobody is allowed to hunt or fish without permission. They find out the exact area of animals' habitation following a stream where the animals come to drink water at the time of full moon or new moon. The area of the forest where hunting games are available or the wild animals live is called Hwachidu. Generally, they hunt wild boar and sow, deer, hare, monkey- different types, etc. The Lisu hunt all these animals with gun and with hunting bow and arrow. They also hunt different kinds of birds. The area of hill mouse's habitation is called Heypukhu. The habitation of hill mice is located following their foot prints on the paths by which they return to the habitation. This species of mice is regarded as a good means of livelihood by the Lisu. The Lisu eat the meat of this mouse relishly. The Heypukhu is considered an individual property. Nobody is allowed to catch mouse without

permission. Similarly, small natural lake, canal, pond, etc. where fishes are available, are considered individual properties. This property belongs to the Lisu who first discovered it, and it is termed Ngwaludu. One can fish in the small lakes or ponds, taking permission from the person concern. Big rivers, and lakes are common to all the Lisu for fishing. The Lisu use angle, casting net and trapping net and baskets etc. for fishing.

The Lisu allow the poor families to use all these properties- Jejidu, Hwachidu, Heypukhu and Ngwaludu, for a specific period on contract basis. Or they may be sold in exchanges of household goods or for one hog or cow depending upon the quantities of the property, when the Lisu leave the village for ever.

#### Collection of Gold

It is said that the Lisu were proficient in collecting gold particles from the different river beds in good old days. They used to make a kind of wooden plate from a particular species of trees. Gold particles stick to this wooden plate- when it is gently and continuously pushed in the clay of gold available river-bed. As reported, the Lisu of Burma still persist it. The Lisu of Gandhigram used to do it in Noa-Dihing river before the establishment of Circle Office at Vijaynagar. They have stopped pursuing this occupation only to avoid the bad name of a gold smuggler. It is said, most of the Lisu, possess same quantities of gold.



### Business

The Lisu are very intelligent and shrewd people. Recently they have adopted business of stationery goods and clothes as subsidiary means of livelihood. They purchase all these commodities from Tinsukia and Dibrugarh markets of Assam. Some of the Lisu have established good business relation with the Marwari and as a result they got business goods on credit. A Marwari remarked that the Lisu have extraordinary business talent, and if they are provided with all the necessaries (capital, proper place etc.) for business, the Lisu can bring down or defeat the business supremacy of the Marwari. At Gandhigram there are four cloth shops and four stationery shops, and two tea shops, run by the Lisu. At Vijaynagar, there are nine shops, two clothes and seven stationery shops. One of the cloth shops is big and having a transaction of rupees forty to fifty thousand. Generally, money is the medium of exchange, but barter way of exchange also operates side by side.

### Lisu Co-operative Store

In 1963, with the inspiration of Mr. Macher, Circle Officer, Vijaynagar, the Lisu established a Co-operative Store of essential commodities at Vijaynagar. Every Lisu family contributed an amount of money for the purpose, and purchased shares of the Co-operative Society; later on it was aided by the government of Arunachal Pradesh. The actual name is Yobin Joji co-operative store. It is running smoothly.

### Government Service

The Lisu are also employed as government servants under both State and Central government. About two percent of them are in government service. They are mainly class IV or 'D' staffs, there are <sup>few</sup> class III/'C' staffs. The Lisu are employed as Jawans in Assam Rifle, as interpretator in Circle Office, as peons and field staffs in S.I.B., S.B., and M.I.B. offices of the central government.

### Alternative means of livelihood

The Lisu are foresighted people. They think ahead on the problem of food grains' scarcity. In fact, they had faced the severe scarcity of food as a result of repeated failure of the growth of food crops due natural calamities like continuous drought or flood which compelled them to find out alternative means of livelihood adopted only at the time of severe scarcity of food. Those means of livelihood are nothing but few trees, herbs or modified stems or leaves, which they do not take in normal condition. Some of these trees are cultivated and others grew automatically in the forest. I tried my level best to find out the English names or botanical names of all these trees or herbs in vain. All those trees or herbs need a series of process to make them eatable. These are:-

#### Athu

A kind of tree, grows generally ten to fifteen in height. The leaves of this tree become serrated like Dhokisaag. It grows

automatically in the forest. Every Lisu family has reserved area containing one hundred to two hundred of these trees. The stem of this tree is cut down into small pieces, then dried it up, ground into powder. From this powder, a kind of reddish cake is prepared. To prepare this cake is a tedious job. A Lisu family consists of six adult members can survive five to six years eating these cakes prepared from two hundred trees when there is severe scarcity of food.

### Siwe

This is a kind of tree resembling coconut tree. It is cultivated in the forest as well as in homestead land. Almost every Lisu family is having at least four or five such trees. From its stem, followed by a long process, powder is made; and from this powder a kind of cake, like Indian chapati, called Siwekhu is prepared. A Lisu family of seven adult members can survive one year eating the cakes prepared from one tree only.

### Dagelay

A variety of herbs or plants grow automatically in the forest, mainly besides the streams. Petioles of its leaves become potato-like. Sufficient quantities of these swollen petioles are collected, cleared, and crushed into dough. From this dough, the Lisu prepared a kind of bread. One such bread is sufficient for an adult as one time-meal.

### Mukhulahi

This is also a kind of plant, grows naturally in the forest. The stems of these plants are collected, and cleared up of its

unedible parts. Then after boiling, these stems are used as food.

### Muje

This is a kind of wild potato, naturally grows in the forest. It has four varieties. It is just boiled and taken after removing its skin.

### Fruits and Leaves

Besides the trees and herbs mentioned above, fruits and leaves of different kinds of trees which grow naturally in the forest are taken by the Lisu in the period of severe crisis of food. The leaves are used as vegetables and the fruits are eaten as such or raw.

### Types of Labour

The Lisu have very recently acquired the status of settled agriculturists. Labour is one of the main factors of agricultural production. The Lisu have their own arrangement or system for the utilization of labours <sup>in</sup> needed occassion.

### Wajaphu

This is a kind of labour arrangement or process by which large number of labourers are employed at the time of starting a new field for shifting cultivation or at the time of sowing or plantings or harvestings. This is required to complete the work within specific period which cannot be done or completed by one or two persons or labourers. These labourers are the

co-villagers or the kith and kin of the Lisu. He who requires such a large number of labourers, taking one basket of prepared rice, has to move from one family to another and distributing one plate of cooked rice to each person willing to offer labour. This type of contact with the labourers has to be made at least one week before the day of actual engagement. No payment is made in cash or in kind to the labourers. They work in the field from early morning to evening, one hour rest in between, generally at noon. They are provided with only one meal with rice and meat in the morning, and boiled arum as tiffin. In the evening when they return from the field, two cups (one small and one big) Jiphu (rice beer) are given to them. This type of engagement of labour used to call wajaphu by the Lisu.

### Wajo

This is the type of labour engagement same as Wajaphu but in a modified form. In this type, one need not carry a basket of cooked rice while contacting with labourers, instead, they are simply invited one day before to help in transplanting the paddy seedlings during June and July, and in harvesting during October and November. In Wajo, it becomes obligatory on the part of an inviter to help or respond at the call given by any one of the participant labourers in similar occasion. In wajo, one meal of rice and meat is given to each labourer in the leisure period in the field itself. Raw tea (without milk and sugar) is given to them instead of Jiphu in the evening. No payment in cash or kind is made to them. In wajo, working period is from 6.30 A.M to 4.00 P.M, leisure period is from 12 noon to 1 P.M. This period

of labour engagement has been fixed by the Lisu themselves.

### Kayu or Kawu

This is a type of labour employment given to a poor Lisu male or female even to a child of seven or eight years old by a rich Lisu family for few days. In getting such employment, he or she comes to the door of the rich Lisus at his or her own accord. In addition to one time meal, rupees seven is given to them in cash per day. Adult male or female or a child (male or female) gets equal payment. They may be engaged in any household work as well as field work. Lisu children are very efficient in transplantation of paddy seedlings. This is indirectly an economic help given to the poor Lisu families. These labourers work from 8 A.M to 3.30 P.M., one hour recess in between.

### Pomi

This is a type of labour contract made with the skilled labourer (e.g. carpenter). Job of these labourers is to prepare wooden planks or posts by cutting down big trees from the forest. These trees are ear-marked by the Lisu in due time. These labourers are exclusively the Nepali settlers of Vijaynagar. For making one wooden post or one wooden plank of twelve feet in length and twelve inch. in breadth rupees seven is given to this type of carpenter. Payment is made in cash as well as in kinds (rice, vegetables etc.)

### Phuzipha (Carpenter)

The Lisu engage carpenter to make furniture (chair, table, cot etc.) and other household articles on daily basis. For one

day employment of a carpenter rupees fifteen is given, in addition to one time meal. A carpenter works from early morning to evening. The Lisu also engage a carpenter in exchange of labour. That is an employer of a carpenter also acts as a labourer to the house of the carpenter. Labour is divided according to their suitability, no fixed rule is followed. Sometimes they place demand of their requirements to carpenter who supplied them accordingly. A lumpsum amount is <sup>paid</sup> ~~april~~ to the carpenter for the furniture or articles supplied.

#### Hedupha (blacksmith)

Blacksmiths are employed by the Lisu in the same manner as that of carpenter. But mostly iron implements are made free of cost, if the required iron is supplied to the Hedupha.

#### Division of Labour

In the Lisu society labour is divided on the basis of sex and age only. But this division of labour is not strictly followed by the Lisu. The Lisu males and females, specially husbands and wives, work jointly in almost all spheres of life.

#### Husband's or Male's duty

All the hard works where enormous physical strength is required, the works involving the use of axe and scythe are generally done by the husbands or young males. Hunting of games, collection of honey from the forest, ploughing of wet paddy land, collection and carrying of firewoods from the jungle, driving of bullock carts, fishing by nets are the works of male Lisus. Fencing and cleaning of the vegetables garden are the exclusive jobs

of the Lisu males.

### Wive's or Female's duty

Theoretically, all the light works are supposed to be done by the Lisu females or wives. To bring up the children, to cook food for the family, to feed the bulls, cows, pigs, and hens are the jobs of the Lisu women. Weaving and stitching the clothes are considered very important work of the Lisu females. Preservation of different kinds of seeds, gardening (vegetables), to keep the house clean, cleaning of clothes, winnowing and cleaning of rice, are done by the Lisu wives. The Lisu females are proficient in transplantation of paddy seedlings. Lisu wives are in-charge of the houses, in domestic works they are all in all.

### Old parents' duty

Old parents of the Lisu generally remain in the house to look after the children and household goods; to keep a constant watch on fire so that it cannot break out and damage the house. If their physical strength permit, they collect fire woods, also, and help in the operation of husking lever.

### Boy's duty

Lisu boys between the age of seven and fifteen are generally engaged in the collection of drinking water, grazing the cattles, to keep and carry small children. They also assist their father in different works, besides attending school.

### Girl's duty

Girls of the same age as that of the boys' mentioned



above are mainly engaged in the collection of fodder for bulls, cows, and pigs from the forest, besides attending school. Seve- ring of paddy grains is their main duty. They also keep and carry small children and also assist their mother.

### General Routine of Work

A Lisu couple rises very early in the morning, wife first lits the fire, then begins to prepare foods while husband does minor household work. After taking the food, they go to forest together, where they work whole day. While returning in the eve- ning or in the afternoon wife brings fodder for bulls, cows and pigs, and husband carries firewoods. Reaching home they clean themselves by water. Wife cooks food, and husband does a little bit of household works, taking the food they go to sleep, before going to bed, wife does the job of weaving or knitting for a while. This is generally the routine life of the Lisu, additional works are performed according to their suitability.

### Livestock

The Lisu rear cows, bulls, buffaloes, goats, dogs and fowls. Buffaloes and bulls are reared for ploughing as well as domestic consumption. They rear cows only for meat. The Lisu do not take milk, one or two families started using milk with tea. The Lisu never eat the meat of dog, dog-guard the Lisu house and render help in hunting games. Pigs, chickens and fowls are reared for consumption in the family as well as in social occasions. The Lisu, specially the women, nurture and rear pigs with utmost care, its meat is very dear to the Lisu.

## Household

Lisu households (Chohi) are the units of production consumption. Each household is composed of two aspects; consumers and producers. Some members of the household consume but do not produce, for example old people and children<sup>2</sup>; others both consume and produce. Following Durrenberger (1979) Chohi can be broken into two figures; one measure the number of workers; the other the number of consumers. Adults eat more than children, therefore an adult working male can be counted as the standard of consumption and call him one consumer unit. It is a general principle of household economics that people work just enough to satisfy their needs. One of the determinants of need is the number of consumer units that must be to feed his share of consumers. Therefore, the amount of work each Lisu worker does should be related to the ratio of consumers to workers (Chayanov:1966). In other words, we divide the number of consumers by the number of workers to find out how hard each Lisu worker must work in order to produce the household's need (Durrenberger, 1969). This completes the discussion on the Lisu economic organisation which falls into the broad category of production-consumption economics. Chayanov and Lenin advanced two different perspectives for the analysis of peasant economies. Emphasizing the dynamic of production unit, Chayanov (1966) argued for an understanding based on description and the analysis of the operation of household production. Lenin (1972), on the other hand, insisted on the necessity and primacy of structural analysis to show relations among classes and other features of rural economic system in which household units are enmeshed. While Chayanov focussed on

the motivations of producers in households, Lenin considered constraints external to the household production unit to be primary. This has led to an enduring argument as to which view is correct (Patnaik:1979). Durrenberger (1979) concludes that neither is sufficient, that both are necessary for the proper understanding of peasant economies. Lisu materials support the view of points of Durrenberger. A description of economics life can depart from one of two complementary vantage points. The system of relationships within which individual household, or other production unit decisions are made, or the dynamic of decision making within a structure of relationships. The distinction is the same as between social structure and organisation. Taking the latter viewpoint, one describes the way choices are made in terms of available alternatives. From the former perspective, the structure of alternatives available is central. The consequences of current choices provide the contexts for future decisions. The Lisu economic organisation does not concern the importance of market as it is yet to be developed in the Lisu area.

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## CHAPTER - 5

### L I F E   C Y C L E   R I T E S

The ritual performance associated with life-cycle i.e. from birth to death may be defined as life cycle rites or rite-de-passage. The performance of these rites varies from ethnic group to ethnic group and it solidifies or strengthens the ethnic identity. Right from the day a Lisu is born, he or she goes through various ritual performances as a result of which <sup>or she</sup> he is accepted into various roles or statuses like that of an adult or a husband or a wife in course of his or her life. A Lisu is born a social being, he or she attains sociality by going through the performances of rites or rituals. This is actually a process of refinement. The life of the Lisu from birth to death is actually surrounded by different taboos, rituals, and sacrifices etc.

#### Conception and Pregnancy

The Lisu know the biological or physiological cause of conception. But they do not believe that sexual intercourse always follows conception. They ascribe the cause of conception to their god named Phula. Blessing of Phula is essential for becoming a mother. A physically fertile Lisu woman may not become a mother unless she is showered with the blessing of Phula. A sterile Lisu woman is considered unlucky because she is deprived of the blessing Phula. Generally, no pre-birth ritual is performed by the Lisu, but the movement of pregnant woman is restricted by the different taboos and works. These are as follows:

- i) During the period of pregnancy a Lisu woman should not visit the place where the evil spirits or ghosts are supposed to reside.
- ii) She should not visit the place where the traps are set up for hunting animals, birds and fishes.
- iii) She should not cross-over the fishing net (shague) and arrow (chey), straight scythe (atha) etc.
- iv) It is a taboo to cross over the rope by which the pig, goat or cow is tied upon.
- v) She is debarred from taking the things which are bitter in taste (khaosha).
- vi) She should not carry heavy load.
- vii) She should not fall on the ground by any means.

The belief behind all these taboos is that they help in the successful delivery, otherwise, as per their belief the woman will definitely get troubles like serious pain, abortion, deformed baby, delay in delivery etc.

### Birth

Generally delivery or the birth of a child takes place in the husband's house. For delivery, a room is selected where the pregnant woman stays. Delivery is attended by the women only. In every Lisu village, there are a few women who specialise as delivery nurses named Jhojasu. When the labour pains start, Jhojasu is informed. Mother of the pregnant woman also attends

and generally stays with her daughter. No male members including the husband are allowed to enter the delivery room. The technique of delivery varies from one Jhojasu to another- depending upon the nature of the case. In some case the woman is made to lie down on her back with her knees folded when the Jhojasu exerts pressure on the abdomen. Sometimes, the woman is asked to kneel down when the Jhojasu exerts pressure on her back. When the Jhojasu fails to bring about a successful delivery, the help of Hatofa is sought. Hatofa is a specialist in successful delivery. Hatofa keeps a pig in a bamboo made basket with her neck tied upon by one end of a rope, the other end of which is caught by Hatofa by his left hand. Then he chants thrice some charms in the name of Phula for quick and safe delivery, and thereby sacrifices the pig. If by that time the delivery does not take place, the whole process is repeated twice as a last resort. Then it is left entirely on the mercy of Phula. The woman may deliver a child after a few days struggle or may die. No payment is made either to Hatofa or to Jhojasu, but they are provided with one or two meals sometimes. After a successful delivery, the umbilical cord is cut with a sharp knife (Athali) or sharp bamboo splinter (wachuphi) by Jhojasu, then it is buried in the courtyard together with the placenta. The baby is washed with warm water by the Jhojasu. The underlying belief is that warm water helps the baby in proper urination. Immediately after the delivery mother is given hot boiled rice fried with hog's fat. She is also given rice beer, and chicken soup. After the delivery mother is kept lying beside the fire for three days. The baby is given mother's milk after two or three days when begins

to cry. Up to three days of birth no outsider is allowed to see the baby or the mother. If anybody violates this rule is required to present articles to the new born and the mother. After the delivery, the Lisu husband is required to lead a very careful life for the welfare of both baby and mother. Immediately after the delivery, it is a taboo to a Lisu husband to cross a river, to fell a tree and to crack a bamboo or a wooden log. It is one of the foremost duty of a Lisu husband, since the period of four or five month's of conception to collect 40 to 100 chickens and feed them carefully. Number of chickens to be reared depends upon the economic capability of a husband. From the third day of delivery each meal of the mother is provided with chicken curry. This continues for two or three months. Meal is prepared by her husband with utmost care and she is always provided with warm fresh food. From the date of delivery up to two or three months a Lisu mother gets complete rest and her health improves so much that she looks young and beautiful after each delivery. The Lisu mother never becomes polluted after the delivery, after three days of delivery she cleans herself, no purification ceremony is observed by the Lisu; so the question of employing washerman and barber does not arise at all in the case of the Lisu. Actually, the Lisu do not have the specialists like washerman and barber. Still birth or miscarriage is attributed to the misbehaviour of the woman who does not obey or follow the taboos in connection with pregnancy. For such happening no ritual is performed, physically handicapped or deformed baby is attributed to the act of evil spirit (Ni). Such baby is killed immediately after birth and buried in a suitable place, but not in the burial ground;

and sometimes the baby is kept floating without killing in current water of a near by river. Their presence is believed to bring calamities and misfortune to the Lisu.

### Name-giving ceremony

On any day after three days of birth of the baby, a name giving ceremony is performed. Here the consanguineal relatives of baby's father are invited. Name of the baby is given by his or her grand father or mother. Grand father or mother announces a name of the baby before the relatives. A hog is sacrificed on that day. Invitees or relatives are provided with a feast consisting of rice, pork and beer. Then according to suitability, mother with the baby, after two or three month's of birth goes to her parent's house with some presentations and remains there for some days. There also a ceremony observed where the relatives of the mother's side are invited.

No feeding ceremony is performed by the Lisu. When the baby begins to cut the teeth, mother put some solid food to the mouth of the baby after chewing them properly. No fixed day or time is selected for the purpose, mother does it according to her suitability.

The Lisu do not believe in birth control, and they do not use any contraceptive for the purpose. They consider birth control a kind of genocide and vehemently oppose it. It is one of their foremost sacred duty to increase their population or fellow beings rather to procreate as many children as possible. The Lisu do not believe in rebirth of their ancestors, and there is no system of preparing the horoscope of the babies born to



the Lisu. Preference of male or female child varies from one family to another in the Lisu community. In general both sexes of children are equally preferred in the Lisu community. A Lisu mother prefers female baby only to get an extra helping hand in her daily work, and similarly a Lisu father prefers a male baby to get assistance in his work. Inspired by the same reasoning, a Lisu father wants first born to be a male and a Lisu mother prefers first born to be a female.

The term Diza is used for the baby born of extra-marital <sup>What</sup> relation. Mother of such baby is looked down upon by the Lisu, <sup>it means</sup> and she loses all her social dignities, statuses and values. In short, such mother and baby lose all types of identities with the Lisu.

#### Child care and rearing

A great care is taken to protect a Lisu baby from the clutches of evil spirits. A Lisu baby is never left alone. One is always deputed to remain with the baby. It is believed by the Lisu that the spirit cannot do any harm to the baby in presence of human beings. Lisu children are brought up or reared by the process of swaddling. When children stop suckling mother's milk, they are left to <sup>the</sup> care of old males or females or young boys or girls or older children. It is the foremost duty of the older Lisu children to look after the small children. As a Lisu child gets old enough to follow or understand a fact or a work, training is given in accordance with the sex of the child. A female child is given training to all the household work done

by mother for example, how to lift a baby, how to fetch water, how to prepare fodder, how to lit and treat fire with proper caution, how to address relatives and behave with the seniors etc. Similarly, a male child gradually gets training to all the works of father, for instance, how to prepare a bow and arrow and how to use them, how to use knives, straight scythes and axes with proper caution, how to fell a tree, how to hunt a game, how to clear up bushes etc. No puberty rite or ceremony is observed by the Lisu, although, puberty for girls means the beginning of adult life and more responsibility. When a Lisu girl has her first menses or first menstruates, her mother gives her all sorts of training for treating the menses, and the fact is kept very secret. If any third person knows about her first menses it is considered derogatory for the concerned family. It is for this reason, the Lisu girls, after their first menstruations, try to behave as normal as possible, although they become very much conscious of their behaviour after the incidence<sup>t</sup>. of Incidence nose piercing is rare, but the custom of ear piercing is common, specially among the female Lisu, and no ceremony is performed for the event. Piercing of ear is done at any stage of development of the female child, according to their suitability. The Lisu girls get first hand knowledge on sex from their mothers when they have their first menses. Besides, they get additional knowledge on sex from their girl-friends who are married already. Similarly, the Lisu boys get sex-knowledges from their married friends as well as fathers.

### Premarital and Extra-marital Sex Relations

The Lisu rigidly maintain the rules in matter of sex-relations. They never allow pre-marital and extra-marital sex relations, and much value is set on virginity. Illegal sex relation is a crime in the eye of the Lisu. "Post-marital or extra-marital sex relations are considered greatest crime, next to murder, and never tolerated by the Lisu, and heavy fines in the form of cows, hogs, hens, feast and even cash are imposed upon the concerned party. The Lisu always consider their married and unmarried girls honest, dutiful and faithful to their parents and husbands. It is the general belief, though there may be exceptions, that Lisu women, both married and unmarried, can never do such works or indulge in such behaviour which go against the name and fame of their parents and husbands. Accordingly to their opinions, it is the male folk of the Lisu who compel the female folk in indulging illegal sexual intercourse. If, by chance, such type of sex relation is detected, enormous fines are imposed only upon the male Lisu who are thought to be the culprits or wrong doers. The male wrong doer is required to give fines to the parents as well as husbands if the concerned girl is married; and only to the parents if ~~the concerned girl~~ is unmarried. For instance, in pre-marital sex relation when both are unmarried, the boy is required to give fines in accordance with the demand of the girl's parents if the boy refuses to marry the concerned girl; and it often becomes very difficult to get a husband for the girl. Even if the boy agrees to marry the girl, still then, the boy is bound to give fines,

though less in quantities, to the girl's parents. When a married woman or a wife indulges in sex relation with an unmarried or married man, as usual, her husband will demand fines from the concerned male. But if a wife is detected as guilty in post or extra marital sex relation, which is a rare phenomenon, she may be divorced immediately or otherwise father is to give heavy fines to her husband and a grand feast to the relatives of her husband for the re-acceptance of his daughter as wife. And if a Lisu wife is found guilty in sex-relation with a male outside the community, her husband may not hesitate to kill her if caught red-handed. Incidentally, one such case happened at village Gandhigram about five years ago, when a Lisu husband killed her wife who committed sexual offence with a Nepali labourer who managed to escape. The Lisu husband was sent to jail by Circle Officer, Vijaynagar for four years. At present, after Christianisation, all these ways of imposing fines for violating the rules in regard to sex relation have more or less been left over by the Lisu. Such cases are now mostly decided upon by church-priest called mafa who keeps Bible on the head of the concerned male and female requesting to take oath and confess guilty. If anybody does otherwise, he or she will be punished by Lord Jesus Christ in due course; and according to their belief nobody can avoid that punishment.

### Divorce

The traditional Lisu society used to permit divorce in a very rare case. That is divorce is permitted but it is not common. Because of its internal adjustment or mechanism divorce

does not occur frequently among the Lisu. Adultery, barrenness, elopement, incompatibility of temperament etc. are regarded by the Lisu as the reasons for divorce. Adultery rarely leads to divorce, because, if detected, the case of adultery is settled by paying requisite compensation or fines to the concerned party. If a married girl elopes with another man married or unmarried, divorce is inevitable. In that case, her father will have to pay enormous fines- thirty cows, thirty pigs, thirty types of household articles, and a grand feast to her husband as well as husband's relatives. In case of barrenness and other sex maladies, spouse is allowed to marry again. Temperament of Lisu spouse is seldom incompatible for leading to divorce. After embracing Christianity, as stated early, the Lisu marriage has attained the merit of religious sacrament as a result of which they never encourage the dissolution of marriage. Whatever may be reasons, a divorce comes about only after the decision of the chouw or head priest who carefully goes into all aspects and details of the case before giving his verdict. At the time of dissolution of marriage it is customary for both the divorcee and the divorcer to appear before the chouw with their relatives. When a divorce is socially permitted by the chouw, the divorcer (divorce-suiter) is required to bring one cup of rice beer called majasapi and drinks it with the divorcee at a time from the same cup, and then the empty cup is permanently offered to the divorcee which indicates final separation.

#### Necessity of Marriage (emic view)

According to Lisu belief marriage is an imperative need to the procreation of offsprings for the continuance of their

generation rather human generation. As per their views, life becomes perfect and complete only by the performance of marriages. Life is comparable to a coin. Male comprises one side and female other side of that coin. In other words, male is one half and female is other half of one life unit. Life blooms fully or develops completely only when male and female combine or unite biologically, economically, psychologically and culturally.

The Lisu consider themselves rather all human beings, like plants and animals, muds and stones, water and air, a part of nature. To get marriage and to procreate children is also a part of nature. Nature itself arranges it for the continuation of life. Plants breed, birds and animals procreate, following the same natural law or phenomena men and women live together and procreate offsprings. One of the fundamental duties of the Lisu is to marry and also to arrange marriage for their progenies. The Lisu always desire to increase their population and they could fulfil that desire only by performance of marriage.

### New Roles After Marriage

Almost all the Lisu marriages are associated with the setting up of a new and separate establishment. After marriage, the most vital role of the new couple as husband and wife is to build a new house rather to establish a new chohi. In building a new house, relatives come forward with their helping hands to the couple but the main responsibility lies with the couple which is equally shared by husband and wife. The Lisu couple starts their conjugal life in the newly built house (Hi) which

is affected with the change of residence from patrilocal to neolocal. Change of residence for the couple means the beginning of new life and new responsibilities, the end of careless gossiping and companionship. They become very much conscious of their new roles as husband and wife, their marital statuses. All the household activities are performed by them in accordance with the knowledge or experience acquired from their parental house. In actual practice, newly married girls perform household and agricultural tasks identical with those of their husbands. After marriage the Lisu boys and girls participate together in their own household affairs. For examples, the newly married couple go to the agricultural field, forest, fishing etc. together and also return together. Similarly, they go to shopping together, they eat together, they sleep together. With all these joint endeavours, the Lisu settle down to increase their value as husband and wife. In short, a newly married Lisu woman's life is lived in the sweet company of her husband and vice-versa. Husband is her only associate. As a result, the couple interact in a narrow social sphere. According to suitability, the couple invites their parents to a meal who advise them in their day today household affairs. After marriage, a great change is perceptible in the couple's behaviour with regard to their father-in-laws and mother-in-laws. The couple must treat their father-in-laws and mother-in-laws with great care, respect and submissiveness. The couple always obeys their parents and does not hurt or insult them. There is no expectation of conflict between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law as they live in separate household. Still then,

an insolent daughter-in-law is no more tolerated than an insubordinate daughter or niece. After marriage, the young Lisu couple, specially the young wife is surrounded by few taboos, most of which are prohibitions against certain activities and behaviour. For instance, young wife should never utter the actual names of her husband, father-in-laws and mother-in-laws; she should never quarrel with her relatives, specially with her affinal relatives. At her first pregnancy as well as her first child's birth, a Lisu woman gets a certain amount of social prominence when relatives arrive frequently, cut jokes, make remarks.

#### A Case Study of Lephecha (Marriage) Ceremony

In Lisu language, 'le' means band and 'phecha' means unite or combine. Literally, lephecha means union or unification of ~~hands~~. But symbolically, it means union or unification of physical body, mind and soul. In other words, lephecha is a new type of marriage which takes place with religious solemnization following the marriage rules laid up or formulated in the Bible. These rules have been modified by the Lisu in compliance with the ecological, political and social environments or set ups.

#### Selection of Bride or Bridegroom

In lephecha, the Lisu boys and girls are at liberty to choose or select their mates. Parents have little say in this matter. Only physically mature boys and girls are allowed to choose each other. As stated early, the Lisu of different places or areas are destined to live in one place or area i.e.



Gandhigram as a result of this new pattern of residence, the Lisu boys and girls get ample opportunity to observe each other in all spheres of life. Intelligency, physical fitness and working capacity of both the boys and girls are generally the primary criteria attributed for selecting mates. Physical beauty, back-ground of the family, rich or poor, and age are secondary considerations for the selections. A junior boy may select a girl senior in age.

### Restriction

By general rule, marriage is confined within the community itself. A Lisu girl or boy is restricted to marry a Lisu boy or girl who is Christian by religion. Village or clan or lineage endogamy is never a bar to the Lisu. But, they are never allowed to marry within the range of three generations from father's side. The Christian Lisu never allow the marriage of a boy and a girl who are already in love with each other. This is considered an act of insult to the members of the Deacon, who are held responsible to arrange marriage for the young Lisu boys and girls.

### Mediator and the Fixation of Date

A committee consists of ten members or clergymen of the church is called Deacon or Mijifa. The Lisu term- Mijifa is also used to designate an individual member of the committee. One of the functions of this committee is to arrange marriage for the young Lisu girls and boys. Mijifa acts as a mediator or a negotiator for the Lisu marriage. When Lisu boys and girls

attain the age of marriage which generally varies from sixteen (16) to twenty (20) years of their growth, they are asked by their parents to name a boy or a girl of their choice. Or, sometimes they themselves express opinion to their parents to marry a particular boy or girl. This getting the name, father of the concerned boy or girl calls for two or three Mijifas in his house and conveys or communicates the decision or desire of his marriageable girl or boy to them. Mijifas are entertained with raw tea, boiled eggs, boiled potatoes etc. Sometimes, a letter written by his daughter or son addressed to the preferred boy or girl is also handed over to the Mijifas. Then Mijifas meet the parents of the concerned bride or bridegroom and have necessary discussion on marriage, and deliver the letter to the bride or bridegroom. If the bride or bridegroom agrees to the proposal thus communicated lephecha may take place, otherwise not. Sometimes, a marriageable boy directly writes to a preferred girl and vice-versa. Minimum two weeks are required to settle a lephecha. Actual date and time of marriage ceremony is fixed by the parents of the bridegroom which is communicated in due course to the parents of the bride by a Mijifa.

#### Description of Marriage Ceremony

Lephecha is performed during the period from November to March every year, because of the less pressure of agricultural and other household works. Here is a description of lephecha ceremony based on direct observation. At Gandhigram, at 8.30 A.M. the church's bell rings continuously for three minutes. On hearing the bell the bride's (melema) parents with relatives, the bride

with one girl friend as helper (melechochu) and the concerned Mijifa enter the church (Wakhuhi) and sit down on the wooden bench on the left side of the hall. Then, after a while, the bridegroom's parents with relatives, the bridegroom (melefa) with one boy friend as helper (melechochu) come and sit down on the wooden bench on the right side of the hall. Then, invitees, in batches enter the church and sit on the place marked (back benches) for them. Inside the church, sitting pattern is based on sex. Left side is meant for males while the right is for females. Head priest (Mafa) and the members of the church committee sit on dias who generally arrive well before scheduled time. Then begins the general marriage song as well as prayer for the happy occasion. Relevant chapters of the Bible are then read out and explained to the would be couple by the head priest emphasizing the significance of marriage, importance of the relationship between husband and wife etc. After that, actual marriage song meant for the bridegroom is sung. On hearing that song, bridegroom with the helper comes and stands near the dias; by hearing similar type of song, bride with the helper comes and stands near the dias. If more than one marriage ceremonies are performed in the same day, the couple whose marriage has been settled first come to the dias first for completing or observing the necessary marriage rituals. Following the same rules marriage rituals for the rest of the couple are performed by them. In this particular case, two marriage ceremonies occur at the same day. After their arrival on the dias, in order to verify

their opinion, engaged couple are asked by the presiding priest (Mafa) of the marriage ceremony whether they are ready to accept or they have already accept one another as their life long partner or not. When positive reply comes from them ~~§~~.i.e. when they say 'yes' which is again supported or confirmed by the relatives of both the bridegroom and the bride who attend the marriage ceremony at the church. Then they are directed to clasp their right hands. Holding their hands, Mafa prays to God for their happy conjugal life, when prayer songs are sung by the members of the deacon. Then both the married couples with their helpers come out and stand at the gate of the church and all the out-going members shake hand with the newly married couples, women shake hand first. This ends marriage rituals or ceremony which is completed within two hours.

The newly married couples, the helpers, the relatives and all the invitees walk to the residence of the bridegroom's parents where they are entertained with food and drinks. Just before entering the premises all the participants in marriage ceremony are served, specially the invitees, with milk by the young beautiful Lisu boys and girls in fresh bamboo tubes called (adeythu) instead of raw tea (without sugar and milk) which is the general practice. They enter premises drinking milk, and are guided to sit down on the chairs and benches specially arranged for the non-Lisu invitees. As soon as they settle down on their seats, rice cakes fried in dalda (vegetable oil) are served to them in a kind of leaf placed on the tables. Immediately after this, food is served to them in packets made of leaves (look like ginger's leaves) collected from the forest. Two packets are

supplied, one is big and the other small. Big one contains cooked rice, and the small one contains chicken or pork or beef. Chicken is meant only for the invitees who do not take pork or beef. Boiled vegetable curry of cabbage is directly served on to the table. Rice to be consumed in the marriage ceremony is cooked separately in the house of near relatives both affinal and consanguineal. Rest of the food items are prepared by turn at one place. After taking the food only three non-Lisu invitees (myself and two from Assam Rifle) offer presentations to both the married couples. The feasting ceremony continues upto late evening. Later on, within 8 O'clock in the night all their relatives disperse to the respective residences. Then as prescribed in the Bible a marriage certificate called Lephecha-thogu is signed by the newly married couples, their parents, Mijifas, Melechochus (helpers) and the Mafa who presides the marriage ceremony. Then after few days, the names of the newly married couples are entered into the marriage register of the church.

After staying two or three days with her husband at her father-in-law's house, the new wife with her husband pays a visit to her parents' house for two or three days.

### The Invitees

Since this is a wedding ceremony of two rich bridegrooms who are bosom friends and employed as jawans (young men) in Assam Rifles, posted at Joyrampur, all the Lisu inhabitants of the village Gandhigram including the affinal and consanguineal relatives of the couples are invited to attend the ceremony. Besides, eight jawans from Assam Rifles posted at Gandhigram,

all the teachers and the students of Gandhigram M.E.School, after taking the attendance of all the classes, school is declared closed on the marriage day; the employees (three persons only) of Central Public Works Department and all the Arunachal Pradesh Police men stationed at Gandhigram get invitation in this marriage ceremony. Circle Officer (with family) and head clerk of Vijaynagar circle also attend the marriage ceremony as special invitees. All these non-Lisu invitees are hailed from different states- Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bengal, Bihar, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh of India.

### Dress

After Christianization, wearing of suits, coats and long pants is very common among the literate male Lisus. Similarly, female Lisus wear modern skirts, blouse and lungis. But they never forget to wear their traditional dresses during the time of marriage ceremony though marriage takes place in the church in accordance with the rules of Christian marriage. In this case, bridegrooms wear betsi-jala (like over coat) over the chito-betsi (like shirt) which is wrapped by a kind of belt called ye-jihu. Likewise, brides wear chito-betsi (skirt), chidu (jacket), yegaw (loose peticoat) along with traditional ornaments like wulu (head ornament), lewo (big necklace of stones beads), lewu-Lewu (small bead-necklace) and woaja (conch discs necklace). In traditional Lisu women's dress and ornaments, there is no difference between the dresses of married women and unmarried girls; between the marriage ceremony and any other social ceremony or occasion or festivals.

### Remark

This marriage ceremony appears like a village festival when every Lisu family participates in merry-making. In other words, one can hardly differentiate between a festival and marriage ceremony when two or more marriage ceremonies take place at a time in the Lisu village.

In present Lisu marriage, there prevails no system of giving presentations to the bride and bridegroom by the Lisu invitees, but non-Lisu invitees have started giving presentations to the newly married couple. The custom of brideprice has been abandoned, but the entire cost of marriage ceremony including feast, drinks etc. is bore by the parents of the bridegroom. Practically, no expenditure is incurred by the bride's parents. Bride's parents may give or may not give some household articles and new clothes to the bridegroom depending upon their economic solvency.

### Old Age and the Lisu Society

One of the most important aims of the Lisu is to produce as many children as possible. Intendment behind the producing of number of issues is that at least one of them will surely look after the Lisu parents at their old age. Lisu society bestows the responsibilities of looking after the old parents upon the youngest son called zadi. In other words, as a sequel to the norm of the Lisu society, the parents at their old age prefer to live with their youngest son. Old men and women command respect from their society. Generally, the Lisu men

and women continue their normal household activities even after the age of fifty five or sixty. After menopause when they are relieved of the burden of child-bearing, Lisu women again turn their attention to the heavy work of the plantations, harvesting, collection of fire woods etc. at par with men. In old age, some Lisu women become mid-wives and pursue their professions till death. As old age approaches women settle down to performing the skilled tasks in the household, to weaving, superintending the children, feeding the cocks and pigs. Similarly, men settle down to preparing bow and arrow, fishing nets controlling the burning fire in the house, guarding the house, giving advice to the young men, and explaining their experience in life to the young generation. The Lisu men and women do not want to live up to the very old age when they are not in a position to participate in any active work.

When a Lisu male is disqualified from active work by disease like rheumatism, typhoid, or general feebleness or by an accident his role as a teacher is diminished. He can teach the aspirant young men the lore of fishing or hunting but not the technique. The old woman on the other hand is mistress of housebound crafts and to her must go the girl who is ambitious to become a skilled weaver. Disabled persons are looked upon sympathetically by the Lisu. The Lisu always extend their helping hands to them both economically and socially rather in all spheres of life. The old Lisu men and women become very much delighted if they could see their actual burial place and the coffin before death.



## Death

Belief as to the cause of death is generally attributed to a natural phenomenon. But when a Lisu man or a woman dies due to old age, it is thought to be a natural death, and the cause is imputed to the will of God (Wusa), at present to Jesus Christ. Now they believe that the allotted span of life in this world is over, so Jesus Christ has taken him or her to himself. Death due to prolong diseases, death by accident such as a fall from a tree, drowning, rolling boulders, ferocious animals, etc.; death at pregnancy or at the time of delivery, death of a child, and epidemic death are ascribed to the evil actions of different spirits commonly known as Ni.

## Treatment of the Dead Body

As soon as a man or an woman dies in the Lisu society, death news is immediately communicated to all the affinal and consanguineal relatives. The corpse is kept in the floor of a sleeping room for one day i.e. 24 hours. Just behind the head of the corpse a wooden plank is kept. During this period relatives come to visit the deceased and console the bereaved family. Each male relative brings a cup of rice-beer (kuju) as a last offerings and places it on the wooden plank. A half-dead pig is also offered to the corpse by placing one end of a rope in between the palms, the other end of which is tied on the neck of the pig. The corpse is brought down on the courtyard. On the left side of the corpse's head a basket containing different kinds of foods like rice, meat, pork, fish, egg etc. <sup>are</sup> ~~is~~ kept, another basket containing his or her dresses, bow and arrow in case of male

corpse, and other belongings are kept on the right side of the head. A man called Nibutipha verbally or symbolically directs the corpse to take the foods kept beside. Nibutipha acts as a guide to the corpse's soul which is to reach Mamisumi, the world after death. Taking a bamboo stick in his right hand, Nibutipha depicts or portrays in words the way to Mamisumi. On the way to the world after death, the corpse will subsequently find the plain land, the forest, the high hill and the cloud. Nibutipha then directs the corpse to put his or her legs on the cloud and to hold the cloud. Thus riding on the cloud for some time, the corpse will find the gate(nako) of the house in which <sup>his or her</sup> ~~its~~ soul will remain forever just like his or her ancestors. When the soul of the corpse is believed to reach the gate of the house, Nibutipha suddenly breaks his stick and stops directing the corpse. Then some persons come and catch hold of him, and bring him in a room where he is given sufficient quantity of rice beer. Drinking adequate quantity of rice beer Nibutipha lies down on the floor.

Then a male Lisu carries two baskets to the grave prepared already for the corpse and hang them in a bamboo pole fixed in one side of the grave where the head of the corpse is placed. Head of the corpse is generally placed towards the hills and leg towards the plains.

The dead body is tied upon on a bamboo or a long wooden log by rope and carried to the graveyard by the neck in procession. When the corpse reaches the graveyard, a curtain is made by a blanket, and women and children are asked to stand against it. Then the dead body is washed by water and clad

in a new clothing. If the corpse is of a very old male or a female his or her hairs and nails are trimmed. The body is then placed in a wooden coffin and then all come to see it for the last time. The coffin is then closed and it is carefully examined by striking thrice on the head side and leg side. A ~~arrow is~~ thrown in the sky which is believed to direct the soul of the corpse to the ultimate desination. Grave is then covered with earth, it is swept, then a rough sketch akin to the corpse is drawn upon the grave by earth. The dead body is buried generally after 12 O'clock in the day. Death is mourned for three days,. During the period kin groups do not change their dresses, but no restriction is there in respect of food and drinks. No other ritual is <sup>performed</sup> connected with death.

### Changes

After embracing Christianity, great changes are perceptible in the death rites. Now, after death the Lisu aspire to a communion with Lord Jesus Christ. Now they perform death-rituals in accordance with the Christian traditions, but they still retain some traits of their traditional death-rites.

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A Lisu girl working on her loom.



8. Lisu men and women carrying jungle leaves for roof covering.



9. A Lisu marriage is solemnised in the village church.



10. Small Lisu girls swaddling babies



11. Lisu male twin with



12. Lisu female twin with mother.

## CHAPTER - 6

### S O C I A L   O R G A N I S A T I O N

Social organisation of the Lisu may be defined as a part of the total life process which is concerned with the social activities, relations and behaviour. Social activities and behaviour of the Lisu may be seen through their institutions like family, marriage, clan etc. First, we turn to the discussion of the clan of the Lisu.

#### Clan (chewo)

The Lisu are organised into a number of consanguineal or patrilineal descent groups or clans. But these descent groups of the Lisu do not fully connote the features of a clan defined by the anthropologists. If we call it a clan, we find that the Lisu do not follow clan-exogamy and clan-hierarchy, and the stories connected with the origin of clans are somewhat different. The following clans or descent groups are found to exist among the Lisu.

1. Ngawja or Ngawjafa
2. Jeyja or Jeyjafa
3. Heyja or Heyjafa
4. Jali
5. Meche
6. Leme
7. Nofa or Nopha



8. Fuche
9. Lafufa
10. Dafulu

Out of ~~these~~ ten (10) consanguineal kin groups, the Ngawja, Heyja and Jeyja are said to be the major or original clans of the Lisu and the rest are said to be originated from these major three groups or clans but where and how these later groups rather the subgroups or clans originated they have no clear-cut idea. However, they try to build stories connected with the origin of those groups or subgroups; and the stories go like this:

#### Ngawja

The most dominant clan, dominant in the sense <sup>of</sup> numerical strength, of the Lisu is Ngawja. Ngaw means fish, and 'ja' means man in Lisu language. So the literal meaning indicates their origin from fish. But in all practical purposes, they never interpret their origin from fish. Instead, they explain their origin from a group of people who were experts or efficient in catching fish. It implies <sup>an</sup> occupation. It was believed that people from Ngawja group never failed to get fish while people from other groups may failed to get or catch fish while on fishing. Even today, it is said to be the fact.

#### Jayja

'Jay' means honey. This group of people trace their origin from the people who were experts or efficient in collecting honey from the forest or in cultivating bees for honey or bee-keeping.

Heyja

Hey means mouse. It indicates a group of people who were proficient in catching and eating mouse, and the Lisu who trace their origin from that group are called Heyja or Heyjafa.

Jali

The man lost in wrestling or fighting and then flew away is called Jali. And the Lisu who trace their origin from that man are called Jali. 'Li' means escape also.

Nofa

No means river and fa or pha means man. The Lisu who used to reside or preferred to live near a river called Nofa. Nomilo is a name of a river flowing in China and the people or the Lisu residing near that river are also called Nofa. In addition, people engaged in the cultivation of cereals other than paddy are called Nopha.

Leme

Nobody can give a clear answer about the origin of this group. Cheu or Chesu is the name of a organ attached or situated below the liver of a hog or a pig. It is difficult to make out whether cheu is meant for gall bladder or spleen or pancreas. The colour of cheu (if in good condition) is termed Meme. Meme indicates a colour between grey and brown which has no equivalent word in English. The Leme is thought to be originated from the term- meme; and the people who are expert or proficient in examining or seeing meme, i.e. the colour of the cheu are called

Leme. It is also said that they have some fictitious connections with the species of tiger.

#### Fuche

It is a name of a place in Burma. Some Lisus of the Ngawja clan used to live at Fuche generation after generation; and they were called by the name of Fuchet. Fuche is a sub-group or sub-clan of a Ngawja group.

#### Meche

This is also a sub-clan or sub-group of Ngawja clan. Me- means land levelling and jungle clearing, and che- means name. The Lisu of Ngawja clan who were experts in land levelling or clearing bushes and giving the names of places, man and animals are termed as Meche.

#### Lafufa

This is also a sub-group of Ngawja. It originates from a place called Lafu situated in Burma.

#### Dafulu

Similarly Dafulu is a sub-group of Ngawja. This group originated from a place called Dafu situated in China.

From the above analysis of the origin of the Lisu-clans, it appears that these clans are nothing but occupational groups or categories. These groups of the Lisu actually arise from specialisation in certain spheres of life. Table-2, shows the familywise distribution of the Lisu clans or groups.



TABLE - 2

Family-wise distribution of Lisu-clans or groups:

| <u>Clan/Group</u> | <u>No.of Family or household</u> |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Ngawja            | 99                               |
| Jayja             | 22                               |
| Heyja             | 19                               |
| Nefa              | 13                               |
| Leme              | 11                               |
| Jali              | 9                                |
| Lafufa            | 7                                |
| Fuche             | 6                                |
| Meche             | 6                                |
| Dafulu            | 5                                |
| <hr/>             |                                  |
| Total:            | 197                              |

The Lisu term chowo includes more features than the English term clan does. Cho means men and wo- means bundle. Literally, chowo is a group of people, originated from the same stock of people. They use the term like Lisuwo, Nepaliwo, Assamesewo etc. by which they mean the entire Lisus, the entire Nepalis, and the entire Assamese respectively wherever they may like. So, it will not be justified if the Lisu term 'chowo' is called clan which has no equivalent term in English; but, besides chowo, there is no other term among the Lisu which may be compared with clan. Similarly, the Lisu term shiza-woza may be compared with

the English term lineage. Shiza-woza is used to designate all the kins of male line (husband side) up to infinite number of generation which can be remembered or can not be remembered. People addressed as shiza-woza never live together or in the same place. Whereas in lineage the people generally do. In the same way, the term- Nihwa-Niza is used to designate all the kins of female line (wife's side) up to infinite generation who never live together. As appears from the current investigation, the Lisu do not have the kin group called lineage in the proper sense of the term.

#### The Family (Chohi)

The smallest unit of social life or organisation is the family. The Lisu do not have the term to mean what is meant by the anthropological concept of family. The Lisu have a separate term-chohi which includes family. The Lisu term-chohi means both husband and wife with their children, married and unmarried, the place of living (house, household, home etc.), the livestock, the land properties, the trees i.e. all the movable and immovable properties, they possess. Nuclear and extended types of family are found among the Lisu. Nuclear or the elementary form of family is the most prevalent one, because the Lisu never like joint-living. No two Lisu brothers are found to live in a same family or in the same household. The Lisu prefer the nuclear type of living and dislike the joint type of living for the following reasons:

- 1) Children are not properly brought up because of lack of extra-care in the joint type of living.
- 2) They face difficulties in the cooking and arrangements of food in the large family, large in the sense of many couples.
- 3) To maintain the good relation between the brothers, when new members as wives enter the family there is every possibility of occurring of difference of opinion which may lead to quarrel among the brothers.
- 4) To avoid sexual relation or discussion related with sex in presence of parents or elder brothers. The Lisu parents are held in esteem position with regard to sex. It is a taboo to indulge in sexual act or in discussion in the house where parents live.
- 5) To increase the number of households or chohis.

The first son (male issue) of a Lisu-parents after marriage before any issue, sometimes after an issue, depending upon the uniqueness of the condition of chohi, starts or makes a separate chohi or household which is aided by his parents in all respects (economic, social etc.). Similarly, the second son, the third son, the fourth son and so on except the youngest son makes a separate chohi. The youngest son remains with the parents but in separate quarter or room. The youngest son called jadi is the most lovable and dear one who is to look after or supposed to look after the parents in their old age. Jadi exclusively inherits all the properties (movable and immovable) of a chohi

if the parents are poor. If a Jadi is born to a well-do-do chohi, or parents, other sons of that parents may get minor share of the property, but the major share will be inherited by the youngest son. When these sons leave their parents they offer feast and new clothes to the parents.

According to current investigation, the Lisu like large-size nuclear family or chohi i.e. they prefer large number of siblings; and the average size of the Lisu family is seven (7). The Lisu prefer large-size nuclear family or large number of siblings for the following reasons:-

- 1) They get more working hands if they have large number of siblings <sup>will be</sup> ~~which~~ <sup>are</sup> very helpful in the economic pursuits of the chohi.
- 2) A large size chohi is considered very powerful and the chohi itself feels strong and pride too. The parents having large number of issues are honoured by the Lisu society.
- 3) Small size chohi is looked down upon by the Lisu society.
- 4) The Lisu never bother about the scarcity of food. They are habituated to take any produce of the forest. So they never hesitate to produce large number of offsprings or issues.
- 5) It is the general belief in the Lisu society that parents will get more care in their old age if they have large number of issues. If not all, at least one of the offsprings will surely look after the parents sincerely.

- 6) To increase the Lisu population.

### Functions of Chohi

The Lisu chohi performs all type of functions- economic, biological, religious, political, socialisation etc., necessitated to maintain a human life. Of all these functions economic function is most obvious. This function of chohi is distributed sexwise or between husband and wife. Husband (Hisifa) the head of the chohi, is the in-charge of all outside works required to perform by a chohi. Husband's main function is to construct the dwelling house, to collect household and economic goods, and to deposit them to wife's custody in the house. Once those goods reach in the house, wife becomes all in all in disposing or using them. Even the husband is required to seek permission from his wife while disposing them, specially in the case of rice, paddy. When a husband is required to halt for one or more days in an unknown place, wife arranges everythings for him (food, utensils, clothings etc.) required to stay there, cleaning of the house, household goods and their arrangements in the house are done by the wife. Husband always helps if sought by his wife. Sowing in the paddy fields or in the vegetable gardens is exclusively done by the wife, but the fencing of the garden is done by the husband. Preservation of different kinds of seeds, nursing and caring of children, gathering of foods for hogs and hens are the domain of the Lisu wife. Generally, the heavy works are supposed to be done by the husband and the light works by the wife.

### Ideal Chohi

An ideal chohi is called chojihi in Lisu language. A chohi is considered ideal if its members do not feel any kind of want (material and non material). When the chohi is full of large number of offsprings or issues. When its members do not do any harm to others and warmly receive the guests. When its members do not extol themselves of their richness, never show hot temper and gloomy face to others, and never indulge in quarrel with others. When the chohi always helps the suffering humanity. In short, when its neighbours become very much happy in their dealings with that chohi or they become please with the introvert and extrovert behaviour of that chohi, then only it is called chojihi. In reality, it is difficult to come across such chohi. Still then, the Lisu of Gandhigram are having two such chohis.

### Ideal Relation Between Husband (Hisifa) and Wife (Hisima)

The Lisu consider the relation between husband and wife a life long friendship, a friendship where both husband and wife are considered one having two faces just like a coin. The following behaviour of the Lisu husband and wife are regarded as ideal:

- 1) When there is complete understanding between them, and never involve themselves in any type of quarrelling with anybody.
- 2) None of them should be a miser.

- 3) The couple should not criticise anybody.
- 4) The couple should always move, and work together, a quality very much preferred by the Lisu society.
- 5) When 'cheykhochi' is observed between them. A cheykhochi is a type of behaviour when either of them (husband and wife) comes out of his or her resident on the road to help husband or wife while returning from the field or shares the load carried by husband or wife while returning from the forest at dawn. This, occurs on the road when the incoming partner remains at a considerable distance away from his or her residence. This is considered a very good quality of the Lisu couple and it indicates a good and stable relation between the Lisu couple.
- 6) When the couple equally treats each other's father-in-laws or mother-in-laws, consanguineal or affinal kin-groups in all aspects of social life. In other words, no disparity is noticed in their behaviour with the kin groups (consanguineal and affinal). This type of behaviour is called Somotephuku.
- 7) The couple should not leak out each other's fault or weakness to anybody even to their parents. This sort of behaviour of the Lisu couple is termed Xucha.
- 8) The couple should show respect to elder persons of their own community as well as other community.

Authority in the Lisu chohi is vested in husband. Husband takes the decisions for outside works or matters or the works that do not come directly under the purview of chohi. Decisions for works or any matter inside the chohi are generally taken by the Lisu wife, with the consultation of her husband. Over all domenance of the Lisu husband is the general rule, but Lisu wife also dominates in all the household works or affairs.

No rigid rule is followed by the Lisu to construct house for residence. For the selection of a place for constructing a new house the Lisu sow maize seeds. If the seedlings of the maize come out within the stipulated period, then only the house is constructed, otherwise not. As regards the pattern of dwelling, the old parents stay at the last room or an inside room of the house, and the unmarried sons stay at the entrance or guest room of the house. Every Lisu house has got more than one hearth or fire place. This fire place is situated in the centre of a room. Generally the Lisu sleep on the bamboo woven floor around the fire place.

### Marriage

Non-Christian Lisus consider marriage a civil contract but never a religious sacrament. Therefore, religious solemnization does not take place in Lisu marriage. But after Christianisation, the Lisu marriage has acquired the merit of religious sacrament.

### Forms of Marriage

The following forms of marriage are prevalent among the Lisu:



### 1) Choziwhu (Marriage by capture)

This is a marriage by physical capture. Here the marriageable unmarried girls, sometimes married girls also, are taken away by physical force or are kidnapped by the unmarried youths. This is regarded as an act of gallantry by the Lisu and the concerned youth is aided by a gang of gallant youths in pre-planned way. Afterwards, the case is settled by the chowu by compelling the concerned party to pay requisite compensation or bride price, and a feast to the brotherhood. Then only such marriages by capture get social sanction.

### 2) Chokhi-hokhi (Marriage by elopement)

In this form of marriage, a marriageable girl elopes with a boy from home. This is generally occurred when a boy and a girl falls in love with each other but their parents' consent is not forthcoming for arranged marriage.

### 3) Di (Marriage by Negotiation)

Di is the normal type of marriage by negotiation among the Lisu. This marriage is mainly arranged with the help of a chowu.

### 4) Meleto

In this form of marriage the bridegroom (generally comes from a poor family) is required to live with the girl's parents or family or chohi- permanently. This type of marriage is preferred by the well-to-do parents for getting help in old age who have no other issue than a girl. The Meleto is of two types-

- a) When the girl's parents select the boy keeping in view their own interest.
- b) When the girl herself selects the boy for her own interest and informs the decision to her parents.

#### 5) Muchimahwachu (Widow Marriage)

In this form of marriage, the widow or the widower is allowed to marry again. A widower or unmarried youth can marry a Widowna. In both the cases, the would be husband is required to give 3 cows as brideprice to the parents of the deceased husband and also required to clear up the dues of bride price, if any, to the parents of the widow.

#### 6) Jamufuchey - Palekho (Marriage by Exchange)

It is a marriage by exchange. Here the son of a man marries the daughter of the other and the latter's son marries the former's daughter. This type of marriage is very rare in the Lisu society and prevails only in the very poor families who are unable to pay bride price.

#### 7) Polygyny

This type of marriage is still traceable among non-Christian Lisus. When a married girl fails to produce progeny or becomes insane, or when a husband becomes very rich and can afford to maintain more than one wife, then only the Lisu society allows such type of plural marriage.

### 8) Preferential Marriage

It is said, in good old days, the Lisu preferred to marry their cross-cousins, the widows of their elder brothers (levirate) and the sisters of their deceased wives (sororate).

Every type of Lisu marriage is associated with bride price. In other words, no Lisu marriage can be performed without giving requisite bride price. This bride price mainly consists of number of cows ranging from one to (30) thirty. All types of Lisu marriages are associated with sacrifices (cow or hog), feast, drinks and dance. Except marriage by negotiation, all other Lisu marriages need social sanction. This social sanction or recognition is obtained by paying requisite amount of bride price with the help of the chowu, and by arranging feast, dance and drinks.

#### Description of Di (Negotiation marriage)

Di is actually the marriage by mutual agreement or contract or choice. This agreement or contract occurs between the parents of the bride and bridegroom, in presence of chowu. This form of marriage may occur at three stages of physical growth of the Lisu bride or bridegroom.

- 1) When they (bride and bridegroom) are mere children.
- 2) When they are unmatured boys and girls.
- 3) When they reach marriageable age, or physically mature for marriage.

This marriage agreement comes about in a peculiar manner. Father of the bridegroom appears in the house of the bride's father on any suitable day without the knowledge of bride's father. Concerned father is accompanied by bridegroom, chowu and few young men of the village. Chowu, the most honourable and important man of the Lisu society acts as a mediator and witness of the Lisu marriage. The carrying of the following articles is a pre-condition for the marriage by negotiation (Di).

### 1- Ho

It is a kind of earthen pot which contains five kujus (mugs) of Jiphu (country-liquor). Kuju is made of bamboo. One Ho full of rice beer must be carried to bride's father's house.

### 2. Kachi

It is also a kind of earthen pot which contains twenty five (25) Kujus of Jiphu. Kachi is a must for marriage contract or for the selection of a bride.

### 3. Sajue

It is a collected name of articles presented to bride's father at the time of marriage contract. Sajue includes different types of cooking utensils, hearth, clothes, etc.

Taking the articles mentioned above, the bridegroom's party appears on the door of a bride's parent's house. By seeing them coming bride's father, if present, closes the door of his drawing room and sits down to his bedroom. Then they

(bridegroom's party) open the door and enter the drawing room. Taking rest for a while at the drawing room, Jimufa (when a chowu actually begins to act as a mediator or a judge, is called a Jimufa) meets the girl's father and offers him one kuju of Jiphu. The offering of one cup or mug of country liquor implies the very purpose of their visit. In other words, it indicates that they have come for settling a marriage with his daughter. If the girl's father is not willing, he runs away from the house. And if willing, he will bring a small size hog and let the hog free at the room where the bridegroom's party sits. Hog is then immediately caught by the young men accompanied the bridegroom's party. If they are unable to catch the hog, then there will be no marriage contract. Then the girl's father, when the hog has been caught, brings one big cup of country liquor and keeps it in front of the bridegroom's party. Taking the cup Jimufa pours that the entire quantity of liquor to the left chest of the hog. This is poured in the hope of getting Hwachi (gall bladder) and Hwachu (an organ attached to the stomach of the hog) in good shape and colour. If the required organs are in proper shape and in desired colour, then only the marriage can be held. Then the hog is killed by the helpers (associated young men of Jimufa) and the organs Hwachi and Hwachu are examined and shown to girl's father by Jimufa. If the girl's father is satisfied with the shape and colour of the organs, then he takes that liquor offered by Jimufa. And it is a green signal for marriage contract. In fact, both Jimufa and the girl's father are required to satisfy themselves with Hwachi and Hwachu. They are satisfied with when the organs are not pointed, properly grown, clearly located and

not white or blackish in colour. And if that organs show adverse features, then there will be no marriage and the bridegroom's party leaves the place immediately.

When the girl's father gives green signal of marriage by taking the offered liquor, then by examining the Hwachi and Hwachu very carefully, Jimufa gives marriage names to bride and bridegroom which continue throughout their conjugal life. The girl's father then offers that killed hog to the bridegroom's party for consumption if the presentation articles brought by them are in sufficient quantities. Otherwise a feast is arranged for the bridegroom's party with that killed hog, when the feast is over, bride price is fixed by Jimufa by mutual discussion with the girl's father. Bride's father may also demand presentations for his own brother ~~and father~~. And this presentation is called Jafa. Girl's sister and brother may also get presentations. Generally, cows, cooking utensils and other household goods are given as bride price. When the bride price is fixed, the bridegroom's party leaves the house. The entire proceedings for fixing the bride price and selection of bride may continue for one to three days. And the occasion is termed a Dichi or Dido which means selection of bride or marriage engagement. Marriage's date is fixed according to the suitability of the boy's parents. The date may be fixed three or four months or one year after the Dido. The fixed date is duly communicated to bride's parents by a messenger called Nikhofa. The exact number of persons accompanying the bride's party is communicated to boy's parents through Nikhofa.

### Marriage Day (Wisho)

Marriage day, rather the ceremony observed at marriage day is called wisho. Wisho is marriage day for joy and gaiety accompaniment with feast, drinks and dance.

In this day, relatives of the bride come to bridegroom's house in three batches. First, two men carrying the presentation articles for the bridegroom's come, and they are warmly received at bridegroom's house; food and drinks are served to them. Then come bride's parents with their relatives and lastly the bride accompanying by her girl's friends. They all come on foot. They all assemble in a big room. The bride with her young girl friends sits in one side and the parents with their friends and relatives sit in another side of the room. Just facing the bride, sits the boy with his young male friends. Similarly boy's parents with their relatives and friends sit in a group facing the bride's parents in the same room. Then drinks and boiled arum of different sizes are served to them. Bride's party gets special care. Bride's parents are given arum of big sizes. Then they begin to sing songs, and it is first initiated by bridegroom's party. They sing song in the form of conversation or dialogue; and in a competitive manner just like an Indian Kawali (a variety of vocal music). In the meantime, a kind of food called hwasishu is served to the gents of bride's party. Hwasishu is prepared by mixing hog's blood with goafu (a kind of powder made from an indigenous plants). They really relish hwasishu, and feed each other irrespective of age and sex. Then begins the dance. Young boys and girls, married or unmarried, from both the parties,

dance together whole night. It is considered a work of credit to the dancers of the bride's group if a portion of bamboo woven floor is broken while dancing. The bride and the groom do not participate in dancing, but they drink heavily. It is really a difficult task to stop dancing. Dancing, joking and drinking go together. A variety of drinks is served to the bride's party which entails different styles of drinking. A kind of food called Kamaji consisting of meat, rice etc. is served to the bride's party in the early part of the night. At dawn, the bride's party is again served with food consisting of hog's meat, rice etc. Bride's parents are given a half of hog's brain. This food is served in bamboo-made pots of different sizes. When the taking of this food is nearing completion, young men of bridegroom's party begin dances. After taking that food, the bride's party becomes ready for departure. And before the departure, they are entertained with liquor. The liquor is kept in a big earthen pot and they drink it with the help of a bamboo pipe, by turn. Only the bride, with one of her bosom friends remains in the bridegroom's house. Bride and bridegroom sleep in separate compartments. Then after three or four days, the bridegroom with his bosom friends, the bride with her only friend, leave for the bride's parent's house, and where they are received warmly. Then son-in-law is required to stay in his father-in-law house for one or two weeks. During this period, he has to collect firewood from the jungle and to fill up a store room specially prepared for the purpose. This is done only to verify or test the physical strength of son-in-law. Here also they sleep in separate room. After



spending the stipulated period of time husband with his wife and friend leaves for his own house. The girl's parents, again send some presentations with the couple. Then they live together as Lisu husband and wife. According to my informant this is a very short description of the traditional Lisu marriage, covering main points only. Performance of the Lisu marriage following the old rules is termed chozadi, and the marriage by new rules i.e. Christian rules is termed Lephecha. (see chapter-5).

#### Benefits of Lephecha

The Christian Lisus are very much benefited by this new form of marriage called Lephecha, because of the following reasons:-

- 1) Lephecha completely does away with the traditional system of bride price which was thought to be a headache to the Lisu.
- 2) Any form of demand from any side is disallowed in Lephecha. Concerned party may offer presentations according to capacity or desire.
- 3) This marriage involves minimum expenditures which are considered very helpful to the poor Lisus. In the earlier form of marriage poor bridegrooms used to face difficulties in marriage because of high bride price. Now they have been relieved of that social constraints.
- 4) Boys and girls are given marriage only when they are physically mature.

- 5) In Lephecha, mature Lisu boys and girls have complete freedom to choose their mates, which was never permitted by the old system of marriage.
- 6) Sacrifices of hens, hogs, and cows were allowed only at the time of marriage and other social functions and ceremonies and never for individual consumption. But with the introduction of Lephecha, the Lisu are allowed to sacrifice those animals for individual consumption.

#### Ideal Bride and Bridegroom

The following qualities or characters are attributed to becoming ideal Lisu brides and bridegrooms:

#### Ideal Bride

- 1) A Lisu girl designated to be as an ideal bride should always engage herself in household work as well as work outside house with her mother.
- 2) She should not move alone aimlessly.
- 3) She should always move with her mother.
- 4) She should not sleep with any other family without the prior permission of her parents. If any girl does it, she is termed Hagado, a very bad quality or a name for an unmarried Lisu girl.
- 5) The girl should not lose her temper in any occasion, and should not extol herself of her qualities.

- 6) She should be devoid of greediness of any kind.
- 7) She should ~~take special~~ care for her grand parents.
- 8) The girl should have a good knowledge of weaving. The Lisu boys while selecting a girl for marriage give much emphasis on this quality.
- 9) Cleanliness of her body and mind is also a criterion. She should do her work clearly and neatly.
- 10) Presence of mind, the girl having this quality is called chohti; smartness, bravery etc. are considered greatest qualities of a Lisu girl. It is said, in good old days, the Lisu used to fight constantly with the enemy groups, the girl having those qualities are called Midojoma, were of immense help to the Lisu society.

#### Ideal Bridegroom

The following criteria are attributed for an ideal bridegroom:-

- 1) The young Lisu boy designated to be an ideal bridegroom should always engaged himself in works. In other words, he should never sit idle.
- 2) The boy should never talk loosely to anybody on any occasion. In other words, he should behave courteously to everybody in every occasion.
- 3) The boy should always obey his parents, and should loyal to them. He should be honest in his behaviour and should show kindness to others. The boy having these characters or qualities

(honest, kindness, faithful etc.) is termed choji.

4) Above all, intelligency and boldness of the boy are much counted for becoming an ideal bridegroom.

### Inter-Ethnic Marriage

The Lisu are industrious, enterprising, intelligent, good looking, and economically self-sufficient people. They try to maintain a boundary of their cultural and physical superiority with rest of the ethnic groups living adjacent to them. But, because of the political, ecological, geographical situations and structure of their population, they are not in a position to do so. As a result, inter-ethnic marriages occur, but not always in a normal way, where Lisu girls are married by non-Lisu boys. An ex-army man of Kachari community (Burman) of Assam married a Lisu girl 15 years ago by Lisu rules. He also arranged her niece's marriage with a Lisu boy following Lisu marriage rules 4 years back. They are now completely absorbed in Lisu culture and leading a Lisu way of life. A Bengali boy, employed as a manager at Vijaynagar co-operative store, married a Lisu girl (~~love marriage~~) 3 years ago. That Lisu girl is leading a Bengali way of life. Similarly Nepali boys married Lisu girls, and Lisu boys married Nepali girls. It appears that the process of inter-ethnic marriage has well set in and the Lisu will find difficulties to check it.

### Kinship

During 19th century and early part of 20th century

kinship was the dominant anthropological topic. No social or cultural anthropologist could gain a certificate of competence without demonstrating a command on kinship theory. No text book was thought adequate without some treatment of kinship. Men like Rivers, Kroeber, Radcliffe-Brown, Levi Strauss have made great names in anthropology largely by their publications or contributions on kinship. But since 1970, the year of publication of Rodney Needham's edited book 'Rethinking kinship and Marriage' the luster of kinship-study has been diminished remarkably in the contemporary world anthropology, but not so in Indian anthropology. According to Needham kinship has no value in the analysis of social facts, and it itself does not denote discriminable class of phenomena or a distinct type of theory; its study is an odd-job, may be abandoned altogether. The present study on the kinship system of the Lisu supports the view of Needham's, but not fully. Kinship theories developed so far, may not have relevance with regard to social facts, but kinship terms sometimes, have value in understanding the facts of a society. For example, the kinship term- 'Anyi' means a woman occupying different social statuses like father's elder or younger sister or father-in-law's elder or younger sister, mother's elder or younger brother's wife, or mother-in-law's elder or younger sister. The Lisu can marry with the siblings of the 'Anyi' of mother or mother-in-law's side, but never with the siblings of the Anyi of father or father-in-law's side.

The Lisu kinship terminological system may be designated as classificatory. Because, the Lisu use the same term of designation

for more than one relatives affinal as well as consanguineal, lineal and collateral. For instance, the Lisu put father's father, mother's father, father-in-law's father and mother-in-law's father in one category or class called apaa. That is, the term apaa is used to address all the males contemporary to grand father. The Lisu classify their kin term on the basis of generation, sex, age and affinity. In other words, the Lisu kin terms differ in accordance with sex, age, generation and affinity. As indicated, all the males belonging to the generation of grand father is called appa. The term aji is used to denote the elder girls of father's elder or younger sister; nima for younger girls of father's elder or younger sister. Here the Lisu terms differ according to age. Again, the terms Kachofa and Kachoma are used to differentiate the male siblings and female siblings of father's elder or younger sisters. The Lisu kinship terminological system is an independent system. The Lisu do not have the terms for reference. The Lisu terms of address and terms of reference are same. The following are the Lisu terms of address with English equivalents, as recorded in the current investigation:-

| <u>Lisu Terms of Address</u> | <u>English Equivalent</u>                          |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Aha                          | Father                                             |
| Ama                          | Mother                                             |
| Hisma                        | Wife                                               |
| Hisifa                       | Husband                                            |
| Aji                          | Elder sister                                       |
| Nyima                        | Younger sister, father's older brother's daughter. |

|              |                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ayee         | Elder brother                                                                                                                                 |
| Niza         | Younger brother                                                                                                                               |
| Owfa         | Father's elder brother                                                                                                                        |
| Awo          | Father's younger brother,<br>Mother's elder or younger<br>sister's husband.                                                                   |
| Awu          | Father-in-law, Mother's elder<br>or younger brother, father's<br>elder sister's or younger<br>sister's husband.                               |
| Heja or Heza | Husband's elder or younger<br>brother.                                                                                                        |
| Hema         | Husband's elder or younger<br>sister; wife's elder or<br>younger sister.                                                                      |
| Jepa         | Wife's elder or younger brother,                                                                                                              |
| Oma          | Mother's elder sister.                                                                                                                        |
| Mayo         | Mother's younger sister; father's,<br>younger brother's wife.                                                                                 |
| Mewu         | Younger sister's husband,<br>Elder sister's husband,<br>Mother's brother's daughter's<br>husband;                                             |
| Mala         | Elder brother's wife, younger<br>brother's wife, father's sis-<br>ter's son's wife, (new rule)<br>mother's brother's sons wife<br>(new rule). |
| Japa         | Dauthter's father-in-law or<br>Son's father-in-law.                                                                                           |

|              |                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jayama       | Son's mother-in-law; daughter's mother-in-law.                                                                                                                                         |
| Anyi         | Mother's elder brother's wife<br>Mother's younger brother's wife.<br>Father's elder sister<br>Father younger sister<br>Mother-in-laws younger sister.<br>Mother-in-law's elder sister. |
| Owma         | Father's elder brother's wife.                                                                                                                                                         |
| Chaba        | Wife's elder sister's husband.<br>Wife's younger sister's husband.                                                                                                                     |
| Apaa         | Father's father.<br>Mother's father.                                                                                                                                                   |
| Aya          | Mother's mother<br>Father's mother<br>Mothers-in-law's mother.                                                                                                                         |
| Lipa         | Son's son.                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Lima         | Daughter's daughter.                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Aphi         | Grand father's father                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Ayaphi       | Grand father's mother                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Lipaphi      | Grand son's son                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Limaphi      | Grand son's daughter.                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Sama         | Mother's brother's daughter                                                                                                                                                            |
| Saja or Saza | Son-in-law.                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Kacho        | Mother's brother's son<br>Father sister's son<br>Mother brother's daughter's husband, simply friends.                                                                                  |



|         |                                                                                 |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Kachoma | Father brother son's wife.<br>Father sister's son's wife.                       |
| Kachofa | Father sister's son.                                                            |
| Thinu   | Father's elder brother's son,<br>mothers elder sister's son,<br>simply brother. |
| Ma      | Female gender.                                                                  |
| Fa      | Male gender.                                                                    |

There is slight difference in the kinship terminology of the plain dwelling Lisu and the hill dwelling Lisu. The Lisu living in the plains use the term- Sipha for husband, whereas the Lisu living in the hills call husband Hisifa. Then with the passage of time the meaning of some Lisu terms have undergone changes. For example, the term 'Kacho' was used to denote mother's brother's daughter's husband, father's sister's daughter's husband etc. but at present, they use the term 'Mewu' to denote mother's brother's daughter's husband and father's sister's daughter's husband. Similarly, term 'mala' is used in place of 'Kachoma' to designate mother's brother's son's wife, and father's sister's son's wife. The Lisu use the same kin terms of address for persons, not related to them, of their own community as well as outside the community, as they use for their own relatives. The terms of address depend upon the criteria on sex and age of the concern persons. As for example, a person of father's age is addressed as 'Aba', and of mother's age as 'Ama', of uncle's age 'Awo' and so on. Guest of their own community as well as

outside the community is addressed as weza. The term 'Lay' is used to welcome the guest or relatives coming from a long distance, and the term Achibigi is used for the departing guest or relatives ~~or~~ a farewell term. The word 'Kalay' is also a welcoming term. But it is used for the people of the same village who for a short while, or temporarily visit a family or 'chohi'. The term- Thogubofa has been used by the Lisu to address the present investigator. Thogubofa means a writer or a research scholar. The word- yebay is used to denote the people who come from outside and settle with the Lisu. It may be equivalent, with the English term refugee. The word 'Masuoshi' means unknown. Masuoshichoja means an unknown person, and 'Masuoshichokha' means an unknown village.

### The Terminological System

For proposing or establishing the Lisu kinship terminological system as a separate or independent system, let us have a brief comparative and critical analysis of the world's recognised kinship systems based on cousins, siblings and how ego addresses his relations. These kinship terminological systems are:

- i. The Eskimo or American System.
- ii. The Hawaiian System
- iii. The Iroquois System
- iv. The Omaha System
- v. The Crow system and
- vi. The Suddanese System

In the Eskimo system, all parallel and cross cousins are equated, and differentiated from siblings. But in the proposed

Lisu system all cousins (parallel and cross) are never equated with the siblings, the Lisus have separate terms for the cousins.

In the Hawaiian system, we find that siblings terms are extended to all cousins, but in the Lisu system, the sibling terms are extended to the parallel cousins only.

In the Iroquois system, all parallel cousins are equated with the siblings and cross-cousins are differentiated from the siblings and in parental generation, Mo and MoSi get one term, and Fa and FaBr get one term. But in the proposed system, in the parental generation, each man and woman get separate term.

Every kin gets one term, and there is complete distinction between siblings and cousins in the Suddanese type of kinship terminology. In the Lisu system, as we have hinted, every kin does not get one separate term.

Similarly, in both the crow and Omaha system, parallel cousins are equated with the siblings. But difference is this in Crow system we find FaSiSo = Fa, FaSiDa = FaSi, MoBrSo = So, MoBrDa = Da; and in Omaha system we find FaSiSo = Ne, FaSiDa = Ni and MoBrSo = MoBr, MoBrDa = Mo. Now let us have a look at the proposed Lisu system.

- 1) Here all the parallel cousins are equated with the siblings i.e. the Lisu use the same terms for all parallel cousins and the siblings, and the terms differ with respect to sex and age. For example, ego's elder sister and ego's FaBr or

MoSi elder daughter have got one term- aji, and the term 'nima' is used for designating ego's younger sister and FaBr or MoSi younger daughter; similarly, the term- ayi is used for addressing ego's elder brother and ~~ego's elder brother~~ and ego's FaBr or MoSi elder son, and the term niza is used for ego's own younger brother as well as for all younger parallel cousins brothers. Again, for all the parallel cousins, the Lisu use a common term thinu irrespective of sex and age.

ii) Cross cousins are differentiated from the siblings. Ego addresses all the cross-cousins by the same term-Kacho, the term differs on the basis of sex only. For example, Kachofa is used for FaSiSo or MoBrSo, and Kachoma is addressed to FaSiDa or MoBrDa.

iii) In ego's parental generation, MoSi and FaBrWi get one term- mayo, and the term awo is used for FaBr and MoSiHu, the term anyi is for FaSi and MoBrWi, the term awu is addressed to both MoBr and FaSiHu.

iv) In the Lisu system, each woman- Mo, MoSi and FaSi in the parental generation gets one separate term i.e. ama, mayo and anyi respectively. No doubt, here all the collaterals are bifurcated or distinguished, but it differs from bifurcate collaterals in that here MoSi and FaBrWi are merged together for one term- Mayo, and similarly FoSi and MoBrWi are merged together for one term 'anyi'.

# "THE LISU TYPE OF KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY"

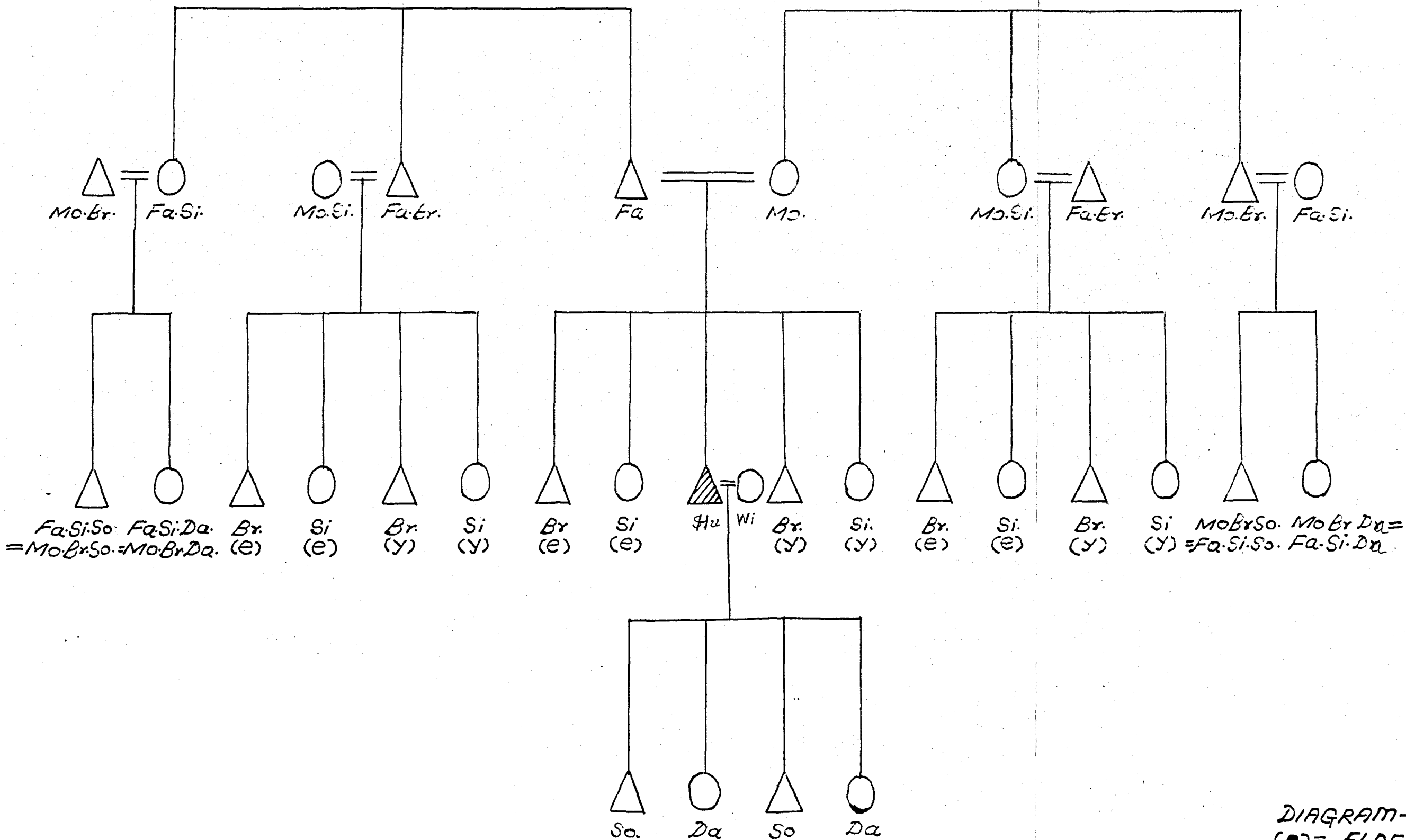
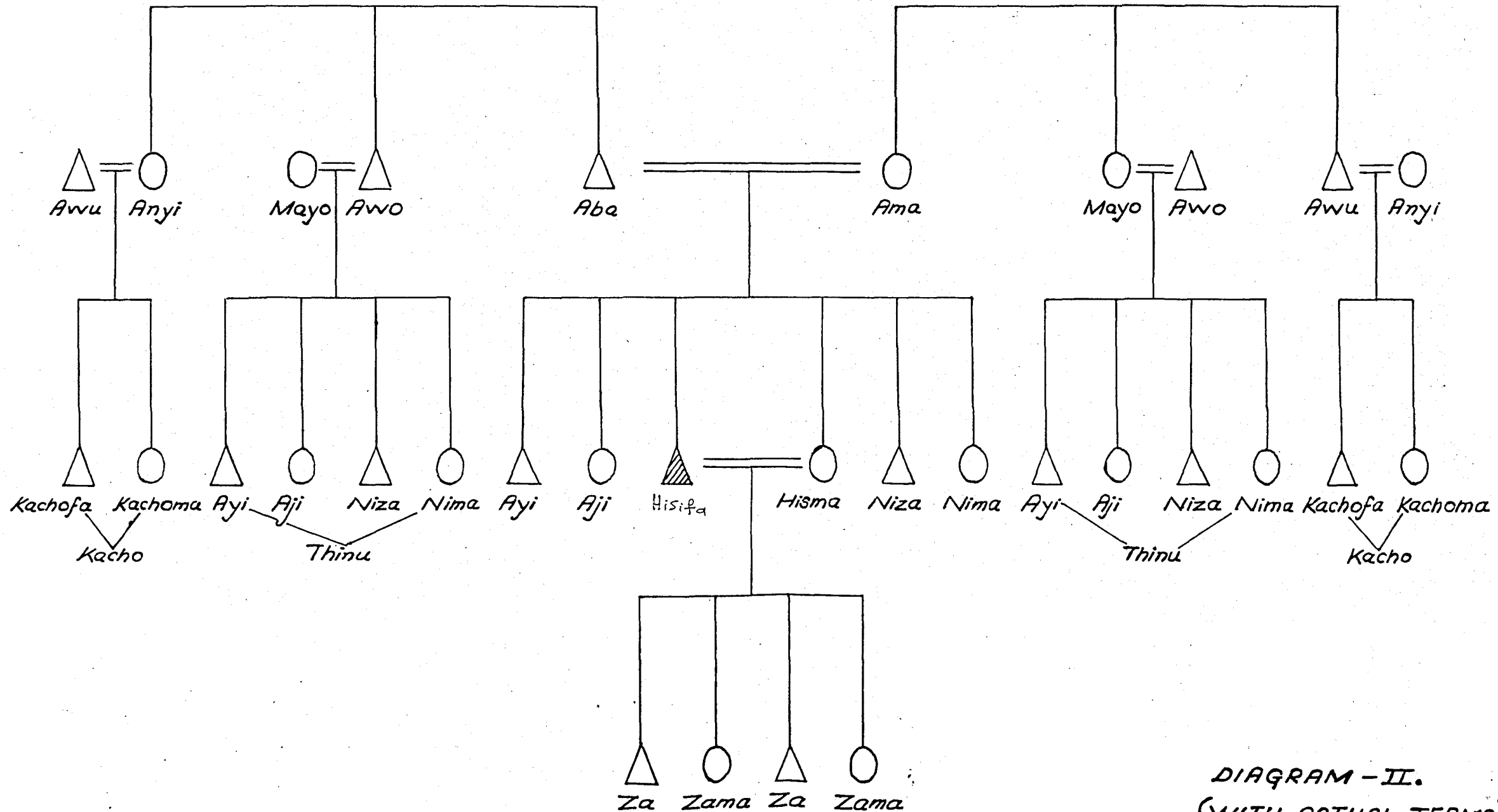


DIAGRAM- I  
(e) = ELDER  
(y) = YOUNGER

*"THE LISU TYPE OF KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY."*



*DIAGRAM - II.  
(WITH ACTUAL TERMS.)*

Thus it is profounded, after analysis and comparison of the different established kinship systems that the Lisu kinship terminological system provides one more variety to the existing systems of kinship terminology. The system is diagrammatically represented here with the English terms as well as the exact Lisu terms. The experts of this line are invited to check the data.

### Kinship behaviour and Usages

The Lisu bestow much importance to the behaviour pattern of the newly married couple, specially the wife. After marriage, it is customary for the couple to work together, move together and eat together. They should behave politely to everybody and show respect to all senior persons and take special care of their grand parents. Wife is not supposed to argue with husband, and she should not cross over the household goods and implements, and keep them in proper place. While serving the guests or relatives, she should move very carefully and serve food or drinks bending her head rather in a very obliged manner. She should serve the food first to grand father, then to the guests. It is obligatory to the Lisu to offer the liver (Yisi), heart (Yinima), brain (yiwunu), eyes (nysu) and the ear (napu) of the hunting games bear, hogs, etc. as well as domestic animals to the senior most member of the family like grand parents, then parents etc. These portions of an animals body should not be taken by the youngers. This type of behaviour is considered a symbol of respect to the seniors. She should carefully arrange the day today use articles of the father-in-law and mother-in-law while

living with them. The Lisu, specially the sons and wives, never cross over the head side of their parents while sleeping. Again, while sleeping, the youngers (both males and females) never keep their legs towards the head of their seniors. There is restriction to utter the names of their father, mother, mother-in-law, and father-in-law. Similarly, it is a taboo to the younger Lisu males or females to utter the names of senior males or females. Those Lisus who do not conform to this pattern of kin-behaviour are dishonoured and looked down upon by the Lisu society. The Lisu, in general, behave with equal respect with the affinal and consanguineal relatives. A Lisu wife or husband makes no difference in his or her behaviour pattern with respect to consanguines and affines.

The Lisu do not have any prescribed form of behaviour for welcoming the guests or relatives. They do it verbally using the words- kalay and lay. Similarly, they do not have any special form of behaviour to give farewell to a person or while taking farewell from a family or a relative. The Christian Lisus have adopted the English way of greetings and farewell.

According to conventional rules of personal behaviour, a Lisu can establish joking relationships with very limited number of persons. In the Lisu society joking relationship is allowed with the siblings of same age of father's elder or younger sister. These siblings of same age are called kachos. Joking relationships are also permitted to the males and females of the same age, but not related consanguinally or affinally. It is forbidden to make or cut jokes with wife's elder or younger sisters



or with husband's elder or younger brothers. The Lisu joking relationships indicate their equality in status and mutual reciprocity. It never indicates a potential sexual relationship.

### Friendship (Kachopa)

The Lisu have a unique custom of making friends. Friendship may be established with the people of their own community as well as outside the community. Friendship is established between the males only. A particular day is fixed for the purpose and the male, to be designated as friend is invited to the residence of the man intending friendship. Then three cups or mugs (kuju) of rice beer (jiphu) are brought. Few drops of liquor taken from any two cups are poured into the third cup. Then two drops of blood collected from each male's thumb are also poured into the third cup. The liquor mixed with two drops of blood is taken in a sapheta way by the two males. Sapheta means the drinking of liquor by two persons from the same cup at a time. In sapheta, liquor enters into two human mouths at a time. Then a grand feast is arranged to celebrate the occasion. In this way the Lisu make their friends, rather the friendship gets recognition in the Lisu society. This relationship is kept alive till death. None of them can break this tie. He who ignores this tie will fall sick and die ultimately. This is believed by the Lisu.

CHAPTER - 7S O C I A L     C O N T R O L

To my mind, the term "Political Organisation or System" is inappropriate for an ethnic group or a community such as the Lisu. In such a small scale technologically and economically underdeveloped community many of the forms and functions of what we generally recognised as government are lacking. So also are the privileges and obligations of ordinary members. Therefore, I feel it imperative to use the term 'Social Control' instead of political organisation though its premises have been defined clearly.

In anthropological usage, social control is the means by which the members of a community or an ethnic group are encouraged to conform to behavioural standards. In small communities, where legislation and behaviour coincide fairly closely, non-conforming behaviour is not likely to be very frequent. People acquire behavioral standards quite early and rarely see any good reasons for violating them. In many cases rules concerning proper behaviour are self-enforcing. On the other hand although most people feel that their cultural traditions provide them with rules governing "what to do upon any occasion", no cultural tradition can encompass all the decisions that might be forced upon the individual. Behavioural standards tend to cover ordinary people in an ordinary circumstances. The overall thrust of mechanism of social control is to ensure that balance of gains

and losses associated with proper behaviour is more rewarding than the balance of gains and losses associated with improper behaviour. In cases where the individual is asked to make important sacrifice for the welfare of the community as a whole, conformity to behavioural standards is correspondingly difficult to arrange. In most societies or communities responses to exhibitions of improper behaviour tend to vary along a spectrum ranging from mild disapproval to severe or life-threatening punishment.

Although it is easy to think of all behaviour in terms of the extent to which it conforms to or violate standards, the situation is not always that simple. Some individuals such as clowns, scapegoats, children and strangers are expected to violate certain standards. The routine violation of standards may be characteristic and necessary for some patterns of social control. To a degree, all forms of social control involve some kind of punishment or reward. People who are shunned or avoided because they are ill tempered or because they are thought to be witches are certainly punished in a sense. So are those who are accused by gossip of sexual irregularities, dishonesty, or other violation of standards. Similarly, people are treated with respect and admiration because they exemplify the highest possible standards of conduct.

In the vast majority of the human societies, mechanism of social control are a means of ensuring that things that people want to do are in close conformity to the things that they are supposed to do. Some years ago, Edward Sapir, (1949)



13. A beautiful unmarried Lisu girls



14. A group of unmarried Lisu girls



15. A Lisu man with injury in the face caused by a bear.



16. A married Lisu couple with children



17. A service holder Lisu couple



18. A Lisu old man preparing conch's discs



made a distinction between a genuine cultures in which the promised rewards for conformity to behavioural were given and spurious cultures in which people were given expectations that could not be met. Along these lines a genuine <sup>culture</sup> can be regarded as one in which the opposition between freedom and conformity is minimised because existing behavioural standards provide <sup>an</sup> efficient means by which a free individual can achieve his goals without causing harm to others. In a spurious culture, the individual is brainwashed and made to conform regardless of the personal and psychological sacrifices involved in doing so. Cultures and their associated mechanism of social control always represent restrictions on human freedom, but there is a difference between cultures in which individuals willingly give up short term gains in order to secure the benefits of membership, and those in which conformity to behavioural standards is secured by violence or the threat of violence.

According to Firth (1959) the term 'social control' has wide range of meaning. It may refer to any ways in which the very fact of living in a society may influence the conduct of the members of that society. Usually, however, it refers more specifically to those ways in which a society maintains order among its members; Keeps them away from 'doing wrong', from anti-social behaviour, contrary to accepted standards. The very notion of control implies a direction, a command of action in reference to some conception of stability, a restraint of deviation from a norm. In Hoebel's words (1954:15) "The entire operating system of sanctioning norms is what continues a system

of social." Elaborating this Firth has said that social control involves a system of values of the society; a set of categories in which these values are expressed, rules for guidance about behaviour; procedures for establishing whether rules are kept or not and for taking action accordingly, and sanctions, positive and negative, whereby conformity to rules is promoted. With these introductory sentences, let us now begin the discussion on how the Lisu control or govern their society.

The mechanisms of social control in the Lisu society centres around an institution referred as Chowuship. In Chowuship all the powers for social control maintenance of law and order, system of values, rules for guidance about behaviour of its members, and sanctions both positive and negative whereby conformity to the rules are promoted, are delegated to a single male person. In other words, authority is vested in an individual mainly.

### Chowuship

Chowu means a male person authorised by the Lisu to look after the problems relating to law and order of the Lisu society, to solve all the major problems faced by the Lisu. Authority of any type is vested in chowu. Chowu is a keeper of the Lisu society. He is a magistrate, a judge, an advocate, a leader and a great soldier of the Lisu. Chowu is the most honourable, respected and lovable person in the Lisu society. Chowu is a hero of the Lisu.

### Selection of Chowu

Chowu is not elected, rather selected or appointed by the Lisu. In a sense, chowu is automatically evolved in the society. The Lisu expect impartial judgement from chowu; in other words chowu should exercise vested authority in maintenance of right, in punishing the wrong doer and rewarding the virtuous people. Any Lisu who can give this type of judgement may be chosen for the post of chowu. And if a chowu does otherwise, he is eliminated from the post. The Lisu never tolerate a corrupted chowu. In reality, the Lisu face difficulty in finding out a just chowu. So they apply trial and error method in the selection of a chowu. That is a man to be designated as chowu is provided with opportunity to settle a particular case. If he fails to solve the issue nicely, then he is replaced by another man, if he succeeds, then he is called for again and again to demonstrate his skill or worth. Sometimes, an old chowu recommends a man for the post, but that man is also required to prove his worth. In this way, the Lisu select a chowu.

### Qualification for chowu

The Lisu place upon a number of qualifications or criteria for the post of chowu. The man to be appointed as chowu should be intelligent, courageous, and physically strong. The man should have presence of mind, sharp memory, imaginative power, and the ability to understand the psychology (swakush) of the mob or quarelling parties. Keeping sufficient knowledge of the traditional rules or customary laws of the Lisu is also an

important criterion. According to Lisu belief a man to be designated as showu is born with all the qualities mentioned above; and the knowledge of the traditional rules is acquired gradually by attending different social functions or the meetings of the existing chowu.

#### Powers and Functions of Chowu

As said early, the Lisu have conferred all powers whether administrative or executive or judiciary or political to chowu. Impartial exercise of the powers conferred to is the most important function of chowu. In exercising this authority interested young men of the area or the villagers help chowu; rather chowu seeks help from the able young men of the village. In a broad sense, the authority is distributed to a number of individuals, it may be called a centrifugal type of authority.

Chowu decides or settles disputes or offences relating to different types of marriages, encroachment of Dajemi land, occupation of Dajemi land, theft, breach of sexual sanctions or illegal sexual relations, murder, inter-village feuds etc. When a chowu actually begins to settle disputes, he is called by the name of Jimufa. Jimufa is the another name of chowu. Chowu has no office, any suitable place, a house or an open space may well serves as his office, strictly speaking, chowu has no fixed area of jurisdiction. Generally women are not allowed to participate in the deliberations or meetings called by a chowu. If involved in the case, women are allowed to participate only to depend themselves. A reputed chowu may be called for to settle



a case of any area. Generally in every village (chokha) there is a chowu. Jimufa wears hat made of hog's hair. Chowu gets fees in the form of feast, drinks and cows depending upon the nature of disputes settled. Chowu settles disputed by imposing fines according to the customary laws or traditional rules, on the wrong doers or guilty party. To realise the imposed fines from the concerned persons or party, and to keep account of its dues if any are also the duties of a chowu. Witness or evidence, logical thinking and arguments and counter arguments, intelligent are the resorts employed by a chowu to find out and punish the wrong doers. In the traditional Lisu society, the Lisu involved in a dispute, used to bring a number of bamboo-sticks before the court of chowu. Each stick used to represent one point for lodging complain or argument. Hearing arguments from both the parties, and making cross or counter arguments, a chowu used to turn down or reject the stick subsequently making a cut mark in its middle during the proceedings of a case. But, sometimes, instead of getting fees or imposing fines, a chowu is obliged or required to give fines if he fails to settle disputes or fails to control the mob or fights between the disputing parties while settling a case. In the circumstances, a second or an experienced chowu is called in for the settlement of disputes. Second chowu comes and imposes fines on the first chowu by mutual discussion. Generally, one third of the total fines imposed by the second chowu to the wrong doers, is required to pay by the first chowu to the winner of the case. No one can disobey or deny the impartial judgement given by a chowu. He who

does is looked down upon by the Lisu; he is considered a fool not fit for living in the society of the Lisu. Nobody will co-operate with him in any matter. Let us now discuss the nature of disputes or offences and its settlements.

### Marriage by capture

The Lisu consider this type of marriage a social offence. This needs to be settled by a chowu. These are of two types:- a) when an unmarried girl is captured, and b) when a married girl is captured. a) When an unmarried girl is captured physically by a Lisu boy, father of the girl with the chowu goes to the house of the boy's father. Having sufficient discussion with they boy's father, chowu decides the case, following the customary rules, by imposing fines of thirty cows, thirty types of household goods and cooking utensils, clothes and a grand feast with meat and drinks. These are given in form of bride price by the father of the boy to the girl's father. Of the thirty cows, one cow is given to chowu as fees. In addition, chowu is entertained with grand feast from both the sides. These fines are to be given within one month from the date of settlement of the case. Fines may be paid in instalment also. In case, of scarcity of cows, three big cooking utensils are considered equivalent to a cow. Girl's father always expects due respect from the boy or son-in-law while visiting the latter's house after one year of the settlement of the disputes. If the girl's father does <sup>not</sup> get proper respect he may file a case against the boy. The case is again settled by the chowu imposing extra fines according to the wishes of the girl's father. The captured girl is taken back to her

father's house if the boy fails to give the fines.

b) When a married girl is captured by force by a Lisu boy, the case is settled by the chowu in the same manner mentioned above. Only difference is that the boy is required to give the fines or bride price to the husband of the married girl captured. In addition, the boy is required to pay the portion of bride price unpaid or kept due by the previous husband to the father of the married girl who has been captured. The same type of fees is given to chowu by the father of the boy.

#### Marriage by Elopement

This type of marriage is also considered a social offence as it goes against the traditional marriage rules of the Lisu society. This is again of two types:- a) when a married girl elopes with an unmarried boy; b) when an unmarried girl and boy run away with each other from home. In first case, the boy is required to give one extra cow to the previous husband in addition to the bride price given at the time of marriage by the previous or first husband. Chowu gets one cow for settling this case. In second case, the boy's father is required to give one cow to the girl's father. This is decided by the chowu, chowu (get) no fees in this case, only food and drinks. Then they marry each other following the traditional marriage rules. The Lisu girls or women are always considered simple and honest by the Lisu society. The Lisu females do unlawful or harmful acts only at the instigation of Lisu males, otherwise not. So when a dispute arises between a boy and a girl for any reason generally the boy gets punishment.

### Dissolution of Marriage

Because of child marriage, it is frequently happened in the Lisu society that grown up husband and wife may not like each other. After marriage refusal may come from either sides Then the marriage is dissolved. Dissolution of marriage is considered a social offence and it is to be decided by the chowu. If the married girl refuses to live with her husband then the entire amount of the bride price is to be returned to the boy's father, in addition to one cow as fine for the breach of marriage rules. The girl brings one mug or cup called maja-sapi or rice beer and drinks with her husband jointly in presence of chowu; then this cup is offered to husband which indicates final separation or divorce (Haleho). Jointly drinking of rice-beer and offering the cup to the concern married person is a symbol of divorce in the Lisu society.

If the boy refuses to live with her wife, boy's father will not get back bride price, in addition, one cow is to be given to the girl's father as a fine for the dissolution of marriage. In this case, the boy brings one cup of rice beer and drinks jointly with wife, and then offers it to her, resulting into final separation. For deciding this case, chowu gets no fees, only grand feast from the party concern.

### Encroachment of Jhum Land

A new patch of forest land is prepared for shifting cultivation by clearing the weeds, cutting down the trees etc. by the Lisu. It takes a number of days to prepare the land. In the

meantime, another or a second Lisu or chohi may start clearing the same patch of land by mistake or intentionally. Then disputes arise between two parties or chohis claiming the same patch of land. In other words, a Lisu intrudes on another person's land and it is considered an economic offence by the Lisu; and it is to be settled by the Lisu. It is the convention in the Lisu society to inform a person or a Lisu outside the family the fact of preparing a new patch of forest for shifting cultivation. So chowa gets ample evidences to decide the case, and the encroacher or illegal occupant is required to offer physical labour to the real occupant for the entire period needed to prepare the land or as decided by the chowa. Chowa gets no fees in this case. This type of case seldom happens among the Lisu. New area of forest to be developed as land for shifting cultivation is earmarked by small cuts on the trees around the area. When a particular forestland is fully developed for shifting cultivation, its border is made by digging ditch around the land or by setting stones around the land. Similarly, the Lisu put two or three stones or chips of stones on firewoods or two or three cut marks on the firewoods left out in the forest which they cannot carry home at a time. Then nobody will touch or take it. Likewise, when they find out a new bee-hive in the forest, but not in a position to collect honey at that time, they put a cut mark on the trunk of the tree or bury one end of a bamboo or a wooden stick under the tree facing its other end towards the bee-hive. Then no Lisu will collect honey or wax from that hive. All these symbols- bamboo or a wooden stick,

stones or a cut mark on the trees play an important role in the political life of the Lisu. These are the symbols of honesty among the Lisu.

#### Minor quarrels and Injuries

For deciding the case of assault and minor quarrel chowu is not called for. Any intelligent young man or any old person of the village can decide this type of dispute, judgement is based on evidences. As a punishment, the wrong doer has to give half of the articles demanded by the person proved to be honest or not guilty. At the end as a mark of good relation, they jointly drink rice beer from a cup in presence of village judge.

But when a person is injured physically due to minor fight or quarrel, a chowu is called for to decide the case. Generally, the person who beats or uses physical force first in the quarrel is considered guilty. And if the guilty person is injured in the fight he is to bear by himself all the cost for treatment or recovery. But if the honest person is injured in the fight, the wrong doer or the person found to be guilty is to bear or give the entire cost for treatment or recovery. Chowu gets drinks only as fees.

#### Murder

Murder is the highest crime a man can do. A man may be killed intentionally, like killing for revenge or retaliation or accidentally. Whatever may be the nature of murder, the

amount of compensation or punishment for the loss of a human life is same among the Lisu. The compensation is paid to the aggrieved or bereaved family. The amount of compensation or fine for the loss of a Lisu life is sixty five cows payable at three instalments- in first instalment thirty cows, in second twenty cows and in the last fifteen cows. The giving of all these cows or equivalent articles is called Kute in Lisu language. Or the murderer is required to give all the things or articles the killed person could earn in his entire span of life. Or a large tank is excavated and the murderer is to fill up the tank with all the articles or goods necessary for maintaining a human life. Generally, relatives of the murderer help in providing all these articles. These articles given in the form of fines or compensations are regarded as the value or cost of the body-muscles (kodifu), stomach (wupofu) and abdomen (wuchifu) of the murdered person. According to Lisu belief killing stops the means of procreation of offsprings of a family permanently. It costs dearly to the Lisu, and it is called Jamujafu. To deal with the case of murder three or four chowu are needed. They investigate the case from different angles and try to find out the actual cause of murder. All these fines are to be given within a specific period decided by the chowus. If the murder is unable to pay the fines he or any person of his family will be killed. And if the murderer's party becomes physically strong, they may again kill a person of the honest party, and vice-versa. This vendetta may continue indefinitely. Ultimately, the defeated party leaves the area or village for ever or becomes slaves to the winning party. It is said that the Lisu were

great fighters, used to win every battle and keep slaves.

### Theft

Case of theft is rare in the Lisu society. Chowu decides the case depending upon the witness. If no witness is available, then help of Sichofa is sought for. Sichofa is a Lisu male proficient in detecting thieves. Sichofa performs magical rituals whereby Ni an evil spirit, is requested or invited to punish the thief. It is believed by the Lisu that 'Ni' can see everything done by the Lisu. When the performance of rituals is over the thief becomes sick automatically and ultimately dies. But hearing the very fact of calling Sichofa, the thief surrenders to the chowu at his own accord. The punishment for theft is twelve times the cost of the item or thing stolen.

### Illegal Sex Relation

According to Lisu customs, to establish sex relation with anybody other than wife or husband is a social offence, and it is to be decided by the chowu. If a unmarried boy and girl indulges in sexual intercourse, and it is caught red-handed, then a fine of one hog is imposed upon the boy. This fine along with a grand feast is to be given to girl's father. Then their social or formal marriage is arranged. If a married Lisu male establishes illegal sex relation with any married Lisu woman, it is considered a serious offence. Then the concern husband is to give fines in the form of hogs or fowl's and a grand feast with drinks to the husband of the married woman as well as to the father of his wife. The amount of fines to be imposed is decided by the



chowu. The Lisu never tolerate the sex relation of their wives to the men outside their community. And if caught red-handed, they may kill the woman concern, and no punishment is imposed for the killing.

### Inter-community Feuds

Inter-community disputes, assault and injury, encroachment of land, theft, marriage, etc. are settled by the leaders of the respective communities following their traditional rules. The case is settled by mutual discussion, mutual concession and modification of the traditional laws of the community concern. If they failed to decide a case, then fights start between the communities. The fight is limited to the trained soldiers only, women are always spared in the fight. If the vendetta continues for an indefinite period; and ultimately defeated community leave the area or remain under over all control of the winning party or community. These are the main disputes or offences used to deal by the chowu of the traditional Lisu society. The main function of chowu was or is to find out the truth and punish the wrong doers in every case of disputes.

### Deacon

As said early, it is a committee of clergymen of the church known as Milofa. Its members are engaged in religious activities. Besides religious function, its members decide the minor disputes of the Christian Lisu. But, they never deal with the major cases of quarrel, injuries, and murder. They administer justice by means of caths and ordeals. To settle disputes,

they take oaths of innocence persons by different ways with the help of Bible, axe and scythe. Putting holy Bible, axe or scythe on their head, persons involved in the case are requested to take oaths in the name of God, only to confirm that they are not guilty, rather innocent. It is believed by the Lisu that if a guilty person or a wrong doer takes such oaths, he or she will become sick and die ultimately.

### Gao-Burrah

In 1961, the system of Gao-burrah was introduced in the Lisu village by the government of India with the help of the officials of the Assam Rifle. The then chowu of the Lisu was named Gao-Burrah. In 1964, Gao-burrah was elected by the villagers of Gandhigram, Circle Officer, Vijaynagar acted as presiding officer of the election. And that elected Gao-burrah continued in the post for nine years. After that Circle Officer, Vijaynagar selected successive Gao-burrahs. In 1980, Circle Officer nominated a person of Gandhigram as an acting Gao-burrah; and that person is still functioning as Gao-burrah. Gao-burrah is an honorary post. He is given woollen red coats with delegated powers by the government to distinguish him from others. The post of Gao-burrah signifies the acceptance of the jurisdiction and authority of the government and to be the representative and official of the administration in the area concerned. Gao-burrah is called periodically to the administrative head quarters for official function or to welcome a V.I.P. Gao-burrah serves as a link between the administration and the local population. His main duties are to maintain peace in the

village to settle minor disputes, to collect hearth tax (chula tax), to help in the implementation of government orders if any and to communicate timely the happenings of the village specially related to law and order problems.

### The Political Interpreter (Kataki)

The political interpreter is appointed by the government with the help of Circle Officer from the local villagers. It is a stipendiary post. The person to be appointed as political interpreter must be well-verse in at least two or more languages besides his mother tongue. The main function of the political interpreter is to explain or to make the local people aware about the policies of the administration. He acts as interpreter whenever an important government official or a prominent political leader visits the village or addresses public meetings at the village. He is a representative of the government in the village or in the area. He helps to decide both civil and criminal disputes of the village or area. To welcome and to accompany the government officials in the village are also his duties.

### Circle Officer

Circle Officer is all in all in a circle. He acts as a stipendiary magistrate, as a judge and as an administrator. He is responsible for all round developments in the area, maintaining law and order in the area is also his duty. The problems of food, health, education, agricultural production and road communication of the area are decided or solved by the Circle Officer. Any major problem of the Lisu is decided by the Circle

Officer, Vijaynagar. At present, Circle Officer, Vijaynagar is the controlling authority of the Lisu. A police station has been set up among the Lisu to deal with the smugglers of Agar-woods and Burmese intruders in the area. Agar-woods are used to prepare a kind of cosmetics.

To conclude this discussion on the mechanism of social control it is emphasised that the Lisu rarely use physical force or coercion for the establishment or maintenance of law and order in the society. This quality or character of the social control of the Lisu supports the view-points of I. Shapera (1956) and Lucy Mair (1962) and refutes the view point of Radcliffe-Brown when he says that the use of physical force is essential for controlling a society. Authority in the Lisu society is centrifugal in nature. In addition to the traditional mechanism of social control, a religious body referred as Mijifa, and recently introduced Gao-burrah and Kataki (political Interpreter) who are in the command of Circle Officer, are also held responsible for controlling the present society of the Lisu.

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19. A reception dance by old Lisu men and women



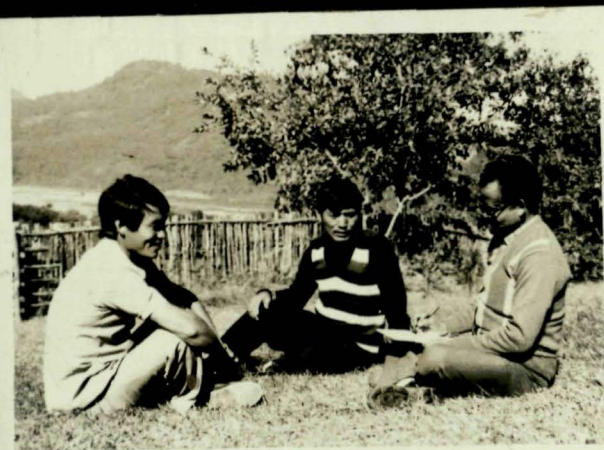
20. Two old Lisu women peeling maize grains



21. Researcher interviewing with old Lisu men.



22. Researcher interviewing an old Lisu man with the help of an Interpreter



23. Researcher interviewing two Lisu young men



24. Researcher eating boiled arum with the members of a Lisu family



## CHAPTER - 8

### R E L I G I O U S    O R G A N I S A T I O N

Religion is widely studied phenomenon in Anthropology. No society or community is devoid of religion, be that may primitive or modern. The views and the attitude of the anthropologist to religion are different from the popular views. Anthropologists are very much keen to view religion in the social perspective and cultural setting. That is probably the reason the students of anthropology consider religion a part of culture. They lay emphasis on the functional aspect, on the congregational aspect and on the societal aspect of religion. To them, in short, religion is belief in supernatural or spiritual beings and this belief is always associated with rites or ritual or ceremonies. These two vital elements of religion were first disseminated by the great French Savant Emile Durkheim. Religion is the human response, expression and relation to the uncimpromising, uncontrollable phenomena and the forces of nature. It may be also defined, crudely, as a "defence mechanism" evolved by human beings for their own existence against supernatural and natural forces, evil spirits and evil actions which is expressed through symbolic procedure or rituals. But it is difficult to distinguish clearly between things that are natural or social and things that are supernatural. In many cases the attempt to differentiate between natural and supernatural leads to a kind of ethnocentrism in which the beliefs of scientists, including anthropologists, are

considered to define the realm of natural, whereas all other beliefs are held to deal with supernatural.

The most appropriate definition of religion is given by Clifford Geertz (1966). It says- "Religion is a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful pervasive and long lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic." Social anthropologists are keenly interested in symbols and symbolism. All symbolism are as a type of language, a way of saying something and the various symbolic behaviour in which anthropologists are most interested usually assert the importance of some social value. John Beattie says "People who carry out institutionalised symbolic procedures or rites usually believe that by doing so they are either producing some desired state of affairs or preventing some undesired one." Every society or community whatsoever its stage of technological development must have a body of practical and common sense knowledge founded in and tested by experience. The religious practices and beliefs are more than a mere system of social and moral symbolism. But such group symbolism may be very important in secular as well as religious context, and it was to Durkheim's great merit that he pointed this out. There is an intimate relation between religion and morality, between religion and magic. To Lucy Mair, "Magic and Religion are no more than a clearing of the ground for the discussion of the place of religion in social life." Religion and magic are inter-

related, both have some points of similarities and dissimilarities. Both are associated with beliefs in supernatural beings. But in magic supernatural power is not bigger or mightier than man's power, in other words, it may be controlled by man or expert, whereas in religion supernatural power predominates over man's power.

Dukheim was one of the first few writers on primitive religion, who had given such importance to the society in relation to religion. The name of Tylor and Frazer should also be noted as few pioneers in this field. In primitive religion people live in constant dread of evil spirits whereas in modern religion people do not. Modern religion is marked by its philosophical profundity and the primitive religion is not. Religion differs from other aspects of social life because it is concerned with system of relationship and action and those actions are directed towards entities. In the field of religion, the ideas are normative, they are concerned with what ought to be done and the reasons why it ought to be done. But the social anthropologist at every point of culture except religion is asking "what do people think? as well as what do they do?".

Again, religion is one of the driving forces in human activity both individually and socially. It not only gives opportunities for elaborate institutionalised assemblies i.e. festival, it also gives sanctions for a wide range of conduct. It gives a chance to enjoy life to all kinds of people. It aims at ridding them of their destitution and mental worries and



anxiety at least for a few moments. Religion is also one of the agencies of social control.

Edward Norback in his book- "Primitive Religion" classified the theories of religion into three main categories- Psychological, Sociological and Theological. The Psychological theory has been further divided into Rationalistic, Emotionalistic and Psycho Analytic theories. In addition, we have the functional theory of Radcliffe-Brown and Malinowski. Under each category of theory, different scholars like Tylor, Malinowski, Marett, Codrington, MaxMuller, Frazer, Durkheim, Freud, Herbert Spencer, Paul Radin, George Simmel, etc.; have tried to interpretate the origin of religion on the basis of conjectural arguments, on the basis of gathered experience in life, on the basis of relationship between men and women, on the foundation of the study of particular phenomena or happenings of nature and on the study of specific religion of a society or a group of people. But, in spite of their scholarly and convincing interpretation, due to lack of unanimity among them as to what the origin of religion is it still remains in obscurity to the anthropologists as it was before <sup>when</sup> ~~where~~ they first began to study religion.

#### Major studies in India

Studies on religion in India may be grouped into three major headings :-

- i) Studies on Tribal or Primitive region.
- ii) Studies on religion in the context of Indian village or complex societies.

iii) Studies on religion and civilization through the traditional cities, and centres of pilgrimage.

S.C.Ray, the father of Indian anthropologists, as remarked by Hutton, may be considered the first anthropologist to initiate the study of primitive or tribal religion in India. He developed the concept of bongaism which was later refined and accelerated by Pro.D.N.Majumdar, T.C.Das, and also by V.Elwin's work of Savara tribe. Later on different anthropologists, undertook the study of primitive religion keeping in view the theoretical proposition.

In the sphere of religion in complex societies or villages, the work of M.N.Srinivas on "Religion and Society among the Croogs of south India" is a valuable contribution. He developed the concepts of "Sanskritization" "Desanskritization" and "spread". Then different scholars like Dube, Mariott, Opler, Lewis, Cohn, Milton Singer, Mandelbaum etc. discussed aspects of religion in different Indian villages in different context. Prof. Vidyarthi's edited volume on "Aspects of Religion in Indian Society" is also a pioneering study on tribal and village religion. Then Harpar's edited book- "Religion in south Asia"- also an important landmark on researches on religion. Besides, many anthropologists like Ayyapan N.K. Bose, K.P.Chattopadhyaya, Surojit Sinha, B.N. Saraswati, K.N.Sahay, M.Jha and so on wrote books and papers on religion.

Studies on religion and civilisation through traditional and nontraditional cities was unfolded by Redfield "Cultural Role

of a city". In India some sporadic attempts were made earlier to study cities by economist, sociologist, archaeologist and a few anthropologists like Milton Singer's "Madras City", N.K. Bose's "Calcutta and Kanpur city" Inspired and influenced by Redfield's idea, Prof. Vidhyarthi made for the first time, a systematic anthropological study on the traditional city of Gaya. He unfolded new methodological approach through concepts like "sacred geography", "sacred performance", and "sacred specialist" accreting to "sacred complex". Prof. Jha's "Dimension of Pilgrimage", and Prof. Saraswati's "The spectrum of sacred" are significant contributions on religion and civilisation. This is a bird's eye view on the researches on religions in Indian Anthropology.

No systematic anthropological work on primitive or tribal religion covering all aspects of religion in the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh is available. "The Singpho and their Religion" by T.K.M. Barua may be treated as a major work on primitive religion. Verrier Elwin, P. Dutta, N. Kumar, N. Sarkar, Srivastava and a few others wrote on some aspects of religion of some tribes of Arunachal Pradesh.

With this brief introduction on the religion and the studies conducted in India, let us turn to the discussion of Lisu religion. The Lisu religion may be defined as a belief in different kinds of malevolent and benevolent spirits and the rituals or ceremonies performed to propitiate them. It is primitive or animistic in nature.

### Wusa

In the traditional Lisu belief system, the concept of god, a being who is all powerful, eternal and omniscient guardian of morality, is absent. Similarly, the Lisu have no concept of a deity having the characteristics of omnipotence, Omnipresence, creativeness and the complete beneficence which are the attributes of a supreme being of general conception. But they have a concept called Wusa which has some attributes of God. Wusa is all powerful, who can see and know everything done by the Lisu men and women. Wusa, as they believe does not do any harm to the Lisu. The Lisu believe that Wusa comes to help them when they apprehend a sudden danger in life such as falling from a tree, facing a tiger, snake bites etc.;. When suddenly the name of Wusa comes out from their mouth. Otherwise, it is considered a taboo to utter the name of Wusa. The Lisu do not worship Wusa nor do they sacrifice any animal to appease him for getting any desired object or for the fulfilment of a cherished desire.

### Phula

Clan- deity of the Lisu is commonly known as Phula. Each clan has a separate <sup>name</sup> for Phula, which is on the verge of extinction. The people of Ngawja, Jali and Jeyja clans can still remember the names of Phula. They are given below:

| <u>Clan's name</u> | <u>Phula's name</u> |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Ngawja             | Ajamewemu           |
| Jali               | Adhibu              |
| Jeyja              | Adhisu              |

The Lisu believe that Phula can punish and control all the evil spirits (Ni) conceived by them. In fact, Phula is believed to be the in-charge of the evil spirits. The Lisu reports all the troubles given by the evil spirits to Phula. They worship Phula sacrificing hen or pig or even cow to evade the evil effect of Ni, and to get remedy from the disease caused by the evil spirits. The deity- Phula is believed to live in vacuum (Yihango). Phula has no shape, no sex and no specific place to reside. Phula is invisible and lacks many of the attributes given to an idealised god. Phula does not do any harm to the Lisu.

#### Namugolo

Namugolo is the presiding deity of thunder (Mogu) and meteor (Mebichi). He is believed to be a male deity. Namugolo lives in the sky. And once in a year during winter this deity moves in the sky from south to north direction to watch the doings of the Lisu. Namugolo has four hands. He carries a number of poisonous snakes and germs of different diseases with him. Torrential rain, ghasty wind, thunder and meteor are indicative of the movement of Namugolo in the sky. This deity wants warm welcome and respect from the members of every Lisu household. The Lisu believe that this deity prefers the rotten smell of a kind of wild bean locally referred as Anobili. During winter every Lisu family invariably collects it from the jungle and then boiled it with water. It is then packed with a leaf and kept in the house. After few days, rotten smell begins to emit. This is the way of appeasing Namugolo. If any family forgets to do it, then all

the members of that family will die of an epidemic disease.

Otherwise, Namugolo does no harm to the Lisu.

### Lo

Lo is regarded as the presiding deity of flood (Azey-Zilla), storm (Loha), earthquake and rain. To stop these natural calamities, the Lisu propitiate this deity sacrificing pig and goat. Lo can take any shape man, animal, bird, fish etc. When he appears as a man, he is known as Lofa. The Lisu believe that this deity Lo has many daughters. Lo, Namugolo, Phula and Wusa are malevolent deities or spirits.

Besides, the Lisu believe in a number of evil spirits hovering all around whom they term Ni. They are conceived of as having anthropomorphic figures and lack the attributes of God. Their tradition or legend emphasises that all these evil spirits originated with the Lisu from the same mythical gourd. The only difference between Ni and the Lisu is that the former did not get physical shape of human beings whereas the latter did. And that is why, as the Lisu say, Ni always remains angry with the Lisu, and tries to trap them in different kinds of difficulties. The word Ni is a common term for all kinds of evil spirits. All these evil spirits have specific place to live and specific function to perform. Their main function is to spread different kinds of disease among the Lisu. They can see everything done <sup>by the Lisu and punish them</sup> in accordance with the wrong done. The Lisu live in constant dread of these malevolent spirits. Because of the painful emotion caused by the impending danger of evil spirits, the Lisu society is

devoid of sorcery or witchcraft.

As indicated before, all these Nis are evil and prone to harass the Lisu men and women out of sheer spite. They are held to be responsible for all kinds of misfortune, and the different kinds of diseases that the Lisu suffer from. It is with a grudging eye they generally look upon the Lisu and no particular incentive is required to rouse their fury. They make the Lisu suffer from diseases and all sorts of hardships just to draw out from them the sacrificial offerings consequently to which they are fond of. As a result, a Lisu lives in constant fear of Ni and ever faces the problem of propitiating them by necessary worships and sacrifices.

The names, residences, and the characteristics of the different evil spirits as conceived by the Lisu are discussed here individually.:

### Musini

This evil spirit is believed to live in high hills, big rocks and caves. In other words, Musini is thought to be an owner of rocks, caves, hills and forest. This evil spirit becomes very angry with the Lisu when they clear the bushes and burn the forest for shifting cultivation and climb a hill for hunting games or other purposes. The Lisu believe that the Musini is very efficient in capturing the souls of the Lisu. Musini does it when the Lisu enter the domain of the evil spirit and damage the forest for cultivation. It is their strong belief that the Musini captures the soul and puts it in a closed chamber referred

as Budu, and then beats the soul mercilessly and accordingly the concerned Lisu men or women gets stabbing pain or any kind of disease. The soul takes the human form of the Lisu. To get relief of such disease or pain, the Lisu are required to appease the Musini by the requisite sacrifices with the help of an ritual expert referred as Nifa.

### Sizini

This spirit resides in the big trees of the forest, i.e. all the big trees of the forest are considered to be the properties of the Sizini. When a Lisu fells a tree without prior permission or requisite rituals, Sizini captures his or her soul and treats it in the same way as the Musini does.

### Nichani

Nichani- lives in the parasite plants. All the parasite plants are supposed to belong to this evil spirit. This spirit is held responsible for small pox or ulcer and any kind of abdominal pain. It is believed that this evil spirit takes away the soul and throws it on the wild ants who live in the parasite plant.

### Yidosi

This evil spirit is considered to be the lord of stream. When a Lisu throws a stone on the stream or blocks it by the trees or boulders for catching fish which arouses anger to this spirit, and as a result, the whole body or any part, of the person



involved in such an act inflates.

### Jaguni

This is the evil spirit of the road, whose anger knows no bound. It is believed by the Lisu that Jaguni always moves with a knife and suddenly pushes it in any part of the body and never pulls it back. Sudden serious illness while moving along a road is attributed to the evil act of Jaguni.

### Dini

This spirit also resides in the road, constant suffering from any kinds of disease is attributed to the wrath of the Dini. The Lisu get this disease while passing through a road.

### Hikhawni

All the evil spirits conceived by the Lisu originated with them from the same mythical gourd. Hikhawni is the name given to an evil spirit who emerged from the mythical gourd last. Finding no other place, the mythical parents of the Lisu allotted Diti, the corner of their dwelling house for Hikhawni, Hikhaw means room. This evil spirit gives out and muscular pain to the Lisu. Hikhawni is often appealed to for help in bringing the soul back in the body. The officiant i.e. Nifa asks Hikhawni to make the prayers effective. This spirit furnishes a mean of communication between the worlds of the Lisu and the world of spirits by riding the mediums and answering the questions. Hikhawni, sometimes protects the members of the household from

the attacks of other malevolent spirits.

### Nima

This is the only female spirit conceived by the Lisu. She lives in the forest. She is believed to have tremendous urge for sex. She always loves to live as a Lisu wife for sexual pleasure. Whereever this female spirit finds a married Lisu women moving alone in the forest, she immediately transforms her into a bird. Then taking the exact shape of that woman, she goes to live as a wife. She never converts an unmarried girl into a bird.

This completes our discussion on the benevolent and malevolents spirits conceived by the Lisu of Arunachal Pradesh. With great difficulties, I could gather the information on this aspect of religion from a few old Lisus. Let us now turn to the discussion on how they counteract the evil spirits or Ni.

### The Ritual Specialists

To deal with the evil spirits and to cure the diseases caused by the wrath of Ni, the Lisu society has produced the following specialists:-

Nipha or Nifa

Dashipha or Dashifa

Hatopha

Nigupha and

Lethuthufa

Let us discuss them individually:

### Nipha

Of all the ritual specialists Nifa is considered to be the most significant. Ni means evil spirit, and Fa means a male person. Hence, literally Nifa denotes a person who is very efficient in counteracting the evil effects of Ni; he is a 'spirit man'. He is a mediator between the worlds of the Lisu and of the spirits. Nifa functions as the main communication link between the Lisu and the Ni.

### Eligibility

Nifa is not made or selected by the Lisu. Mere training and observing a few taoos are not sufficient to become a Nifa. As the Lisu say, Nifa is evolved automatically from their society. Their clan god-Phula chooses a person as Nifa. One of the first signs that one is chosen is that he likes to stay at home rather than go to the fields. He becomes very weak. Because, as the Lisu believe, getting a signal from the Phula, a Ni enters into the body of the chosen person and eats the soul called Ha of the person, and then instils his own soul referred as Niha. This chosen person begins to behave abnormally, weeping, laughing uttering obsence words, jumping, taking frequent bath and so on. A future Nifa, of whatever age, will like to play in the fire, and when he eats certain foods forbidden to Nifa, foods that taste of union or garlic or which are fried, he will become mad for a short time. This is taken as a sure sign that the person is to be a Nifa. Then an old Nifa is called in to confirm that the person is really possessed by the Ni. A ceremony is performed to

appease the house spirit to bring the man to senses. The affected man can refuse to be a Nifa, but it will do no good to him because the spirit has already possessed him. When a person shows the symptoms of becoming a Nifa the news travels to surrounding villages by gossip. Since the symptoms develop over a period of time, by the time it is generally conceded that he might be destined to become a Nifa, everyone in the locality knows about it. Explaining that their spirits have told them of the new Nifa; old Nifa from surrounding villages come to the village of the neophyte. These older Nifa initiate the new one. The senior Nifa takes the new one to a place in the thick forest and no children can play there since bad spirits are thought to follow children. There the Nifas report, they set out a number of bamboo cups filled with mashed beans and some with water and many lighted bee wax candles. The new Nifa eats the beans and candles and drinks the water. Then one of the senior Nifas calls a spirit to him and this spirit questions the new Nifa on his clan spirit (Phula) who is senior to whom, who is more powerful. The new Nifa answers, and then the senior one asks which spirits the new Nifa would like to come first. The new Nifa answers that the least powerful should come first.

Meanwhile, some of the senior Nifas call many more spirits to them because some bad spirits will try to ride over the new Nifa. In the forest live many evil spirits, however, these too, wants to ride the new Nifa. The senior Nifas call the more powerful spirits to overpower them and drive away these bad spirits by beating them with the lighted jobs sticks. It is important that the bad spirits be taught at this time that they may not overpower the new Nifa, for should they ride him when he is

trying to cure someone, they would eat the sick man's soul and the patient would die. Other bad spirits may try to ride the new Nifa, but they are not allowed to. When this ceremony is over, only the Phula can ride him, and he is able, with his help to cure people and to communicate with the spirit world. Following this ceremony the new Nifa seeks further instruction from the senior Nifa. During such training sessions the new Nifa and the older Nifa are both possessed by spirits, and the senior one demonstrates and teaches the various aspects of this craft.

### Functions

The Nifa's duties are concerned with communication with the evil spirits whenever this is demanded. They do this in order to diagnose illness, to separate the souls of the dead from those of the living after death,. Functions of a Nifa are summarised below:-

- 1) To give training to the new Nifa, how to utter the names of the spirit, how to use different symbols, and how to dance, and to detect the disease. To give training for the spirit dance, a pig is tied with a rope on the back of the new Nifa; this pig symbolises an evil spirit. Older Nifa teaches where the evil spirit resides, what kind of diseases they spread and what kind of shape they may take. Nizu, an eagle like bird, the messenger of evil spirits, the killing of this bird is also taught by the Nifa.

### 2) Nijakhu

Nija, means a kind of bird who knows the evil desires of all the spirits, and Khu means to call. Nifa, by his magical tricks

calls this bird to him thereby correctly diagnoses the diseases and cures them.

3. To cure all those diseases that Dashifa fails to cure.
4. To protect the children from evil eye of the spirits, and also pregnant woman.
5. The Lisu believe that stronger souls punish the weaker souls as a result possessor of weak souls, falls sick. This is cured by the Nifa.
6. To predict the future events is also his duty.
7. The person whose soul could not reach Mamisumi, the land of souls turns into a ghost referred as Nibu. Souls of the women who die in pregnancy turn into Nibu mostly. To send this soul to Mamisumi is the duty of the Nifa.

### Ways of Treatment

First job of the Nifa is to call Nijakhu to detect the diseases and the spirit involved. Rice beer called Jiphu, cock, hen, pigs, and herbal medicines are used to cure the different kinds of diseases. For details, see chapter on "Etiology and Medical system".

### Taboo

Nifa is required to follow some restrictions, otherwise he may be overpowered by the evil spirits. Nifa cannot eat foods which taste of onions of garlic, fried foods or drink much liquor.

Some Nifas do not drink Jipu<sup>h</sup> at all. If a Nifa comes to a house where food is being fried he may leave immediately, for even the smell of frying food is offensive to him. It is a taboo to a Nifa to kill a monkey or a bird. A Nifa cannot cross over a Atha (straight scythe), and so on. This seems to be an especially strong prohibition for the Nifa.

One spirit always stays with the Nifa, and gives him special powers. Among these is the power to diagnose misfortunes by looking into a cup of Jiphu or water. Nifa may also see ghosts and spirits. Should the Nifa not observe the prohibitions on his behaviour his spirit may beat.

### Dashifa

Dashifa is a ritual specialist or witch-doctor who deals with the minor diseases caused by the wrath of Ni, Dashi means to know a bit of everything. Any male Lisu can acquire this craft or skill who finds interest. No special training is needed to become a Dashifa. He carefully observes how an old Dashifa deals with a case. Then he himself tries to cure a minor disease supposed to be caused by a Ni. If he succeeds then he is recognised as an established Dashifa. Of course, an old Dashifa helps him to master this craft.

### Function

One of his main functions is to conduct Lethuthu. Lethuthu is a process of detecting the evil spirit thought to be responsible for a disease. It is he who prescribes what kind of animal

is to be sacrificed and what are the articles needed to cure the disease. Dashifa uses Atha (straight scythe) a big leaf, a bamboo or wooden stick and cheyju (an indigenous lighter) to diagnose the disease and the concerned evil spirit.

### The Process

Two pieces of rope are tied on the two ends of a Atha or a stick. Ropes are then caught by both the hands. Then he utters the names of evil spirits one by one. While uttering the name of an evil spirit if the sticks or Atha oscillates automatically, then the name of the spirit involved is confirmed. By the same process what animal is to be sacrificed, is determined. Holding the stick like a balance, Dashifa says to spirit "We are brothers and originated from the same gourd therefore you should not trouble us."

It is the duty of the Dashifa to select and to prepare the place of sacrifice, and to demonstrate how to sacrifice the animal. Dashifa himself can sacrifice the animal and perform the needed rituals or ceremonies. Or he may depute a person according to the wishes of the sick person. This performance is known as Nigu, it means to sacrifice animal to appease the evil spirit. And the person who does the Nigu is referred as Nigufa. Similarly, a person who perform a Lethuthu is known as Lethuthufa. Lethuthu is generally done by the Dashifa. Therefore, Lethuthufa and Dashifa are one and the same person. When a Dashifa himself performs the job of Lethuthu and Nigu, he is termed Lethuthufa and Nigufa respectively. It can be performed by a separate person



as well. The main functions of a Lethuthufa are to detect the Ni and diagnose the diseases caused by the Ni; to find out what types of animals are to be sacrificed; to prescribe articles needed to appease the Ni and to choose the place of sacrifice. Chicken, hen, fowl, pig and sometimes cow are sacrificed.

### Nigufa

Nigufa is a person who actually sacrifices the needed animals as directed by the Dashifa. Ni, as stated before, means evil spirit and Gu means sacrifice. He is to gather all the ritual articles needed for the treatment of diseases and to prepare a platform made of split bamboo.

### Hatofa

Hato is a process of treatment of diseases or a ritual performance by which all the grievances against evil spirits or the troubles given by the Ni are communicated to the clan-deity Phula. The Lisu believe that phula gives punishment to the concerned Ni. The person who actually perform Hato is called Hatofa. Hato is generally performed inside the room where the patient sleeps or falls sick. The ritual articles required for the performance of Hato are Jiphu (rice beer), Atha (straight scythe), rope, a pig, a closed basket for keeping pig and a cup made of bamboo.

In the Hato way of treatment a pig is kept in a closed basket which is then hung from the beam of a room by a rope.

One end of the rope is caught by the patient. Then Dashifa sprinkles Jiphu over the patient with the tip of a Atha chanting a charm- ' chu chu ... ' Which means that an evil spirit is giving trouble to a person who is lying on floor. 'Oh, Phula, you please punish the Ni.' The process is repeated again and again. Then the remaining portion of the rice beer is fed to the patient. Later on, the pig is sacrificed and its meat is distributed to the persons present during the process of Hato. The patient is also given few pieces of that meat after cooking. The Lisu believe that the patient is cured by this process. Herbal medicine is also used to cure the patient.

Apart from the specialists mentioned above there are no ritual specialists. There are only ordinary men who know how to perform rituals and they are called on to make them when it is necessary. It is worth mentionable here that some women know plant medicines better than other. Some know medicines for certain ailments, and when the need arises, they will provide medicines. This, however, is not a specialised role. There are also people who are expert than others in managing.

### Relationships Among Roles

Here I would like to limit the discussion to the well-developed specialist roles of Nifa, Dashifa, Hatofa, Nigufa, and Lethuthufa. All of these roles involve some kind of interaction with the supernatural or accult forces or beings. All but two of them: Nifa and Dashifa, involve the putative presence of unseen beings as alter to an ego who performs the role. Hatofa,

Lethuthu, and Nigufa involve an unseen being not as an alter to the ego but rather, as an aspect of the ego. In the roles that involve unseen alters, there is a component of learning since the role performer must learn the techniques for relating with his unseen alter. In the second set of roles there is no learning component since the unseen being is an innate characteristic of the ego. It is the kind of relationship with the unseen being that a human has that determines the learning component of the role, whether or not the role involves the use of techniques which could be called magic. Some scholars suggest that dichotomising magic and religion leads to undue confusion and that magic should be treated as one component of religion which expresses the idea that human powers are effective forces. I intend to emphasize here that it is the nature of the relationship between a human and an unseen alter which is of paramount importance in this classification system rather than the use of manipulative techniques. In the chapter of Etiology and Medical System I have described some therapeutic technique that might appear to be magic, but, since they result from a conceptual frame work and a logic which asserts that they should have their putative effects by virtue of a natural causality and not because of the exertion of human powers, they cannot be said to be magic in the Lisu view. Among those specialists who interact with an unseen alter, there is a further division. Some belong to a spirit and some possess a spirit. The Nifa belongs to his spirit. In this relationship there is no element of choice on the part of the specialist. The spirit chooses and the person is obliged to submit to the

wishes of the spirits or suffer from the consequences. Further, there is no contract between the spirit and the person.

This completes the discussion on the religious organisation of the Lisu. Here by religious organisation, I mean the organisation of spirits and the ritual specialists, their role and functions. The Lisu do not have the concept of sacred centre, purity and pollution, in their traditional belief system. Evil spirit is nothing but a soul, their brothers, who could not get the physical shape of human beings. Their society is devoid of festivals in the true sense of the term.

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25. Lisu men playing musical instruments



26. Three recently married Lisu couples with priests behind.



27. A band of Lisu singers of X'Mas festival



28. Head ornament (wulu) for Lisu women.

## CHAPTER - 9

### W O R L D   V I E W

The way a people react to, and treat and perceive natural and supernatural phenomena, social and cultural events, relationship within themselves and outside, and disease and injury reflects a manifestation of their concepts of different aspects of life, which for lack of a more precise term, is often referred to as 'World View'. This is somewhat a nebulous concept. However, this concept has been used in anthropological literature, and studied systematically since after the Second World War. In essence, world view is a set of inferences or assumptions that the people derive or make about their own world and the world around them as well as other people. It is that more essential, basic and effective part of cultural or social tradition which provides the people the answers of what is worth doing and why. Such assumption or inferences do not always reflect the realities; they are not, on the whole, illogical, but they are very often deducted from inadequate information, and not based upon scientific generalisations. From this point of view, the concept of world view may roughly or broadly be classified into two categories- the scientific and the ontological or existential which are self explanatory. Ontological or existential world view is mainly based on presumptions and unscientific generalisations, though literally ontology means the science of existence. The world views of the so called

backward or preliterate communities of the world are more or less existential in nature, whereas the world views of the so-called advance or highly educated communities of the world are more scientific in nature. But, both the types or categories of the world view are primarily meant for the survival of the human beings or societies.

The concept of world view has been variously defined and analysed by the scholars. Mehra (1977) and Adhikary (1984) reviewed critically the definitions given by different scholars. In the context of the present study, I feel it imperative, to quote some of the relevant definitions, as background.

'Mental apprehension of reality' is the world view of a community, says Sol Tax (1941) which he evolved from his study among the Guatemalan; he differentiates world view from social relations. Redfield (1952) defines world view as "the way a man, in a particular society, sees himself in relation to all else". He refined this definition in his subsequent studies (1953, 1955, 1956 and 1971) and says that world view involves "both secular and sacred spheres of life and activities, and includes both stated and unstated conceptions of the people towards everything as it comes to them." He further opines "World view is the insider's total vision and conception of everything." Forde (1954) says that "world view is expressed not only in belief system, but is also derivable from customs, rituals and actions, and there is a close relationship between the belief and the context in which they arise." Influenced by Redfield (1952),



Mandelbaum (1961), while studying the Kota, uses the concept in three levels of relationships- "Man to man, man to nature and man to supernatural." To Geertz (1968) world view is the "cognitive, existential aspects of a given culture." He differentiates it from ethos which is an evaluative element of a culture. Alan Dundes (1968) looks for world view "in any aspect of the cultural material-in kinship, in child rearing, in politics or in economy, which is often implicit rather than explicit." He points out folklore as the most important source for the study of world view. World view is a combination of three systems- cognitive, attitude and action says Mendelson (1968). He treats the cognitive system with the level of scientific world view, the attitude system with any world view, and the action systems with behavioural observation. He considers philosophy a part of world view and gives religion a prominent place in the study of world view.

Jones (1972) tries to reconcile the different approaches to world view and affirms that at the level of common denominator it includes beliefs. In her book- "National Symbol" (1973) Douglas says that cosmology and world view are same, and tries to assert the relationship between the cosmology and the social form. To Kearney (1975) world view is synonymous with cognitive anthropology but he makes a distinction between world view and the practices of cognitive anthropology viz; ethnosience and ethnosemantics. According to Vaughan (1977) "World view" is more accurately a matrix which channels and encompasses the totality of cultural



experiences, it implies that societies organise natural and supernatural phenomena into integrated meaningful systems what might be called philosophic systems." It is evident from the content analysis of the definitions given by different foreign scholars that the world view of a community is actually embeded in almost all aspects of their life. Let us now look at the definitions of world view given by Indian scholars.

In India, the study on world view is very meagre. Foremost among the Indians who have devoted their genius to the concept of world view and its analysis is Prof.Surajit Sinha. Prof.N.K. Bose also tried to define it from his experience and information generated from tribal India. Prof.J.D.Mehra (1977) made an endeavour to project the world view of Indian tribes out of the published anthropological literature. It is Dr.Adhikary (1984) who for the first time in India made a systematic study on world view based upon intensive field work of the Birhor, a nomadic hunting and gathering community of Orissa in relation to their society, under the direct supervision of Prof.Surajit Sinha. Then, Prof.L.K.Mahapatra (1984) wrote a theoretical article on "world view, Meta-philosophy and Nature." So far my knowledge goes, this is all about the work on world view in Indian Anthropology. Sinha (1958) defines world view in terms of "man's conceptualisation of and relation with nature, other men and the supernatural phenomena." He (1984) sees it as a "dynamic process of rationalisation and conceptualisation for creating a meaningful world of living. Ghosh (1968) defines world view as "a way of looking at things." To him, world view is a mental disposition, it is transmitted from one generation to another and is

conditioned by culture, language and religion. He deals with the socio-linguistic aspects, ethnocentrism and the emotional aspects of Mishmi life in terms of dominant underlying motivations. According to Bose (1971) "world view springs from the inner self, through new knowledge, and faith in past history. It is a weave of tradition, of current experience, and of hopes and fears regarding the future." He says that world view is linked with social change. Mehra (1977) says "there is either a defined area of social life which can be termed world view or that world view is to be abstracted from observation of social life." He is of the opinion that world view cannot be studied by the observation of behaviour alone. Adhikary (1984) applies successfully the conceptual framework of world view as a tool or technique to study the social reality, and the social and cultural dynamics of the Birhor community. Mahapatra (1984) tries to conceptualise world view on "Three planes - the Sensory, the extrasensory and the moral". In his opinion, one must take into account the space and time dimension to study world view. In the sensory plane, he includes the position of self and the other, the external world, animals, plants, men and women, materials and so on as space dimension; and the historic past, present and future as time dimension. In the extrasensory plane, space dimension is concerned with supernatural beings, spirits, powers, heaven and hell etc.; and the time dimension subsumes the mythical past, continuous future (transmigration of soul etc.) or cumulative future (concept of Karma etc.) and so on. The differentiation of good and bad, their gradations and combinations, the ideal, virtuous and upright man etc. are the subject matter in the moral plane.

In conceptualising this world view, it seems, Prof. Mahapatra is inspired and guided by the Hindu philosophy of life which, to my mind, may evoke problem in its application to the communities outside Hindu fold. However, he suggested to incorporate both the thinker and the man of world to get integrated world view of a people.

In studying the world view of the Lisu, I follow the lead given by Adhikary (1984) though he omitted the Birhor concept of health and the beliefs associated with it, a vital aspect of their world view i.e. the manner in which they react to, and treat disease and injury in relation to their society. Actually, each chapter of this thesis, reflects the views of the Lisu which have been compiled under a separate heading-world view.

### The Universe

The Lisu do not have a specific term for the universe. But they do have their own idea or belief about the origin and structure of the universe. The structure/or outline (Nemahi) of the universe, was created by a spider like creature referred as Ngema, later on, it was filled with earth by a creature known as Jephu. Then two girls named Aguma, endowed with supernatural power, created the hills, the mountain, the rivers, the forest, and so on. The Lisu divide their universe into four parts. They are Miwo, the sky, Miney, the earth, Mamisu, the world beyond the sky where the souls of the deceased live, and Sobulun, the world below the earth-where ant like man, designated as Sofulu, live. As regards the world above the sky

or beneath the earth, the Lisu can say nothing about its shape, or nature. To the Lisu, the structure of the universe is just like the net of a spider. But it is solid in nature. This origin and structure of the universe is known to a few old men and women only, and there is no other notions on the universe.

### Concept of Time

The Lisu are mostly guided by some prominent natural and environmental phenomena for their day to day activities. When the cock crows at dawn, they get up from sleep and start domestic work, when they see sun rise, finish their morning meals. When the birds, and hens return to their nest, the Lisu stop chore. Therefore, the Lisu concept of time may be term 'ecological' following Evan-Pritchard's (1940) terminology which he coined while working among the Nuer. The Lisu have crystalised idea of time as they have developed their own almanac referred as Euhosodu, i.e. annual calendar of months and days, the calender is given below:

### Ekhosodu (Lisu Calendar)

| No. | <u>Thinyi or Ingne</u><br>(Name of the day) | <u>English meaning</u> |
|-----|---------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1.  | Tholanyi                                    | Haye day               |
| 2.  | Lunyi                                       | Evil spirit day        |
| 3.  | Funyi                                       | Snake day              |
| 4.  | Nonyi                                       | Horse day              |
| 5.  | Yonyi                                       | Sheep day              |

|     |         |            |
|-----|---------|------------|
| 6.  | Menyi   | Monkey day |
| 7.  | Ganyi   | Hen day    |
| 8.  | Nanyi   | Dog day    |
| 9.  | Wenyi   | Pig day    |
| 10. | Haynyi  | Mouse day  |
| 11. | Anyinyi | Cow day    |
| 12. | Lanyi   | Tiger day. |

The Lisu calendar is lunar- as they count their month from moon (Haphu) rising to moon rising. Lisu month is known as Iha. When the moon is first visible that is counted as the 3rd or 4th day of the month. The Lisu week consists of twelve days, and the name of the day and the year (yikho) is same. They could not clearly explain to me how the calendar is read out. But they can very well say what is the day to-day as per calendar; which day is good or bad, in which year there will be more rain or draught. A year is counted anew after twelve years. The period from morning (Nene) to evening (Mukhu) is considered one day i.e. Thinyi. The period is called Moolu when the sun (Mimi) stands over their head. According to Lisu belief, sun is moving round the earth; night (Tishi) occurs when the sun goes under the earth, and when it comes out day begins. The Lisu say that cock (Agafew) crows thrice at night. When it crows for first time, it indicates midnight (Sarhoa-Tishi), and the last time crowing of cock indicates dawn. When the birds (Ngea), cock and hens (Gana) begin to return to nest, the Lisu understand evening is approaching. Birds' nest is called Ngekhu, and Agahi is the

nest of the hens and fowls. The Lisu divide the year into two seasons- Mucho (winter) and Manu (summer or rainy). When the grass begins to dry, leaves of some trees begin to fall down and when a flower called Muchosiwe blossoms, the Lisu understand the approaching of winter. Summer season is indicated by the growing of new leaves and grasses, and when the birds give birth to new offsprings, and by rain (Maha). It is also indicated by the blossoming of flower named- Monusiwe.

The Lisu calculate the age of a person by counting the number of times the paddy crops harvested in the jhum (shifting) field. For example, the age of a child is considered three if the paddy crop is harvested thrice after his or her birth. When the stature of a child reaches the waist of an adult male or female, then only the Lisu parents start counting the age of their children. This is due to prevalence of high rate of infant mortality.

Supernatural Deities / (For details, see chapter on religious organisation)

The Lisu do not consider every natural phenomenon animated. But they do attribute natural phenomena as an act of supernatural deities which are not many in the Lisu community. Each deity has a definite area of activities in nature. The Lisu propitiate and offer sacrifice to these deities. These supernatural deities are believed to play significant role in their life. The Lisu have the concept of Supreme Being or Almighty, designated as Wusa. Wusa is their supreme deity. He is all powerful, can see and know every details of the things happening in the world, and

everything done by the Lisu. Wusa is generally thought to be benevolent and does not interfere in the domain of other deities. The Lisu concept of Wusa does not fully connote the general notion of god, in that they do not worship Wusa, and cannot utter the name of Wusa in every occasion. The Lisu remember Wusa when they apprehend sudden danger in life falling from the tree or high hill, facing a tiger or a snake and so on. It brings misfortune to the person who calls for Wusa without any real cause, the Lisu belief<sup>ve</sup>. Phula is the popular deity, the Lisu place all their grievances and difficulties to Phula, who controls all the evil spirits commonly known as Ni. Phula always does good to the Lisu. He is believed to help all the honest people. To appease Phula, pig, goat and white cocks, are sacrificed by the Lisu. Phula lives in Yihango (vacuum).

Lo is regarded as the presiding deity over the flood (Azey-zilla), storm (Loha), earthquake, and rain. To stop the natural calamities the Lisu propitiate this deity sacrificing animals (goat and pig). Lo can take any shape man or animal or bird. Namugolo is the presiding deity of thunder (Mogu) and meteor (Mebichi). He lives in the sky, and does not do any harm to the Lisu, of all these benevolent deities, the Lisu maintain a close relationship with the Phula. The Lisu have the concept of only one female deity known as Nima, the deity of forest.

### Concept of Disease and Evil Spirits

The Lisu have their own theory of disease and therapy which is based on causes and symptoms. Accordingly, the diseases suffered by them are classified into five categories- Nima, Himana, Nabidina, Nadudu and the fifth category is the diseases whose causes are unknown to them (for details see chapter on Etiology and Medical system). Nina is the diseases caused by the wrath of evil spirit. Himana, is the stomach troubles caused by the eating of forbidden things (fruits, leaves, stems and so on) mistakenly. Nabidina, is caused by the germs, and the Nadudu is the diseases caused by physical injuries. It has been observed that most of the diseases suffered by Lisu are attributed to the wrath of evil spirits commonly named Ni. The Lisu believe that the Ni originated along with them from the same mythical gourd or pumpkin. The Lisu got the physical shape of human beings whereas the Ni did not. That is why the Ni are jealous, and always <sup>remain</sup> angry with the Lisu, and try to trap them in difficulties. Ni have no fixed shape, they can assume any shape man or animals, they desire. Each Ni has got specific name, and place to reside, and each Ni is responsible for a particular disease. The Ni live in river, lake, cave, trees, stone, road and so on. Ni can be seen by a Nifa, a person expert in dealing with Ni. The Ni punish the Lisu by inflicting different types of diseases only, and the Lisu live in constant fear of Ni. Musini, Sizini, Nachani and Yodosi, are the names of Ni (see chapter on Religion).



### View of Soul

The concept of soul is firmly rooted in the Lisu community. They even consider that Ni, the evil spirits, is nothing but a form of soul. According to their belief, a Lisu male has got nine souls, and a Lisu female has seven souls. The common term for the souls is choha. Soul is a life or living matter possessed by man or woman. Out of nine or seven souls, two souls are vital for each man and woman. One is named Ha, and the other called Mamisu. From birth to death Ha remains with human body, when it leaves the body, man or woman dies. When Mamisu leaves the body, human beings sleep. There is a constant fight going on between Mamisu and Ni as per their belief, the Lisu see dreames because of Mamisu. Each soul is tied by a rope called Logu with god-Phula. A man has nine such ropes and woman has seven. All the members of a Lisu family are tied together by a big rope with god-Phula. When a small rope of a member is disconnected by the evil act of Ni from Phula, the member concerned falls sick, and it is the foremost duty of the Nifa to repair the rope and thereby to cure the sick person. After the death of a person, where the soul Ha goes, the Lisu have no idea; but Mamisu goes to reside in the Mamisumi, the land of souls above sky. Sometimes Mamisu comes back in the shape of a ghost called Nibu to disturb the Lisu, and to ask for his or her belongings. Nibu does not do any harm to the Lisu. The Lisu feel the presence of a Nibu by the peculiar sound emitting from a graveyard or a dirty place. The Lisu, then bury the belongings and

the Nibu disappears. The Lisu do not have the idea of ancestral spirits and ancestor worship, as they could not provide any data on this aspect of life.

### Knowledge of Forest Ecology

The Lisu cannot conceive their life without forest. Simami is the term used for the forest. They can easily move or negotiate with the difficult hills, terrains and forest like a monkey, that is why the Lisu are also known as 'monkey people'. Forest provides them firewood, timbers, fodder, crops, vegetables, games for hunting and so on. Forest is also the place of romance, they love to remain in the forest from early morning to evening. This is proved by the fact that during the day, no active or adult members of a Lisu family can be found in the village. Few invalid olds and few children try to break the silence of the day in a Lisu village. They are well aware of the ins and corners of the forest and the hills around their habitation, and they have coined their own terms to describe them. The whole range of hills around them is termed Mugaphiko, Ko means hills. On the north, there are hills namely; Gasako, ten day are required to climb it, here lay the ruins of different types of planes of Second World War; Ziyawudoko, requires seven days Phagawasse needs five days, and Huanushiduko needs three days foot march from their village. On the east, stand Soluma, Wachi, and Sewpuko hills. All these hills are snow-clad.

The forest around them abounds in wild animals, and birds, and medicinal plants and herbs. The Lisu are expert hunters, and

they eat all types of animal except horse (Ama), cat (Aruya), snake (Nifu) and frog (Opa). The Lisu have a fictitious relationship with the tiger (Me-me) and boastly say that they are never attacked by a tiger. The tiger simply looks at them and goes away. Not a single incident of death from the attack of <sup>tiger</sup> ~~givers~~ is reported in the community. But they face frequent attacks of bear. It is said that bears attack invariably on their faces. Surprisingly, I found four cases of face injuries caused by bears during my field work. There<sup>is</sup> an interesting story to explain as to why bears always attack a Lisu on the face. Bears generally live in the part of the forest where big trees are available. The Lisu fell these trees by their shapp axe for timber and firewood. Bears notice them and think over it. Bears say in their mind "we are having big teeth, but cannot fell a single tree, and how these people are doing that, their teeth might be bigger and stronger than us; let us see them. The Lisu smile and say in order to see our teeth bears attack us on the face." For hunting wild animals, the Lisu hunters remain in the forest for months together. They have identified trees, plants and herbs, which are used as food during simultaneous failure of crops.

### Phenomena of Birth

The birth of a child is considered by the Lisu the gift of the god-Phula who creates new soul (choha) according to his wishes and send it in the womb of a woman. To get this gift of Phula, cohabitation and sexual intercourse is a must for the husband and wife. To the Lisu, mere sexual intercourse by a couple does

not lead to the birth of a baby; the couple must get the blessings of Phula. They argue that there are some married couples having regular sexual relation but fail to produce a baby. Because, they are devoid of the blessings of phula. The term-Soluna is used for a barren lady and Solufa is used for an impotent man. Barrenness, abortion, and still birth are explained as an evil act of the spirit named- Sini who to punish the couple concerned by destroying the Janemay (embryo of a baby). The Lisu do not believe in rebirth, and do not like to restrict child birth as it goes against the will of phula.

#### View of Marriage

The Lisu term for the marriage is Chozadi, it is an old term, and the new term marriage for the Christian Lisu is Lephecha. The Lisu consider them as all human beings, like birds and animals, a part of nature. They see birds and animals to live in pair and to produce offsprings. A Lisu or a man should marry and produce children to preserve and to continue the generation which is a part of nature. They do not regard age as a factor for an effective and happy marriage. A junior boy can easily marry a senior girl. The Lisu prefer to remain as husband and wife till death. That is why a Lisu widow or a widower does not find any difficulty for re-marriage.

#### View on Women

The Lisu treat woman as an equal natural partner in life, though the Lisu women have no right of inheritance of immovable

property, no say in the decision making process and religious affairs. They are equal in the sense that there is no clear out sex-wise division of labour in the society. Lisu women equally participate with men in all types of indoor and outdoor activities. It is not that women will always cook food, men also prepare food. Majority of the husbands consider the position of their wives equal in the Lisu society, but some wives treat their husbands as superior. Lisu women are in-charge of all household goods. Without their knowledge Lisu husbands cannot dispose any article. Entire responsibility of managing a household lies mostly with the women. A dominant view is that Lisu women are intrinsically innocent. They can not do any harm to their husbands and the society as a whole. It is the men who misguide women, provoke them to do mischiefs. That is why to settle a dispute only men are held guilty and punish accordingly.

### Tales, Song and Dance

Tales of the Lisu are characterised by the narration of an orphan<sup>ly</sup> boy i.e. Jachi nani. A good number of tales are composed with the hero as an orphan. The major part of every kind of tale is occupied by the deeds of supernatural deities, specially, the deity-Lo. Almost in all the stories, the boy falls in love with a rich beautiful girl of Lo. They marry and become rich by the blessings of Lo. These tales reflect the intimate relationship between the Lisu and the supernatural deities. Life of a Lisu is inseparable from supernatural forces. It also reflects their poverty and the cravings for wealth.

The Lisu have a slight different conception of songs. No doubt, they sing song for recreation and entertainment. But Lisu song implies competition, no competition, no song. That is they sing songs always in a competitive manner. They sing songs sitting face to face in two groups. One group finishes, the other group begins, it is just like conversation, there is little tune in their songs. It is marked by the absence of musical voice. In the traditional society, a Lisu never sings songs alone, if anybody does, it means he or she is in deep sorrow, in a pensive mood. Depending on the age of the singers, the Lisu songs termed Mogua are classified into two categories- Moguabu and Oyii. Moguabu are the group of songs sung by the old men and women, and the Oyii songs are voiced by young men and women, boys and girls including children. Marriage ceremony, house constructing and harvesting are the three occasions for songs.

The Lisu term for the dance is Wakhi. This performing art of the Lisu is of two types- Wakhikhi is a group dance performed by the Lisu irrespective of age and sex. Cheyngo is generally a competitive dance, here the dancers form two groups. It can be performed also in a non-competitive way. For instance, to welcome <sup>and men</sup> and to receive the dignitaries, Cheyngo is performed by old women. Like song, the Lisu do not have the conception of dance perform by a single person. Occasions for dance and song are same.

Folk materials (tales, song, dance, etc.) indicate the social personality of the Lisu which is more expressive of happiness and honesty than unhappiness, melancholy and dishonesty. They are good and brave fighters, and never lose a face to face battle. They aspire to become rich and desire to achieve high status.

### Concept of Work

By work the Lisu mean the things or activities done to sustain life. They survive on food grains, fruits etc. which are grown in the earth or field; plants and trees draw their sustenance from the earth. Therefore, it is of paramount importance for survival, they think, to know the method of agriculture, or the technique of cultivating the land. Agriculture, both settled and shifting type, poultry, piggery and collection of firewood are the major works of the Lisu. The Lisu love to work hard, and want others to do so. Throughout the year, from early morning to dusk they work incessantly. From November to March is the period when the intensity of work lessens. During this period, the Lisu become busy in arranging marriage for daughters and sons. It is a rarity to see a Lisu sitting idle and indulge in gossiping. Idleness is thought to be the cause of poverty. Hence, they consider idlemen the enemies of the society. Even very old men and women are found working in the vegetable garden or preparing food for pigs, though they are greatly respected. They want to die working. Every Lisu is a potential labour force irrespective of sex and age. Exchange of labour is a feature of their economic life. The Lisu highly value economic

independence and cooperation. For instance, during peak agricultural season if the members of a family are unable to work due to illness, others will come and cultivate their land. The Lisu hardly engage labourers on the basis of payment cash or kind.

### The Headman

The headman of the Lisu village is designated as Chowu. Chowu is viewed as a god-gifted man. All the powers for social control maintenance of peace, law and order are delegated to Chowu. He is a keeper of the Lisu society. Chowu acts as an administrator of a magistrate, a judge, an advocate, a leader and a great soldier of the Lisu. In short, Chowu is a secular head. His main function is to give impartial judgement in every case. He is required to exercise the vested authority in the maintenance of right, in punishing the wrong doers, and rewarding the righteous and brave people. Chowu is selected by the will of the Lisu following trial and error method. He is above the will of the people. If a chowu is found incapable of dispensing justice to his people, he is immediately eliminated from the post. A Lisu to be selected as chowu should be intelligent, courageous and physically strong. The Lisu say - the man should have presence of mind, sharp memory, imaginative power, sufficient knowledge of the traditional rules and customs and the ability to understand the Swakush (psychology) of the mob. The Lisu believe that a man to be designated as Chowu is born by the blessings of god-Phula, with all these noble qualities.



### Phenomenon of Death (Sochi)

According to Lisu philosophy, god-phula gives life, and Ni takes it away. Life is termed choha. Choha of a Lisu is made up of two souls mainly- Ha and Mamisu. When Ha leaves a body, a Lisu dies. After the death of a person; the soul- Mamisu goes to Mamisumi; where the soul-Ha goes, the Lisu have no definite idea. Some says it mixes with air. The Lisu believe that death brings complete cessation of life. Once left, a soul cannot re-enter into human body. All kinds of death are attributed to the evil acts of Ni. Death due to old age, snake-bite, the attack of bear, falling from a tree, deseases, pregnancy and so on, in all these cases Ni are held responsible. Some thinks that death is natural phenomenon, it cannot be prevented. Death due to pregnancy is considered very harmful. Souls of such woman cannot reach Mamisumi it turns into a ghost called-Niha or Nibu. Then she gives all sorts of troubles to the Lisu. To avoid that harmful situation, the Lisu take the unborn baby out of mother's womb and buried it separately. By this act of separate burial souls of both the mother and baby reach Mamisumi and the birth of ghost is avoided.

### Aspiration

Thought of old age and future generation termed zu occupies a prominent place in the life of a Lisu. In fact, the whole gamut of Lisu life revolves around this thought. Burden of old age importunes them again and again. They do not like to live to the age of invalid. Before reaching that last atage of life, death is welcomed. In other words, an old Lisu man or woman

prefers to die when he or she still has the capability to do a little bit of household activities. At old age, they expect help and care from any son, preferably the youngest son called zadi. They become more happy if they get care from their daughters. In order to achieve this goal of life, they do not like to restrict birth, on the contrary, they prefer to produce as many children as they can. The logic behind this attitude is that at least one of the children will surely look after the old parents. Death is joyful to the Lisu when they die leaving behind sufficient stock of food grains and a large number of children, grand children and great grand children. It gives them great pleasure to see that his or her generation will continue after death, and they will find no difficulty in maintaining life. An old Lisu becomes more happy to see the coffin and the site of burial before death. Death becomes painful to the old Lisu when they die for want of food, when there is no one to look after them. It is customary for the Lisu to narrate the different experience of life to son's or daughters', and relatives before death.

#### Knowledge of Hindu Society

The Lisu have a very poor knowledge about Hindu or Indian society. Knowledge on the Hindu society is mostly derived from the economic interaction with the Nepali ex-army men who have been given permanent settlement near the locality of the Lisu since 1964, by the government of India. At the initial stage, the pattern of interaction between the Lisu and the Nepali settlers was one of co-operation and reciprocal. At present, it is one of conflict and competition. The Nepali settlers are arranged in hierarchical order which is followed rigidly. Ethnic composition

of the Nepali settlers is as follows: Brahman (priestly class), Chhetri (warrior class), Pradhan (business class), Mugar (agriculturist), Rai (agriculturist), Limboo (Agriculturist), Gurung (Agriculturist), Tamang (agriculturist), Kami (blacksmithy), Sonar (goldsmithy), Domai (tailor), Sarki (cobbler), and Bhujal (palanguin bearer). In the new ecological and social setting, none of these castes follows their traditional callings, they are all, irrespective of high or low statuses, are engaged in agriculture.

Views of the Lisu on the Hindu society as reflected through their contact with the Nepali settlers may be summarised as follows:-

- 1) Hindu society is divided into different groups. No unity or cooperation exists between the groups. The Lisu are not aware of the hierarchical order prevailing in the Hindu society.
- 2) They prefer to lead on individualistic mode of life, without bothering the difficulties and comforts of others.
- 3) They are mostly corrupted and dishonest people.
- 4) Sex rules are not rigidly maintained in the Hindu society, besides husbands, their women sleep with many other men.
- 5) Hindus are not labourious, and they are heavily addicted to alcoholic drinks.
- 6) They cannot explain why they are called Hindu.

It is interesting to note that the Lisu look at other people or societies in contrast to the good qualities or

characters of their own people or society. According to their own evaluation these qualities of the Lisu are : the rigidity of sex rules, tremendous amount of unity and cooperation, maintenance of strict secrecy, and laboriousness. The Nepali also take these characters of the Lisu for granted. The term- Kalafa is used to refer Hindus or Indians. The Lisu say, this is the term actually used by the Burmese for Indians. They have borrowed it from the Burmese. Dimpha and Chonepha are the two Lisu terms used to designate Hindus or Indians. Dimpha means outsider, and Chonepha means black people. For the British and American peoples, the Lisu use the term- Whaphupha means white people. Thoubufa and Xichafa are the two terms used by the Lisu to designate my position in their society. Thoubufa is male person who writes about their culture and society in general fashion; and Xichafa is again a male person who thoroughly investigate and interpretate the rules, customs, norms and behaviour of the Lisu for their good. These two words very often floated to my ears while I was moving in or around the Lisu village with my interpreter and informants for collecting information.

It is obvious from the description that the Lisu confront many visible and invisible things in the natural and supernatural domains, in their ecological and social circumstances, and by creating a meaningful way, they maintain a kind of intimate relation with them. The human world of the Lisu, the natural and supernatural domains, the habitat and ecological setting, and their neighbours are linked together to form a meaningful world of living for the Lisu.



30. Aluminium ear ring (nakho)  
for Lisu women



29. Conch's discs' necklace  
(wooja) for Lisu women

## CHAPTER - 10

### ETIOLOGY AND MEDICAL SYSTEM

Medical anthropology, more precisely, clinical anthropology, has emerged in recent years, and it is pleasant to see and important to recognise that it is within anthropology, and not within any of the proliferating branches of medicine, that medical anthropology has come to the fore; and a journal on this new dimension of knowledge entitled medical anthropology has started coming out regularly. Hitherto, ethnomedical beliefs and practices in developing and similar countries, have been discussed principally as aspects of witchcraft or sorcery either mainly by anthropologists with little knowledge of medicine or by medical men of conservative or historicist tendency. As a result, little has been done so far towards abstracting these health beliefs and health practices from their contexts, and treating them as subjects for generalization. No doubt, indigenous medicine is associated with witchcraft or sorcery system, but not always, it is not unlike the indigenous medicine of Europe before scientific revolution. Thus the increasing knowledge on medical anthropology may supplement the encroaching medicine of the west. According to Bulletin (1978:16-17) of the International Committee on Urgent Anthropological and Ethnological Research, "it should be of prime concern to the medical anthropologist, but this could be most rewarding in association with an investigation of the concomitant responses of the society or community to medicine introduced from outside." Anthropology can have important role in the

clinical setting to facilitate patient care by health professionals, because it presents powerful methodologies which may be used within the existing health care system to help health professionals resolve issues of ethnicity and medical care. Anthropological theory and method may be applied to health programmes in the interests of efficacy or effectiveness. With these few introductory words, let us now turn to the discussion of the Lisu medical theory.

The Lisu have their own medical beliefs and theory or system which are based on causes and symptoms. The morbid conditions of the human body or the physical sufferings of human beings are indigenously classified by the Lisu into five categories, namely, Nina, Himana, Nabidina, Nadudu and there is a category of the diseases whose causes are unknown to them, and it has no nomenclature. Na is the Lisu term for disease. Let us discuss them individually. Causes, symptoms and the treatments of the diseases are discussed simultaneously. By reading these descriptions of the diseases, the modern physicians may easily detect the actual kinds of diseases suffered by the Lisu.

#### Category: Nina

Nina is the common name for those diseases that are caused by the wrath of Ni, the evil spirit. Majority of the diseases suffered by the Lisu fall under this category. The followings are the diseases conceived by the Lisu under this category:

#### Yidosi-nina

Yidosi is the name of an evil spirit who lives in dirty water of the stream or river, and the disease caused by this

spirit is termed Yidosinina. This spirit remains in angry mood always, as believed by them. When a Lisu knowingly or unknowingly throws stones or a small piece of wood into the water, then he or she is caught by the disease-Yidosinina. In this disease, the patient feels serious pain in almost all the small joints of the body specically in great toe, knee and ankle and waist. This disease seems equal to gout suffered by the so called civilised person.

### Yidosinachu

This disease is again caused by the Ni-Yidosi. When a branch of a tree ofa a stone falls into water all on a sudden, the spirit becomes very angry, and the unfortunate person present there gets this disease. In this disease, inflamation with serious pain occurs on any part of the body suddenly. He or she may get this disease while crossing a stream or a river.

### Treatment

First step taken for the treatment of the diseases-Yidosinina and Yidosinachu is to detect the Ni by the process of Lethuthu, done by a witch-doctor called Dashifa. After the detection of the Ni, Dashifa, pastes a piece of triangular paper or cloth just like a flag to one end of a bamboo stick, and in that cloth a small amount of Dichi, a herbal medicine is tight up, Dichi, is prepared from a herb called Dikhaw grows automatically in the snow-clad hills. Then Dashifa oscilates or swings, holding the other end of the stick, the paper or cloth over the body of the patient again and again requesting the Ni to leave the body of



the patient, as he is offering costly things like Dichi, and woollen blanket (i.e. the triangular piece of cloth). This treatment is done generally outside the residence of the patient and if the patient is unable to move, then it is done inside the house. As reported by the informants, most of the patients are cured by this treatment or process which is termed Wu. If the process of Wu fails to cure the patient, then another process termed Negu is applied, where animal sacrifice, and fire are required. In the Negu process of treatment, a bamboo platform is prepared outside the house, under this platform, a hen or a pig is sacrificed. Taking small pieces of flesh from all parts of the animal's body, a meat curry is prepared, which is then offered to Ni putting them on the bamboo platform in hot condition. Ni is then requested to accept the offerings and leave the body. After the offerings, rest of the meat are consumed by all the members of the family including the patient;. It is the firm belief of the Lisu, that by this process of treatment, all the patients of bodyache are fully cured. In the end of this process, Dashifa threatens Ni to leave the body, by felling that he will call a bear (Wopha) to destroy their residences, a monkey to kill them all, and ultimately, Lo, a supernatural being, who can destroy, hills, rivers, etc. Initially, Dashifa, tries to appease the Ni by sacrifices and offerings, and ultimately, he threatens the very existence of Ni for the treatment of the patient. They believe that, if Negu process fails, nobody can cure the patients of bodyache.

### Chegunina

This is the disease of the chest caused by the Cheguni, here the patient feels intolerable pain at the chest. Cheguni is believed to reside in the road, who always remains in angry mood. The Lisu believe that they get this disease in the chest all on a sudden while moving through a road. It is said that the Cheguni moves in the road with a knife and stabs it to the chest of a Lisu while walking through a road or crossing a road. As a result of this attack, the patient gets serious pain in his chest (Osi) on all a sudden. This disease-Chegunina is cured by the process of Wu, by Dashifa. In addition, a hen is set free to appease Cheguni. It is said, that patient gets relief from the chest pain by this process.

### Dinina

By this disease a person loses his life vigour or energy gradually, the person becomes weak and weak. In its initial stage, the disease can not be detected. When the person is unable to move or walk and when he or she is not able to take food, then only the attack of the disease-Dinina is felt. The patient becomes thin and pale. This disease is caused by an evil spirit called Dini.

### Treatments

First to detect the disease and the Ni responsible for it Lethuthu is done by the Dashifa. The disease is cured by the process of Nigu.

### Hikawmina

This disease cannot be detected easily, here the patient feels uneasy, and his or her entire body suffers from muscular and tissue pain; when the disease becomes acute, the patient is not able to walk, and stops taking food. This disease is caused by a Ni called Hikawni. This Hikawni is believed to live in the house with the Lisu, and this Ni is treated as their brother.

### Treatments

First to detect the disease and the evil spirit Lethuthu is done by the Dashifa. After its detection, first Wu is applied, if not cured then Nigu process is done to cure the disease by sacrificing a pig in the name of the Hikawni, thereby Ni is requested to leave the patient. It is believed to be cured by the process of Nigu.

### Nichanina or Sizinina

This is actually the skin disease caused by an evil spirit known as Nich<sup>a</sup>eni or Sizini. This evil spirit lives in the trees, herbs and creepers. The Lisu are attacked by this disease- Nichanina or Sizinina while they go to forest for hunting games or gathering tubers. While they move in the forest tearing herbs and creepers, the Ni gets annoyed and angry; and as a result, eruptions comes out in the dorsal part of the body, but never on the ventral part, as their belief goes. Sometimes, watery substances or fluid or pus comes out. According to Lisu

belief, a skin disease or any disease caused by the germs generally occurs on the ventral parts of the body. While moving in the house, as their belief goes, the soul of the person is taken away and is kept in the room of the ants. These ants are believed to be the body-guards or soldiers of the Nichani or Sizini. Sizini's soldiers i.e. ants bite the soul, then and there the eruptions come out in the dorsal parts of the person concerned; or they suffer from skin disease. This disease is actually due to absence of soul from the body.

#### Treatments

The Lisu get rid of this disease- Nichanina or Sizinina by the same process of Wu and Nigu. The most vital and paramount important here is to satisfy or appease the spirit Sizini and thereby bring back the soul into the body of the concerned person.

#### Musichu

This disease- Musichu is caused by the wrath<sup>of</sup> an evil spirit known as Musi. This evil spirit (Ni) lives in rock, cave and big trees. When the Lisu open a new field by slash and burn method, they are attacked by this disease-Musichu, when they unknowingly sets fire on the trees, caves etc. where this spirit<sup>is</sup> believed to live. Out of anger, this spirit Musi, captures the soul of the person who sets the fire on, and keeps it in confinement. As a result, the person suffers from serious headache, behaves abnormally, repeatedly utters- "my belongings have been set on fire," and becomes unconscious in the end. By this symptom, the Lisu easily recognise it as an act of Musini.

### Treatments

This disease is cured by Dashifa by the process of Nigu, which is done in a little bit different way. In this type of Nigu- white cloth or paper, white hens, goats and pigs are essential to appease the Musni who loves to take all of them, as they believe. In addition, the place of Nigu is surrounded by bamboo stick fencing. It is believed, after the performance of Nigu, the patient is recovered completely.

### Nebukho

Nebukho is actually the disease of the tooth i.e. toothache. Nebu means the soul of a dying person, and Kho means to catch the tooth. In this disease, the patient gets serious pain in a tooth suddenly. Underlying belief is that the soul of a dying person who is very near and dear to them, who wants to live longer, holds or catches a tooth of one of his or her relatives as a last resort for survival. As a result, the gum of tooth swells and pain occurs, blood and pus come out from the root of the tooth, in modern term the disease may be pyorrhoea.

### Treatments

The process of treatment of this disease-Nebukho is known as Nebuti, which is done by Dashifa. In this process, in a big iron spoon few small pieces of pork as well as few partly burnt charred woods are kept. Holding this spoon by right hand, Dashifa repeatedly request the Nebu in a chanting tone to leave the tooth. In its second stage of treatment, in a big flat and circular bamboo basket, some amount of cooked rice, and meat, and rice beer

(Diphu) are kept. Then sitting at the door of the patient's house, Dashifa gradually throws them one by one in the air in the name of Nebu requesting in a chanting tone, to leave the tooth of the patient, as he is offering so many things. The patient is believed to be cured by this process. And if it is not cured, then within few days, the tooth falls down automatically and the patient gets permanent relief.

### Nibunikho

This is also a kind of tooth disease caused by Ni who sends the soul (Nebu) of a dying person younger or old to catch a tooth of her or his near and dear ones. It differs from Nibukho in that in Nibunikho, tooth never falls down, no pus is formed in the root of the tooth, no blood comes out. Only the gum of a particular tooth swells and serious pain occurs. This disease of the tooth occurs temporarily; as soon as the concerned person dies, the trouble vanishes automatically as per Lisu belief. Out of frustration and jealousy and ill wishes of the young man, who is dying and cannot eat anything, therefore he wants his friend or near relative should not eat anything, the Nibunikho is believed to occur. No treatment is prescribed for this disease.

### Nima

This is a kind of eye disease, believed to be caused by the Ni. In this disease, one eye, sometimes both the eyes of the patient become swollen and red. This disease occurs intermitently. The eye patient is cured by Dashifa by the process of Nigu. According to the Lisu, this disease is not infectious.

Nado or Nasi

By the attack of this disease, the patient suffers from slight fever for two or three days, then eruptions come out all over the body. In each and every eruption watery substance accumulates gradually. This disease may be the modern small or chicken pox. This is supposed to be caused by the Ni. After the detection of the disease, pork is taken by every member of the family including the patient as a remedial measure. If it fails, then Nigu is applied. When all types of treatments fail, they die one after another, and the Lisu leave the habitation forever.

Niju

This is a fatal disease caused by the Ni. In this disease, the patient suffers from constant cough, associated with blood, in the last stage of the disease, the patient vomits blood. The patient becomes very weak, rickety<sup>t</sup> and skeleton and his face swells, at this stage of the disease, the patient is removed in a cave in the jungle, and food and water is supplied to him or her by his or her relatives for few days. Then the patient is allowed to die by the turn of the disease. No relatives or friends visit the patient any more. Symptoms of Niju point to the modern Tuberculosis. As per their belief, no Nifa or Dashifa can cure this disease.

Wudo

This is a disease supposed to be caused by an evil spirit. Old men and women generally suffer from the Wudo. Here internal

growth red in colour takes place around the anus. During evacuation of bowels, it comes out and the patient gets serious pain in the anus. To get relief, the patient pushes it back inside the anus. The persons suffered from this disease become very weak physically and unable to move. This may be internal piles in modern sense.

### Treatments

The process of treatment of this disease called Hato and the person who does this treatment is named Hatofa. Here a pig is kept in a basket, tightened with a rope, and one end of that rope is caught by the patient. Then Hatofa chants charms and prays to phula, their god, to relieve the patient of the Wudo. The patient seldom gets cure by this process.

### Napuna

This is a common disease of the ear caused by an evil spirit called Hikawni. Napuna is of two types- Napukay; when ear infaltes and pinching pain occurs; and Napuchiyi, when pus forms in the ear. The disease is treated by the process of Wu and Nigu.

### Nichichi

This is a diseased by an evil spirit. In this disease the patient begins to tremble all on a sudden, not by fear, sometimes falls down on the grand, and looses sense. The Lisu have not been able to device any treatment for this disease. It is cured automatically.



Nimeme

This is madness, when a Lisu is possessed or over-powered by an evil spirit named Musini, meme-means to behave abnormally. Here the patient, talks, laughs, sings and dance, sometimes predicts the future of a person or of a village. There is no treatment for this patient. The patient is cured automatically. Sometimes they sing praise song named Nima in the name of Ni.

Nijuna

This is a fatal disease. The patient rarely survives from the attack of this disease. In this disease, the patient's skin and muscle gets dried, and becomes ricketty, unable to move or eat. The Lisu have no medicine for this disease. The patient is removed in a ~~jungle~~ hut where food and drinks are provided so long the patient is able to take them. Then the patient dies automatically.

Lachuphu

This is a disease of the tongue. Tongue swells and ulcer is formed. This is believed to be caused by an evil spirit called Awani. The disease is treated by the process of Wu, and leaves of some plants are also used as medicine for this disease.

This completes our discussion on the diseases supposed to be caused by the wrath of evil spirits.

Category Nabidina

This is the second category of the diseases which are thought to be inflicted by the germs, worms, insects, and by

the pollin<sup>e</sup> grains of different flowers blossomed in the forest. The Lisu have two concepts of germs. Germs created by nature called Naxi, and germs created by evil spirits called- Nahu. The diseases caused by these two types of germs are discussed under Nabidina, Nabidi, is a common term for germs, worms, insects, etc. and Na means pain or sufferings. According to the Lisu belief the diseases inflicted by the germs of nature is not so painful, not so intolerable, and the resultant sufferings continue for few days, and it rarely leads to death; whereas the disease cause by Ni and its germs are fatal, very painful, intolerable, sufferings continue for months together which in most cases leads to death. Lisu medical expert can easily differentiate the diseases caused by evil spirits and its germs, and by the germs created by nature.

### Wobu

This is an abdominal diseases associated with pain in the stomach and loose motion, sometimes white worms come out with stool. The patient suffers from this disease for two weeks at the most. Persons of all age groups suffer from this disease.

### Treatment

Two types of treatments prevail. Liquid of gall bladder of pig and fish is mixed ~~is mixed~~ with water and ashes which is then filters through a piece of clean cloth. This medicine is given to the patient twice or thrice in a day for one week and the patient is cured. In the second type of treatment the root of Sichi, a kind of herbs, is crushed and mixed with water which is then given to the patient twice in a day; and the patient gets

relief completely.

### Chuhu

All kinds of fevers due to malaria, cold, and eating of unripe fruits of jungle and sugarcane are put together under one common name Chuhu. Chuhu is also supposed to be caused by germs which they are unable to detect.

### Treatments

Patient is given liquid of gall bladder of bear mixed with water, thrice in a day. Besides, the roots of Sichi, a kind of jungle herb, crushed into liquid then mixed with water is given to the patient thrice in a day. The patient is believed to be cured by these two types of medicines.

### Nyahu

This is a kind of eye disease, eyes become red and inflated, water comes out frequently from both eyes. Nyahu is an epidemic disease, this occurs due to infections of the germs.

### Treatments

Both the eyes are carefully washed with salt-water a many times as they can afford, because salt is not readily available to them. Kabuchey, a kind of plant's leaves, after, extracting its juice, is applied to the eyes. By these methods patients are cured.

Nachu

This is a kind of ulcer occurs at any part of the body. At the initial stage of the disease, the skin of that particular place becomes red, inflates, then pus is formed inside.

Treatments

At first, pus is pressed out and the skin is removed. Then a kind of plant's leaves round in shape called Nuchey is warmed on fire then pastes on the spot or ulcer. Nuchey is replaced by new one twice or thrice in a day. The patient gets cure within one week.

Obuna

This is a kind of headache occurred during seasonal change or change in climate. Obuna continues for three or four days. No prescribed medicine is used for the disease. They simply pull downward the head hairs with a sudden jerk. The patient is cured by this process.

Napochiyi

This is a disease of the ear frequently suffered by the Lisu. Pain occurs in the ear and then in later stage pus comes out.

Treatments

Bat's skin is burnt into ashes which is then applied in the ear. A kind of sticky substance that emits from the wings of hens is also used for the recovery of this disease.

### Huchi

This is a skin disease, eruptions come out all over the body, the patient is frequently engaged in itching the body. The germ of this skin disease is named Yikhu.

### Treatments

The disease is cured by applying Muse all over the body. Muse is a dark substance formed as a layer on the walls of the kitchen or on the hanging platform made upon the hearth. Muse is mixed with water, then applied all over the body after a vigorous itching. Besides, clothings of the patient are changed and washed them in hot water. The patient is supposed to cure by this way of treatment.

### Chunguhu

This is a type of cough caused by the germ or pollen grains of some hilly flowers during summer season. No prescribed treatment is there for the disease- Chunguhu. To get relief of this disease, the Lisu take leaves and roots of the plants which are very bitter in taste.

### Hina

This is a disease of the stomach or abdomen. Here the patient feels pain and goes to latrine again and again. In the later stage of the disease, blood comes out with the stool, leading to blood dysentery.

### Treatments

Three types of medicines are used in the treatment of Hina. Raw rice is fried until it becomes black in colour, then some amount of water is poured into it. Then this water is given to the patient three or four times in a day. Chichu-hilly fruits, are boiled with water which is then kept in a bottle for few days. Then this water is given as medicine to the patient twice a day. In a raw bamboo tube called Bechutho, with a hole at its bottom, some amount of hot ashes are kept in. Then water is poured into the tube which then comes out and accumulates into a pot. This water named Koha-woye, is given to the patient four or five times in a day. The patient of the blood dysentery is supposed to be fully cured by these treatment.

### Chelona

Any disorder in the stomach indigestion, pain, vomiting and so on, is named Chelona. Men and women of all age groups become prey of this disease.

To get relief of this diseases gall bladder of any fish is taken out and engulfed by the patient in tato. Second way of treatment is that a big earth worm like worm called Wobu by the Lisu that sometimes comes out during evacuation of bowels is caught and dried up into powder which is then given to the patient as medicine. Patient is cured completely by these two methods of treatments.

### Sichikho

This is the disease of the teeth in which cavity is formed and pain occurs. Sichi means tooth, and Kho denotes pinching pain.

To get remedy from this disease, a piece of flesh or liver of any animal is roasted on fire and kept in the cavity. This process of treatment is repeated again and again. If it is not cured, the affected tooth is pulled out by cutting the gum with a sharp knife.

### Sololona

This is again a type of disease of the tooth, specially last molar. When it begins to erupt, serious pain is felt in the inflated gum. No prescribed treatment is there for the Sololona. For its relief, the Lisu cut the affected<sup>d</sup> portion of the gum by a sharp knife.

### Nachudi

This is a type of skin disease more specifically an ulcer occurred on any part of the body. The disease-Nachudi may be the scabies called by the modern doctor. The Lisu prescribe, two types of treatments for the Nachudi. One is called Athabuchungo, and the second type is known as Siche-Chungo. In Athabuchungo, butt of a straight Scythe (dao) is heated on fire on a tolerable extent and then pressed on the ulcer repeatedly. Atha, means straight scythe (dao), Bu means handle or butt, Chu means warm, and Ngo means to press. By this treatment, the germ of the disease is killed and the patient is cured. In the second type of treatment, serrated leaves of a plant is warmed on fire and repeatedly applied or pasted on the ulcer.

### Chilonuna

In this disease, an ulcer is formed at foot heel. For its

remedy, no prescribed treatment or medicine is there. The Lisu purge the pus out and cut out the affected skin by a very sharp knife.

### Ajay-seymu

This is the disease of the leg. Legs inflates, and pain occurs. This disease is thought to be caused by the germs of water

To heal this disease, a stone is collected from the river-bed and put on fire. After sometime the stone is taken out from fire and cold water is poured on it, and when the vapour begins to come out, the inflated leg is placed on vapour. This process of healing is repeated several times. Ajay, means water, Sey, denotes vapour and Mu means blow.

### Bodi-Sey-chungo

This is a skin disease caused by an insect called Bodisey in Lisu language. The Lisu get this disease by the contact of this insect while working in the forest, its contact produces eruptions in the skin, and thereby pain occurs. Affected portion of the skin is vigorously treated by a knife, and then the place is constantly rubbed by head hairs.

### Chuhuchu

This is a kind of cough caused by a germ called-Chuhu; chu-means cough. No Lisu can escape the attack of this disease; as they believe. At least once in life, they suffer from the attack of this disease. Chuhuchu is believed to be infectious.



Children frequently suffer from this disease, sometimes they die. Its symptom is constant coughing, dry-cough with breathing trouble, may be whooping cough in modern sense.

The only medicine prescribed by the Lisu is the dry gall bladder (chi) of bear (wopha). Dry gall bladder is cut into small pieces then mixed with hot water which is then given to the patient twice daily morning and evening. The patient gets remedy by this process of healing. Sometimes, the patient is advised to live in the forest until it is cured automatically.

#### Cheuhuchen or Nahuchi

This is a malaria type fever caused by germ called Hu. Cheu means fever. The patient suffers from intermittent fever. Fever remits with perspiration on a particular time in everyday.

For the treatment of this disease, the Lisu eat bitter taste ripe fruit called Apumu, and leaves called Mishni-tita in Assamese language. During fever, they take rice with chicken which is believed to be a method of healing.

#### Nadu

This is a serious headache caused by germs called Nahu. Pain in the brain or head becomes so serious that the patient cannot take food, somebody has to feed the patient. The Lisu believe that Nahu is created by the Ni. This is thought to be infectious. Nifa, the expert in dealing with Ni treats this disease, by satisfying evil spirits. If fails then he uses the

root of a jungle creeper named Hinamechi. Its root is cut into pieces, then boiled with water and this water is given to the patient twice daily. Root of this plant is also used to cure the disease Hina, caused by the germs of the Ni. A rat like jungle animal called Hepuwu by the Lisu is killed and its alimentary tract is taken out and dried up placing on the Teju, a hanging shelf, then cut into pieces and boiled with water. This water is treated as medicine for the Nadu. Then again, a goat like jungle animal called a Ha by the Lisu, whose legs are dried by natural process, then boiled with water, this water along with bone marrow (pi) is given to the patients of Nadu. In similar fashion, legs along with bone-marrow of an animal called Anga is used as medicine for the treatment of Nadu. This is also used as preventive medicine for the disease. This completes the description of the diseases inflicted by worms or germs.

#### Category: Causes Unknown

There is a third category of diseases, caused neither by germs nor by evil spirits, the causes of these diseases are unknown to them, they have no common name for this category of diseases. Some of these diseases are as follows:

#### Nono-wa-khikhi

Lisu women frequently suffer from this disease after delivering a baby. Here the breast (Nono) moves up and down automatically causing serious pain, sometimes they become senseless. It is said, if in the initial stage of the disease, the patient operates

husking machine, blankly by both the feet alternatively in quick succession, the patient is cured very soon. Otherwise, leaves of a plant called Hiwochey is used. Leaves are made soft by the pressure of hand palms then pasted around the nipple on the breasts. Disease is cured within few days.

### Tamafu

This is a fatal disease, nobody can survive the attack of Tamafu. They cannot detect the disease in the initial stage; when detected death is inevitable. White spots or scars appear all over the body, both the body and head-hair begin to fall. The patient becomes anemic, and very weak, and skeleton, abstain from eating and drinking, unable to walk. At this stage the patient is removed to a cave made artificially near by a river in the jungle. Ultimately, the patient dies there and the corpse is washed away by the current of the river. The Lisu have not been able to find any remedy for this disease referred as Tamafu.

### Nephuwu

This is the disease of the testis (Naphu) of the Lisu children. In this disease, the testis of the child inflates and becomes reddish in colour. Blood that comes out from mother's body during delivery is considered very poisonous by the Lisu; testis of a baby or a child swells due to contact of that poisonous blood, as they belief.

To cure this disease, mother's pubic hairs are burnt into ashes, and then it is mixed with hot water which is then given to

the patient thrice or four times in a day. The patient is cured within one week.

### Zuphuna

This is a disease of the genital organ of the young unmarried or married Lisu girls. Here the vagina of the girls inflates, pain occurs, and white substance called Bah comes out constantly.

The patient is cured by the same method as used in Naphuwu. In addition, urinary bladder (Moduchu) of the monkey is boiled with water, and the water is <sup>fed</sup>~~given~~ to the patient three or four times in a day. The patient is cured within one week.

### Chalow

In this disease, young boys and girls feel pain and burning sensation during urination; and they can not urinate properly.

To get relief from this disease, a nocturnal bird red in colour, called Huaju, is killed, and ten to twelve grains of rice are kept in the urinary bladder of that bird for about one or two years. Then one grain so prepared, is fed to patient everyday. The patient is cured within four days, as per their belief.

### Quick and safe delivery

For quick and safe delivery, the Lisu have a peculiar device. When the delivery is delayed and the pregnant woman gets trouble, the penis of a hunted bear is shown to the mother, and then oscillates a hind leg as that bear over the belly of the woman.

This process is believed to be quickened the delivery.

Category: Himana

Then there is fourth category of diseases suffered from the eating of certain fruits, leaves, plants, etc. which are generally forbidden, but consumed mistakenly, and the general name for these diseases is Himana, it means stomach-troubles or abdominal diseases. Some of these plants and fruits are as follows :

Lasupi

A kind of plant grows automatically near the field of shifting cultivation. It is a taboo for the Lisu to take any part specially the stem of this plant. If by mistake, anybody takes it, suffers from pain in the abdomen. The disease caused by this plant is known as Himana. And its treatment is the same as recorded before.

Solue-nichi

This is a variety of wild plum grows near the jhum field. If it is taken in immature condition, pain occurs in the belly. The disease goes by the same name of Himana. Treatment of this disease is same as recorded before.

Osha

This is a kind of maize grown in the jhum (shifting) field by the Lisu. If Osha is consumed raw then serious pain occurs in the stomach. Treatment is as mentioned earlier.

Zimachu

This is a variety of lemon with acid pulp, and sour taste. If it is excessively consumed, one is caught by fever. There is no treatment for this kind of fever which is cured automatically after three or four days.

Sipu

This is a jungle fruit oval in shape, small in size. One gets both sour and sweet taste in this fruit. It is a taboo to eat this fruit; one suffers from blood dysentery by consuming it. No treatment prevails, it is cured automatically after few days.

Bana

This is an abdominal disease of the Lisu women. It is a firm belief of the Lisu, that if a mother after delivery takes cold rice, cold water or any cold fruit, she suffers from abdominal pain; sometimes abdomen swells. According to Lisu medical belief, Bana is not curable if not treated at the initial stage. As a remedy, small pieces of fried chicken is regularly fed to the mother for one month.

This ends the discussion on the disease caused by eating or consuming certain types of fruits and plants or by consuming tabooed- things.

Category:Nadudu

Nadudu is nothing but wounds or physical injuries caused by accidents which are beyond their control. This is the fifth or

last category of the diseases. In their day to day life, the Lisu face calamities both natural and physical. Falling from a tree, or a hill, hit by a rolling boulder, or by land-slide, attacks of wild animals, and so on are common happenings to them. Besides, while working in the agricultural fields, felling a tree, collecting firewood, etc. , they suffer from a lot of physical injuries minor or major cuts, hurts, fractures and so on. For the treatment of all kinds of physical injuries, they use plants and herbs which have tremendous healing effect. These plants, and herbs and its leaves and roots, are commonly known as Nache-chey. Nache means medicinal value or healing effect, and chey means leaves, generally. The plants or herbs and the leaves that are frequently used for healing purposes or which have medicinal value are as follows:

Our botanists may note these names and identify the medicinal plants and trees for use in the future.

#### Yeyi-mu-chey

This is the name of a herb found in the jungle. Its leaves are used to stop blood that comes out from any part of the body as a result of injury. Leaves of this herb with sputum <sup>are</sup> ~~is~~ pressed by hand palms into a soft mass. Squeezing this soft mass <sup>a</sup> few drops of juice or liquid are carefully dropped on the place of injury from where blood comes out. The whole soft mass of leaves is pasted on the affected part. Their experiences say that bleeding stops immediately and the patient is cured within few days.

Yikhawchey

This is a kind of plant. This plant is of two types- one is greenish and the other is blackish. Both the types have medicinal value, but blackish one is more useful. Leaves of this plant <sup>are</sup> ~~is~~ used in the same manner as described before to stop bleeding of the injuries that accidentally occur while working with a knife, straight scythe (Atha) and sickle. Moreover, blackish leaves are cut into pieces, then fried with the fat of pig or cow, then it is cooked with chicken which <sup>is</sup> then <sup>fed</sup> ~~given~~ to the patient who sustain injuries as a result of falling from a tree or hit by a rolling boulder. The medicine so prepared is considered to be very effective and the patient gets relief within few days.

Wuchachey

This is the name of a jungle tree whose leaves are used to heal broken bones and bone fracture, and bone cracks. Wuchazi, is the most useful tree for joining broken bones. Leaves of these tree are collected in large quantities, then pressed into soft mass which is then pasted to the place of injury, then wrapped by a piece of cloth. Tender leaves are cooked with chicken and fed to patient regularly till the injury is cured. The process for the treatment of broken, fracture and crack bones is known as Wuchanachu. Wu- means bone, cha-means to join, and nachu means medicines.



Niatha-mu-chu-chey

This is a kind of parasites <sup>that</sup> grown on the big trees in the jungle; Leaves of this parasites plant look like a sword. Its leaves are used in the same manner as described before for the treatment of broken bones, fracture and so on. Sometimes leaves of this plant are heated on fire to a tolerable extent then pasted on the affected part.

Nichachi

This is a jungle creeper. Its roots are used in the same process described before for the treatment of fracture and broken bones.

Sinu-chey-chichi

This is again a kind of creeper grown automatically in the jungle. Its roots are collected, pressed, then boiled with water, this water is fed to the patient thrice daily who is suffering from any type of hurt in the body. It is said this so called medicine relieves the patient from pain, exertion and weakness. This is a very useful creeper to the Lisu.

Masutsi

This is a type of plant grown automatically in the jungle. Its leaves reddish in colour are used to stop bleeding from any part of the body which is occurred as a result of injury by knife or axe or dao. Its leaves are used in the same manner as stated before.

Yecheyzili

This is a medicinal plant found in the jungle. The height of this plant varies from two to three feet. Its leaves are used to cure headache and cough. Its leaves are crushed into a soft mass which is then applied to the forehead. Leaves of this plant are heated on fire, then inhale it, to get relief from cough; its leaves are also kept below the head while sleeping as a remedial measure.

Neupulu

This is the name of a tree grows into about twenty feet in height, its trunk is red in colour, and about two square feet in breadth. Barks of this tree are used as medicine for malaria. Bark is boiled with water, one cup of this water is given to patient twice-morning and evening daily. It also relieves of weakness and tiredness. Water of this bark is very better in taste.

Niochala

It is a thorny creeper reddish in colour, found in jungle. Its bark is dried in the sun, then it is again fried on fire, which is then grinded into powder. This powder is mixed with hot water which is then fed to the patient twice daily, who is suffering from dysentery and indigestion. Patient is cured within one week.

Wasiwe

This is a thread like plant without leaves, roots, found in the snow-clad high mountain named Gachalo by the Lisu. Chunks of ice containing this thread like thing or plant are collected and kept in a cave during July to August. When ice melts out gradually, they collect it. It is whitish in colour, and sweet in taste in raw condition. These plants are dried by the heat of fire, then preserved it for future use. It is taken twice in a year cooked with chicken by the males and females, above 40 years of age. It is believed by the Lisu that a man never grows old if this medicine is taken regularly. This medicine provides them with tremendous energy and youthful vigour. It is very difficult to find and collect this plant, every one cannot collect it.

I am overwhelmed to notice one Lisu old man, who takes this medicine regularly is full of vigour and more energetic than young men.

Lama-Wuto

This is a name of a medicine prepared by the Lisu from the bones of tiger, deer, monkey, wolf and growing horns of deers. After removing the flesh, bones (leg, thigh, hand and arm) of these animals mentioned above along with the tender horn of deer are boiled and boiled with water continuously for seven days. When the bones become very soft, it is taken out from the boiling pan. Then the so formed residue is again boiled and observed very carefully. When it begins to frozen or sodify, transferred

to bamboo tubes. When a drop of this liquid is placed on the blade of a dao (atha), it freezes immediately, then only boiling is stopped and transferred to bamboo tube, which then solidifies and becomes black in colour. This Lama-Wuto is cooked with the meat of a hen not yet started giving eggs and taken twice in a year by the persons above 40. One who takes it regularly as per prescription remain young all through his or her life.

This completes the discussion on the etiology and medical system of the Lisu. Under medical system, health care and the beliefs associated with health care, and the treatments for remedy of diseases have been discussed. Every community or ethnic group or society has its own medical belief however advanced it may be technologically, industrially and economically, which is transcended from one generation to another. The Lisu after embracing Christianity, have left out the concept of diseases created by an evil spirits, and its treatments. But diseases created by germs and other forbidden eatables and its treatments by medicinal plants, and by some parts of different animals still continue. Facilities of modern medical care and medicines are not available to the Lisu, but they have realised the efficacy of modern medicines and their responses are favourable. The Lisu approach the problem of disease from two points of view; <sup>Causal</sup> ~~casual~~ and symptomatic. Their medical theory reflects both culture bound and universal elements. Explication of the concepts of illness and curing in the Lisu community is closely associated with their religion and magic to form a cohesive world

view. Foster's (1976) taxonomy of personalistic and naturalistic disease etiologies does not mirror Lisu situation quite accurately, rather it provides an interesting example of shift since the world view of the Lisu have absorbed a different etiology. However, as Foster (1976:776) explicitly recognises that the taxonomies are primarily heuristic rather than explanatory, and other models for explaining the same and related, ethnomedicinal data are also needed. At least, from the angle of treatment, Lisu diseases cannot be separated as naturalistic and personalistic because plant medicines are also used for the treatment of the diseases caused by evil spirits.

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## CHAPTER - 11

### T R A N S F O R M A T I O N S

Anthropologists or sociologists are not aware of any society or culture in the world, however primitive or decadent, that does not recognise change. Change constitutes one of the universals of human society or culture. Change is a constant in culture of society. All the changes in a culture or society may be divided into two groups- internal and external. The changes that originate from within a culture or society by innovations- scientific or technological discoveries or inventions, by the political, religious and social movement, which arise as a result of continuous exploitation, deprivation etc., changes of this kind are referred as internal. All changes that come to a community or culture from outside by the way of diffusion and acculturation, as a result of war or political invasion etc., are termed external changes. Culture changes through the process of diffusion and acculturation can hardly be differentiated. Because, both types of change occur by way of contact. Herskovits (1958:476) rightly points that the diffusion, the transmission of culture, is a process of culture change of which acculturation is but one expression, occurs when any two peoples are in historic contact. Reformation in the behaviour of a group of people or a community is kind of a change. Transformation is also a process of change, it is such a process that converts one shape of society or culture into almost another shape. Archeological evidences, historical records and differences between the

descending generations are the evidences of the changes. The society of the Lisu has undergone great transformation. In India, since there is no historical or ethnographical accounts, on the Lisu, to measure the change, I solely depended on their oral history and the difference between the descending generations. Period of time is a vital factor to study or to measure the changes in a community. I started first phase of field investigation among the Lisu in the month of March 1981 and last in ~~February~~ <sup>December</sup> 1986. This period of five years is too short to study the changes that have taken place in the Lisu society. It is said that the Lisu were Christened during 1927 to 1937 by an American missionary, Okalahama, Morse Families. Therefore, it is actually a period of 59 years from 1927 to 1986 during which the transformations in the Lisu community took place. The transformation of the Lisu community may be looked at crudelly in terms of technical development, social development and ideological development. Technically, the government of India through Circle officers, has been interested in assisting the Lisu to make better use of their local resources, and also to employ them in different departments of the government. Socially, there has been interest in trying to get the Lisu to conform to accepted American standards of behaviour in matters of public order. Ideologically, there has been interest to get the Lisu to accept new sets of political and religious concepts and beliefs. This tripartite frame of transformation will be reflected in course of our discussion. The transformation in the Lisu community can also be examined at the level of physical or material culture and non physical or social culture level. In other

words, they may be roughly labelled as perceptible and non-perceptible changes.

### Perceptible changes

These are actually the changes that can be perceived by senses i.e. by the eyes by direct observation, in other words, these are the changes in material culture. Under this category of changes, I shall briefly discuss the village, house type, dress, agriculture and so on. Let us begin with the Lisu village.

### The Village

The Lisu villages have undergone profound change in its name and form or morphology. Till 1962, their villages were small in size and scattered in type. They were scatteredly living in six villages, namely, Sidhi, Daodi, Achidudi, Yibidi, Gamidi and Nwanalo. After 1962, with the establishment of circle office at Vijaynagar, for greater administrative control, Lisu villages were renamed and re-organised, population of six villages was shifted to two new villages- Gandhigram and Hazolu. As a result, the villages have become bigger in size and nucleated or compact in form or type. When I visited the village-Gandhigram, the unit of my study, last in December 1986, I found that the village has been expanded in length and breadth. Previously, almost all the houses were situated in one side i.e. the school or church side of the village road; a number of new houses have come up on the other side of the village road during this period of five years. In 1981, total household or family in Gandhigram



was 154, and in 1986 it increased to 174. It means households have actually increased to twenty, and the population has increased from 1016 to 1305 according to the records of the Circle Office. Along with new houses two bye lanes have come into existence. Air dropping ground has been shifted to camp place of Assam Rifle. One new shop of cloths has been established and two shops have been closed due to financial constraints. The village church has taken a huge shape and a nice look; its thatched roof has been replaced with tin. Within the compound of the village Middle English School, a Nursery School has been established. An attractive change for the young Lisu boys and girls is the emergence of a Recreation Club, aided by the government, in the village. Police station of Gandhigram has been shifted to Vijaynagar, the circle headquarter. Two Marwaris who were engaged in Agar (a kind of wood used for preparing cosmetics) business have wound up their camp from Gandhigram village. These are the morphological changes that I noticed during the period of five years.

### House Type

Change is also perceptible in the house-type of the Lisu. Traditional huts of the Lisu were built above the ground on bamboo posts, the height of the floors used to vary from three to five feet. The walls and floors of the dwelling house were made of split and plaited bamboo, its length varied from 30 to 40 feet, thatched roof, generally one front entrance, and devoid of window. This traditional dwelling house of the Lisu has taken a new shape,

it is now built with wooden posts, wooden floors and walls, with plank or tin roof. Height of the floors has increased, it now varies from six to twelve feet. These new houses have more than one entrance and windows. Its length has decreased. The residential house are now constructed in different patterns- 'L' type, 'U' type and so on. It is not that all the traditional types of houses have been replaced by new ones, old huts are still existing side by side, depending on the economic condition of the householder. In the entire village, I noticed only one mud floor house constructed in 1986 to test its suitability where a very old couple is residing.

### Material Traits

Of all the material traits, noticeable change has come about in the dresses of both the Lisu males and females. Traditional dresses and ornaments of the Lisu are gradually losing its importance. It was customary for the Lisu, old and young, of both sexes, to wear their traditional dresses and ornaments, during marriage ceremony and other occasions. I noticed it in 1981, but in 1986, I found only old men and women wearing their traditional dresses and ornaments. Young men and women, boys and girls, all are now wearing colourful chequered lungis, specially the young girls. Educated young men and students wear modern trousers, coats and shirts. Shirts are also worn by the young women and girls as upper dresses. Young boys and girls find trousers, shirts and lungis more convenient to put on or off in comparison to their traditional dresses; it gives them more comfort and pleasure. Moreover, as they argue, the traditional dresses are

thick and heavy, it creates inconveniencies while they work or walk. Young Lisu girls also use cosmetics, though their number is very few.

Wind of change has entered the Lisu kitchen also. Utensils of aluminium pan, plate, kettle etc. are now common to every kitchen, some are also using steel utensils. Porcelain cups and plates, polythene mugs and buckets are also used by the Lisu. Side by side, utensils made of wood, bamboo and iron are also persisting.

No changes have been noticed in the use of bamboo baskets, hunting implements, fishing implements, and the implements of shifting agriculture. Two guns are new additions. The Lisu still use the same Atcho (axe) Atha (straight scythe), Mucho (sickle) and Jato-jengwu (wooden stick) for swidden agriculture. But with the adaption of the permanent agriculture (Pishumi), the Lisu have started using new implements. Sigo, the plough specially designed by them; the Lisu plough the land with a single bull or buffalo; Tako, an implement made of wood used for levelling the paddy field; Ago, a long spade; and Chela, for softening the ground.

Few householders have started using wooden furniture like table, chair and bench. Some Lisu boys got training in carpentry from Changlang craft centre, they have started preparing wooden furniture for the villagers. Sewing machine, transistor set, costly camera, Agafa, (Minota and Uyasica) and tape recorder are also used by some Lisu householders. Some Lisu women have learned the technique of knitting woollen caps, sweater, blouse etc., and weaving woollen shawl. They purchase cotton threads and wools

from market. Cotton, pillow, mattress, blankets both woollen and cotton are found in almost every household. Modern Hawaiian guitar and accordion are new additions to their traditional musical instruments; of the traditional instruments, only bamboo-flutes (Juulu) and Chibu, a type of locally made guitar, are used nowadays.

### Food and Drinks

Some changes are perceptible in the food habits of the Lisu. There is a significant change in their drinking habit. The habit of drinking home made rice beer called Jiphu has been abandoned completely by the Lisu; instead, they have started drinking tea and milk called Namu. Black tea without sugar is their favourite drink; milk is consumed by very few. Similarly, smoking-habit is given up. Only the non-Christian Lisu are addicted to drinking rice beer and other intoxicating drinks, and smoking. Pulses called Anuspey are an important addition to their traditional food items. Chilly (Laju), spice (Sisikhu) and mustard oil (whachi) are also used, sometimes, by the families whose members are engaged in government service. They invariably use these items to entertain non Lisu guests with a feast. Consumption of fruits such as guava (Madhuga) and banana (Amathu), and vegetables such as brinjal, cabbage and cauliflower and potatoes has increased remarkably because these food articles are grown by them. They grow these vegetables mainly for self-consumption.

### Non-Perceptible Changes

The changes or the transformations that are not visible to the eyes or cannot be visualise immediately, but they can be perceived by intellect, are roughly termed non-perceptible transformations. In this category, I shall discuss the changes that have come about in economy, social organisation, social control, religious organisation and so on.

### Economy

The economy of the Lisu has undergone great transformation. A subsistence economy based on shifting agriculture along with hunting and food gathering has been transformed into a self-sufficient economy based on settled agriculture. As a result of the self sufficiency in food grains production, since 1962 there has been a definite enlargement of the economic horizon of the Lisu. This is evident in the greater scale of their wants, especially in consumer goods; in the <sup>much</sup> ~~rich~~ greater range of experience in employment on the part of many of their men; in an improvement in their capital possessions; and in their greater familiarity with the use of money.

A great change has taken place in the occupational structure of the Lisu. They no more stick firmly to their traditional occupations. Settled agriculture is now their primary occupation, and shifting agriculture is now their subsidiary means of livelihood. Besides agriculture, the Lisu are now engaged in pretty business of clothes and stationery goods, and in government service. They run few small shops in the villages, their own people are the

customers. The Lisu get employment mainly in Assam Rifle, a paramilitary force, as jawans (youngmen). They are also found as contingent labourers in public work department, and Electric Department, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

The outstanding feature in the Lisu exchange system is the development of the use of money; money has taken a firm root in the community. It has transformed a non-monetary economy into monetary economy, backed by agriculture. Barter form of exchange is gradually losing its importance. A generation before, barter was the prevalent mode of exchange. At present almost all types of transactions are done in money. Miao-Vijaynagar (M.V), road, was constructed during seventies incurring huge amount of money, and the Lisu themselves provided the major labour force. They earned large amount of cash money by selling their labour. This was a turning point in their economy. Some of the Lisu utilised that cash money in setting up small shops-in the village. Moreover, this M.V. road opened a new avenue of contact with the outer world or with the people outside their community. Change in the occupational patterns of the Lisu took place mainly after the establishment of Assam Rifle Camp and Circle Office at Vijaynagar during sixties.

#### Rights Overland

Remarkable changes have taken place in the control over the land, rights over the land and in land holding pattern. This happened after 1962 when the Lisu came under the administrative control of the government of India, presently government of

Arunachal Pradesh. Previously, the Lisu were shifting cultivators, each Lisu village used to have its own demarcated area of land, and within the demarcated area each family or household owned land separately. Their traditional village head man named Chowu exercised full control over the village land. He used to demarcate the area of land for shifting cultivation for individual household. Though chowu was all in all, a person was entitled to clear vaccant land and plant thereon without asking permission from Chowu. Now the whole land tenure system has changed. The land is now the property of the government of Arunachal Pradesh who exercise full control over the land, who has acquired statehood recently. The Lisu have the right of ownership only, they cannot dispose land. A household~~er~~ cannot hold more than four acres of land for wet paddy cultivation, and one acre homestead land. Land for wet paddy cultivation is extremely limited and there is no scope for further reclamation or expansion. With the increase of population new Lisu households are coming into existence almost in every year. There is no land left for wet paddy cultivation for these new households, as a result they are again reverting to shifting cultivation, and the land for shifting cultivation is also limited hence landless householders or labourers are on the increase in the Lisu community. At present, a person cannot clear vaccant land, and plant thereon without asking permission from the Gao-bura i.e. the present headman of the village. Control of land by a lineage or by a clan exists no longer.

### Inheritance

Ultimogeniture was the rule of inheritance of property among the Lisu, i.e. the youngest son called zadi used to inherit all the movable and immovable properties. Lisu women are not permitted to inherit any immovable property, but they can inherit ornaments and household goods. The rule of male ultimogeniture is changed into male equigeniture, but not in the strict sense of the term, because though equigeniture in nature, still major share of the property goes to the youngest son generally. In extreme cases, when an old father is devoid of male issue, the immovable property is equally divided among the daughters.

### Descent Groups

The unilineal descent group structure of the Lisu is still a cardinal feature of their social structure. Descent is patrilineal i.e. through male line. The Lisu are organised into a number of patrilineal descent groups commonly known as chowo i.e. clan. These clans are Ngawza, Jayza, Heyza, Nofa, Leme, Jali, Lafufu, Fuche, Meche and Dafulu. Before embracing Christianity, they were still part of the traditional framework of the social structure of the Lisu. These clans were exogamous, every clan used to have a separate god commonly known as Phula, and ritual experts-Nifa and Dashifa. All the productions were clan based, all types of social activities used to centre around clan. Now, a great alteration has come about in the Lisu clans-after Christianisation. The clans have lost completely all its functions.



No festival, ceremony, or ritual is performed on the affiliation of clan; clan-gods or ritual experts no longer exists, clan exogamy has lost its credence; clan has no role or function in regulating the marriage in the society. In short, clans are no longer a part of the social structure or social organisation of the Lisu. This signifies a change in organisation or structure of the Lisu society.

The unit of Lisu social organisation is Chohi. Chohi does not mean what is meant by the anthropological concept of family. The term Chohi includes both husband and wife with their married and unmarried children, the place of living (house, household, home, etc.), the livestock, the trees and all the movable and unmovable property that belong to them. While the clans have lost its function, ~~but~~ the Chohi has expanded its area of activities and functions. All types of activities- social, economic, political and religious are now centred around chohi. Moreover, there has been an alteration in the relationship between the members of a Chohi, specially between father and son. Previously, authority in a Chohi was vested in father exclusively. Father used to decide or dictate or regulate the behaviour and activities of all other members including the marriage of his son's and daughter's. Now, the situation is reverse. Father has lost control over their sons and daughters'. This does not mean that they do not obey their parents. They do; but Lisu fathers have no say in selecting son's or daughter's marriage partners. They do it independently. Similarly, they choose new occupations according to their suitability, and capability. This change is due to the

effect of new education and Christianity.

There has been no alteration in the pattern of residence in the Chohi, and its type. The rule of neolocal and patrilocal residence is still persisting. Similarly, nuclear and extended types of family are continuing, but nuclear family is on the increase. Sex-wise division of labour was rigidly followed before Christianisation in a Chohi. Now that rigidity has been relaxed, a Lisu woman is prepared to plough the land if situation demands, and husband is also found to cook food.

Kabi means fire place, where food is prepared for the members of a Chohi. Over the Kabi, hangs Teju, a hanging platform having three shelves. Kabi is constructed always in the centre of a floor of a room (Ekoo); in the centre of the Kabi a tripod iron stand hearth called Huchi is placed. Around the Kabi all the members of a Chohi including parents with their unmarried daughters and sons used to sleep. Now the sleeping pattern in a Chohi has changed completely. Parents with small child sleep in a separate room, similarly young sons and daughters sleep in a separate rooms. Now young boys generally sleep in the front room, girls in the middle room and parents in the last room of the dwelling house.

### Marriage

The institution of Lisu marriage has undergone great transformation. Non-Christian Lisus still consider marriage a civil contract, but never a religious sacrament. Therefore religious

solemnization does not take place in the traditional Lisu marriage referred as Chozadi. But after Christianisation, the Lisu marriage has acquired the merit of religious sacrament and the new marriage is known Lephecha. Monogamy and polygyny were the two forms of marriage; at present, monogamy is followed rigidly, and polygyny is not permissible. Several types of marriage were prevalent in the traditional society, i.e. the Lisu used to acquire their mates by elopement, by service, by capture and by Di i.e. by negotiation. Every type of marriage was associated with bride price called Naphu in the form of several cows, pigs, and household goods. The tradition of giving bride-price no longer exists in the present Lisu society. Instead, both the parents of bride and groom together arrange a marriage feast for the villagers if they are capable enough, otherwise simple tea is provided during marriage ceremony to villagers. For the expenditure of marriage ceremony, no demand is placed from either side. Except Di, the marriage by negotiation, all other modes of acquiring mate were regarded as a social offence and the Chowu, the village leader used to intervene for their recognition in society. In the present Lisu society, marriage is no longer a social offence, and the marriage ceremony is presided over by the Mafa, the church priest. The days of child marriage are gone. Now, adult marriage is the rule and the age at marriage for both the bride and groom has increased. For girls, it varies from 18 to 25 years, and boys it is from 20 to 35 years. Age is not a factor for an effective marriage in the present Lisu society. Divorce called Halecho was very common in their society, because of child marriage and the forceful imposition of father's

opinion on their son's and daughter's. Now Lisu boys and girls select their marriage partners according to their own wishes and likings. Hence no divorce occurs, moreover divorce is not permitted in the society of the Christian Lisu, but re-marriage is allowed. During the period of six years i.e. from 1981 to 1986 total 31 marriages took place in the village Gandhigram.

Below is the yearwise break up:

| <u>Year</u> | <u>No. of marriages</u> |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| 1981        | 2                       |
| 1982        | 3                       |
| 1983        | 11                      |
| 1984        | 4                       |
| 1985        | 4                       |
| 1986        | 7                       |

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Total:- 31

### Life Cycle Rituals

With the adoption of Christianity, there has been remarkable change in the performance of life cycle rituals or rites in the Lisu community. During pregnancy the Lisu women no longer follow the taboos which they used to do earlier. Service of Hatofa, an expert to deal with delivery cases is not needed now, but the service of the delivery nurse called Jhojasu is still utilised. In case of any complicity, they now consult modern physician. No pre-firth or post birth rituals are performed. They now get baby by the blessings of Jesus Christ, not by the grace of phula, their earlier god. Biological of physiological course of conception is much more emphasised nowadays.

Name giving ceremony called Somini is still persisting. Instead of grand parents or parents, name is given by the Mafa (priest) of the church. Small feast is arranged with chicken, but not with pork and rice beer called Jiphu as they used to do earlier, to entertain few relatives.

Marriage ceremony is performed in the village church following Christian marriage rules. Mafa presides over the marriage ceremony. Earlier, the marriage ceremony called Wisho was performed in the house of the groom, and the Chowu had to remain there as witness. Dance, song, feast and drinks (rice beer) were the features of the earlier marriage ceremony. Songs of the Bible only are sung in the new marriage ceremony, no music or dance is performed.

Death rites, have undergone change. Corpse is buried as per Christian rules on the same day in the burial ground called Lizuti. All types of corpses are buried. Mafa, reads out a portion of the Bible before consigning the dead body to the grave.

### Social Control

The society of the Lisu was governed by the village headman called Chowu. Village elders would select him for a life term. The post of Chowu was not hereditary, he could be eliminated if found unsuitable for the post. Chowu with help of few young and intelligent young men would settle all kinds of disputes in the society by imposing fine in kinds. The decision given by the Chowu was honoured by one and all. This traditional mechanism

of social control has undergone transformation, the institution of chowuship exists no longer. When the Lisu came under the administrative control of the government of India in 1962 the chowu has been replaced by the gao-bura, a government representative, for maintaining law and order in the village. The Lisu term for gao-bura is Besey. Besides judicial function, the gao-bura is entrusted with the responsibility of looking after the development and welfare activities in the village. Elders of the Lisu choose a person for the post of gao-bura, then send his name for final approval of the Circler Officer. Sometimes, Circle Officer himself nominates a person as gao-bura. The present gao-bura of Gandhigram named Chifuja and his assistant named Yesa are the nominees of the Circle Officer. In order to facilitate the administration in the village, the present gao-bura has divided Gandhigram into eight wards called pati headed by a person named pati-Besey. Pati-Besey settles all kinds of minor disputes that occurred in the ward and if he fails to adjudicate the dispute, then the case is forwarded to the gao-bura. If the gao-bura is unable to decide the case, it is then handed over to the Circle Officer. Gao-bura is the secular head of the Lisu village at present. Besides this secular head, the religious head or priest called Mafa along with other members of the church committee sometimes decides minor disputes in the village. They administer justice by means of oaths and ordeals. Putting the Holy Bible on the head, the persons involved in the disputes are requested to take oath in the name of God. Having the Holy Bible on the head, a Lisu cannot dare to tell a lie, he or she immediately confesses

the guilty and repents for the harm or damage done to others. Then he or she is pardoned. The very concept of justice and punishment has undergone change in the Lisu society. Gone are the days of adjudicating disputes by imposing fines. Christianity has transformed a quarrelling and fighting people into a religious community. Incidents of serious offence are a rarity now.

### Position of Woman

Women were subordinate to men in the Lisu society. They had no right of inheritance, no role in the decision making process and in religious activities. They were used as trusted labour force; child rearing and preparing indigenous clothes from a kind of jute called zu for all the members of the family were their main duties. Women were always at the command of the men. They had little say in the management of household affairs, and rarely contributed to the income of the family. Women were not allowed to do any other work besides the work specified for them. Now, their position has change, their status has been elevated. Lisu women now enjoy complete freedom of work, a marriageable Lisu girl now chooses her partner according to her own wishes; the decision of marriage lies with her. The entire responsibility of managing a household lies with the women, they even contribute to the income of the family selling their weaving and knitting products such as shawl, sweater, bags and so on. In extreme cases, they can inherit the property also. They are also found to run small shoppes in the village. One Lisu women is engaged as teacher in the village nursery school. On of the remarkable changes

is the altitude of the men towards women. Lisu men now treat them as equal, but the majority of the Lisu women still consider their male counterpart superior. Christianity has contributed a lot to bring about changes in the status of the Lisu women. As a result of changes in the position of women, the present Lisu community is apprehending an undesirable situation with respect to their literate unmarried girls. The Lisu girls are fairly good looking and healthy too. The literate Lisu girls i.e. those who have passed tenth class or school final examination no longer like hard life in the village. They prefer to marry a government service holder to get a comfortable life. Lisu boys engaged in government service are very rare, as a result they are moving out of their society by way of marriage. In 1981, I found three Lisu girls who married a Bengali (Kayastha community), a Bihari (Brahman) and a Nepali (Magar) boy respectively. The community did not take these inter-ethnic marriages easy.

### Religious Beliefs and Practices

The religious life of the Lisu was dominated by the fear or dread of evil spirit commonly known as Ni. As stated before, the Ni originated with the Lisu from the same mythical gourd. The only difference between a Lisu and a Ni was that the latter did not get the physical feature of human body whereas the former did. That was why the Ni always remained angry with the Lisu and the major part of the life of a Lisu was spent to satisfy the Ni. Ni used to punish the Lisu by capturing their souls, spreading diseases and so on. Services of different ritual experts and specialists such as Nifa, Hatofa, and Dashifa were essential to



thwart away the evil effect of Ni and diseases. Christianity has completely relieved the Lisu of the trouble or fear of evil spirits. They no longer suffer from the diseases caused by the Ni because now they do not believe in the existence of Ni. But they say, if by chance a Ni appears in dream to give trouble, the person concerned reads out the relevant portion of the Holy Bible inviting a Mafa (priest) to get relief from that unhappy state of mind. One Nifa, and one Dashifa is still alive in the community, but nobody utilises their service any more because of new faith engrafted in their minds, moreover they are too old to practise their craft. After death, their souls no longer go to Mamisumi, they directly reach Jesus Christ, souls never die, souls of the good and honest persons may alive by the grace of Jesus Christ. This new belief is firmly engrossed in their hearts. But when they fall from a tree or face a sudden danger, their earlier god-Wusa creeps up in their mouths, more specifically in the minds of the old men and women. Therefore, they cannot deny the fact that one or two traits of pre-Christian beliefs are still traceable or persisting in the community.

Their earlier religion, animistic in form, was characterised by the absence of festivals in the true sense of the term. Three occasions entertainment during marriage ceremony called- Wesazi, during house construction called (Hi-yizi) and during shifting cultivation referred as Hami-yewazazi were paramount importance in their life. These occasions were like festivals, and now they are replaced by Christian festivals. The Lisu term for festival is Pei. They celebrate- Esohipei (X'mas), Mokhosi (New Year),

Sailapei (Good Friday) and Somupei or Jasipei (thanks giving) in a year with pomp and grandeur. Christianity and its festivals have given the Lisu a new meaning of life; it has attributed to them the concept of purity and sin; the concept of sacred place or centre. The village church referred as Wakhuhi or Sishyhi, is their sacred centre or holy place. They attend church for prayer on Wednesday and Saturday from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, and again from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. Life of the Lisu is now centred around the village church. Society of the Lisu is now organised on the basis of services rendered by them in the church, and the head of this new organisation is Mafa, the sacred specialist. Ritual hierarchy of the members of the organisation or committee are as follows:

| <u>Rank No.</u>              | <u>Total members</u> |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Mafa (Priest)             | 3                    |
| 2. Wakhofa (Pastor)          | 3                    |
| 3. Milofa (Deacons/Bishops)  | 5                    |
| 4. Mijifa (Elders)           | 12                   |
| 5. Ejanja (ordinary members) | not fixed            |
| 6. Pasey (Villagers)         | all                  |

To become a Mafa and Wakhafa one has to pass an examination in Bible. To conduct prayer (Wakho) in the church, to preside over the marriage ceremony and death rites; to baptise (Koduti) young boys and girls, to preach the maxims of the Bible, to establish a new church and to teach the Lisu good manner and behaviour and to prohibit them from smoking cigarette or tobacco

and taking intoxicating or alcoholic drinks are the normal functions of the Mafas. Wakhofas help Mafas in discharging their duties. Mafas and Wakhofas share the gifts in cash or kinds presented to the church by the villagers. Milofas are entrusted with the management of the entire affairs related to the church. In addition, the members of Milofa and adjudicate minor disputes in the village. Members of the Mijifa assist in the activities connected with the church. To arrange festivals and marriage ceremonies, to help Milofa, and to assist in baptismation are their main duties. All the Christian Lisu villagers are designated as Pasey, and when they attend any religious function in the church they are known as Ejanja. These religious organisations or committees are formed in accordance with the rules formulated in the Bible with slight modification to suit the local conditions of the Lisu.

The Lisu belong to "Church of Christ", a reformed body of Christians. They do not keep any symbol-photo or image or cross of Jesus Christ in or outside the church. This body does not believe in outward expression, they keep cross symbol in their mind, and emphasise on the mental alleviation of the persons. Here baptismation with full bath in water is compulsory. Expiation of sin is done by father in Catholic Church, but in church of Christ, a sinner can directly do it. As envisaged by the Lisu, these are some of differences, that give Church of Christ a separate identity as a religious faith.

### Songs and Dance

The very concept of song and dance has undergone transformation in the community of the Lisu. Song or dance no more means a competition to the Lisu. They no longer categorise songs on the basis of age. Songs and dances are now considered a form of enjoyment and recreation. They mainly sing songs of the Bible in the praise of Jesus Christ and to establish spiritual link with Him. Traditional songs- Moguabu and Oyii are rarely sung nowadays. The Lisu now sing devotional songs of Bible with musical voice. Songs sung in chorus are referred as Mojuaajaja, and a lengthy chorus song is termed Moguadama. Song voiced by a single person is named Thiyo-mogua. Hawaiian guitar is a must for any type of song, and the music produced by it or by any instrument is known as Maise. Dance has almost lost its significance in the present Lisu society. Only Cheyngo type of dance is still persisting. It is performed by the old men and women. It will meet death very soon. As no young boys and girls take any interest to preserve this performing art from oblivion.

### World View

Some harbour the opinion that world view is not changeable, it is a stable aspect of the culture or the community. But the Lisu materials present an opposite view i.e. world view is also alterable. Views of the Lisu on almost every dimension of their life have undergone transformation because of the development of new mentality which is more significant than any other development or change. Their concept of time and universe has changed, they

no longer use their calendar called Euhosodu. Now they depend entirely on the English calendar for counting the age of children and other significant events of the society. About the universe, the Lisu have started believing the modern scientific view specially by the educated young generation. Similarly, the notions of disease, evil spirit supernatural deities and the concept of work have undergone transformation. But their view on the women have remained unchanged. The Lisu women are still considered innocent and honest and not harmful to the society as a whole, though the status of the women has changed. As stated before, the Lisu no longer suffer from the diseases caused by the evil spirits, but they do suffer from the diseases inflicted by the germs. They are continuing the use of herbal and plant medicines for the treatment of wounds, and bone crack and fracture and so on. The Lisu now believe in only one soul which mingles with Lord Jesus Christ after death. In similar way, changes in the conceptions of birth, marriage, death, and the village headman have taken place. In fact, along with the change, the horizon of the Lisu world view has broadened.

#### Factors of Change:

So far I have analysed the results of the changes that have come about in the different walks of life of the Lisu. But what are its causes? What are the forces or factors responsible for such changes or transformations. Now, I shall portray the factors of change. Both external and internal factors have acted together upon the Lisu to enforce transformations. The continuous working of these factors or forces have given the present shape of the life of the Lisu.

### Christianity

The greatest single force from the outside world which has transformed the society of the Lisu is Christianity. As American Missionary, named Eugene Morse, Christened few Lisus in 1927 in Burma, it is said that the Lisu were Christened first in China. The effect of this contact had been in the first place to provide the Lisu with few modern medicines as part of philanthropic activities by the American Missionary. Those medicines, as a curer of diseases, made indelible mark on the Lisu. Moreover, the missionary after intensively studying the Lisu language, evolved a script for it which is nothing but Roman#Script written inversely or revertly. Then the Holy Bible was translated into Lisu language with the new script. These two factors, as they say, were attributed to their conversion into Christianity. It was not that all the Lisu in India embraced Christianity at a time. The process of Christianisation took place gradually. When I first visited the Lisu village in 1981, I found some households were claiming as non-Christians. But in 1986, I found that all the Lisu have recorded or declared themselves as Christians in the Vijaynagar Circle Office. Christianity, as a means of education, cleanliness, counteracting evil spirits, putting away with superstitions, unity and brotherhood, and lastly as a great reformatory force has firmly penetrated its roots in the Lisu community. It has given new mentality to the Lisu and a new meaning to their life, and a new way of living.

### Administration

The Lisu came under direct administrative control of the government of India with the establishment of a circle office at Vijaynagar. The Local administration contributed a lot in the technical development of the Lisu. Officers of the agriculture department taught the Lisu the technique of wet paddy cultivation, the method of ploughing and the transplantation, weeding, harvesting and vegetable gardening. In the new environment, the political and economic superiority of the people of India set an ideal before the Lisu who began to assimilate those elements of the culture, specially the material culture, which attracted their attention most, which helped them to elevate their economic conditions. Assam Rifle camp and Circle Office at Vijaynagar have opened up to the Lisu new vistas of contact with the pan-Indian communities. But the Nepali settlers, their neighbour, have not been able to exert any remarkable influence on the Lisu except a mud floor house, which exemplifies the diffusion of a cultural trait.

### Cinema

Though there is no cinema hall at the Vijaynagar circle, officials of the Assam Rifle sometimes arrange shows of old Hindi pictures in their club house for the entertainment of the jawans (young men). Young Lisu boys and girls take keen interest to see those pictures. In the sphere of the dress, body decoration and hair style of the young generation of the Lisu cinema seems to have tremendous effect. Effect of the cinema is felt more on the young girls than boys. The Lisu

girls now aspire for a comfortable life.

### Internal Factors

The traditional marriage rules, the belief in evil spirits and the mechanism of social control acted together for the transformation of their society. Child marriage was the rule. As a result, boys and girls used to have no say in marriage. After becoming adult, they often did not like their marriage partners, which led to quarrel, divorce and chaos in the society. The traditional village headman called Chowu used to impose heavy fine in kinds to adjudicate the disputes. This social system would make the Lisu poor and poor. Similarly, to get remedy from the diseases caused by the evil spirits called Ni, the Lisu used to sacrifice numbers of hens, pigs, and even cows, which were again the causes of their poverty. They were disgusted with the norms of their society which led to internal revolt and caused change in the society.

To close this discussion, it is felt that the present Lisu culture is a changed facet of the past Lisu life. Change has become constant in their life. No sphere of their life has been left out from the wind of change. Christianity as a great reformatory force from outside along with internal force has given the present state of the Lisu culture or life.



## CHAPTER - 12

### P R O B L E M S   O F   D E V E L O P M E N T

The word 'development' connotes different meanings and it is used in various senses- progress; change; gradual growth; evolution; the expression of a function in series; a new situation that emerge and so on. But, development is increasingly seen as a process involving the total socio-cultural system by the contemporary American Anthropologists which ultimately leads to modernization. To Gunnar Myrdal (1975) development is the upwards or downwards movement of the entire social system. Health facilities are also considered by him a non-economic factor for development. In economic theory, development means increasing material production to improve standards of living. Connotation of development changes from one country to another, from one society or community to another. In India and in most so called Third World countries, development broadly means, the upward movement of the economic system thereby fulfilling the material needs, improving the standard of living, and social conditions of life, i.e., quality of life. A sufficient number of rural populations in India still live below poverty line. To provide them with basic needs of life - food, clothes, shelter, education and health facilities are the major challenges of development in India. It is a common argument among the social scientists,

planners, development experts and administrators that these rural poor mass or communities who do not live but survive, form one of the stumbling blocks on the road of development in India. Their increasing number and worsening poverty are becoming a nightmare to the experts who are involved in the process of development. In 1973, Robert McNamara, the then World Bank President dramatically predicted- "The data suggest that the decade of rapid growth has been accompanied by greater mal-distribution of income in many developing countries and the problem is most severe in the country side, and an increasingly inequitable situation will pose a growing threat to political stability."

Development as changing process poses multifarious problems, specially the planned development. And these problems are unique to each group of populations or communities in India. Development experts generally believe that the poor communities are passive, apathetic, distrustful and have negative attitudes towards development programmes rather than achievement oriented view. This belief is not true in respect to each and every group of people. Very few development experts and planners take into account the views expressed by the anthropologists or social scientists, and very few of them have had the privilege or the opportunity to closely identify themselves with the rural poors who are supposedly the beneficiaries of their schemes and plans. These so called experts and planners come primarily from urban areas and have upper or middle class background and therefore have had little chance to become familiar with problems of the rural poors and their own views on the problems of development. Moreover, they are hardly trained to look at the overall problems through the

of rural mass. Again, biases with a sense of superiority with regard to the rural poor and the unlettered, they are ready to teach communication technique, to impose their views on them, but not to listen, to learn and to genuinely communicate in the form of conversation. The growing frustration and unrest in the rural areas in India, specially on the North-East Region, is hardly understood by the so called experts and planners. Rather than seeing these problems and growing unrest as a positive sign of the rural peasantry, it is ignored and feared. Rather than channelling its awakening force constructively, their problems thereby unrest is <sup>met</sup> ~~not~~ by outright repression.

It is an anthropological experience that every group of community or ethnic group in India, specially in the north-east region has its own intrinsic problems. From community to community, from place to place and time to time these problems vary on the basis of their habitat, occupation, level and stage of economy, and nature of exposure to external situations and interactions with other groups of people. In Arunachal Pradesh, problems of one district are completely different from the problems of another district, again, it differs from one circle to another even in the same district. Therefore, to short out these problems more specifically, one is to take into consideration the community i.e. the target population, their ethnic identity, style of life, and the area along with eco-system. The problems of a community having hunting and gathering economy, in other words pre-agricultural economy, differs from a community having subsistence economy or having settled agricultural economy. Therefore uniform

development strategy cannot be made or cannot be applicable.

This uniqueness of problems should be taken into account by our development experts and the administrators as well as the persons who actually execute it.

### Development Activities

Before turning to the specific problems of the Lisu for developments let us have a glance over the economic structure and the development activities initiated by the government of Arunachal Pradesh. Since Independence, Arunachal Pradesh inherited a primitive economic structure primarily for historic reasons, at the time of Independence. Small, self-governing village communities had perpetuated themselves over the centuries at a low level equilibrium of developments. With hardly any division of labour and specialization of function, the economy presented a picture of self-sufficient households and villages with minimal barter links outside their traditional boundaries. Superimposed on this economic structure was a wide variety of tribal custom and belief with each and every tribal group fiercely proud of its heritage and naturally wary about alien cultures and its influences. The decision to breach this isolation was monumental. The challenge of imitating development in the area was tremendous and complex, a delicate task in social engineering, whereby the conflict of cultures had to be minimised and the transition from a primitive environment into a modern technological world effected with the minimum of friction. The foundations for this transition

were rightly spelt out by our late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in his foreword to Verrier Elwin's "Philosophy of NEFA" in five fundamental principles. They are: 1) People should develop along the lines of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every way their own traditional art and culture. 2) Tribal rights in land and forest should be respected. 3) We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development. Some technical personnel from outside will, no doubt, be needed especially in the beginning. But we should avoid introducing too many outsiders into tribal territory. 4) We should not over administer these areas or overwhelm them with a multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through, not in rivalry to, their own social and cultural institutions. 5) We should judge results, not by statistics or the amount of money spent, but by the quality of human character that is evolved. These humane principles are the bed-rock on which the present Arunachal Pradesh rises.

Though the planning era began in 1950, investment in Arunachal Pradesh remained insignificant over the first four "Five Year" plans. The problem was further compounded by the high cost of transporting materials and sustaining an administrative infrastructure in different and inhospitable terrain, as a result of which the developments registered in the first twenty years of planning remained insignificant. However, Arunachal Pradesh took a big leap during the Fifth Plan and has never looked back since.

Construction of roads and bridges was first and foremost task of the administration. An area of 83,743 square kilometres boasted of only three motorable roads in 1947, with a total length of 168 kms. Today Arunachal Pradesh has a wide network of roads collecting all district headquarters (except Anini) and many sub-divisional as well as circle headquarters. The present road length of about 8,600 kms. is expected to increase to 9,800 kms. by the end of the Seventh Plan. Transport followed roads, and the Arunachal Pradesh State Transport Department, which commenced operations with a fleet of two buses in 1975, presently operates 83 buses on 42 routes, the fleet covering an average of 9,100 kms. per day. While the opening up of Arunachal Pradesh has been long, arduous and still incomplete, a big boost has been received in the recent past with the introduction of Vayudoot Services to Ziro, Pasighat, Along, Daporijo and Tezu having been on the air map for the last few years. A difficult journey of eight hours now takes ten to fifteen minutes; and the aeroplane which was a fearsome and gigantic bird in the early years, an object of wonder and suspicion, is now a benign and friendly craft.

Programmes for development of agriculture, horticulture, health and education proceeded apace with the construction of roads. An economy which had been mainly dependent on jhum cultivation, except in certain pockets, began to change course slowly, and the gains though limited, are still impressive. About 48,000 hectares of jhum land had been brought under settled cultivation by the end of the Sixth Plan and another 13,000

hectares are proposed to be so reclaimed during the Seventh Plan. Foodgrain production which stood at 57,000 mt. in 1956, had gone up to 122,000 mt. in 1980, and 1,73,000 mt. in 1985 and is expected to increase to 2,42,000 mt. by 1990. Steps were also taken to diversify agricultural economy by encouraging cash crops like apples, oranges and pineapples. An economy at pre-agriculture level of technology in 1950 is now gradually and firmly establishing in the world of hybrid varieties, genes and bio-technology.

There were two primary schools in Arunachal Pradesh in 1947 and the literacy rate was below one percent. Within forty years of Independence, the number of educational institutions has gone up to 1558, with a present enrolment of 1,24,249. More than 90 percent enrolment has been achieved among the children in the age group of six to four years and the stigma of literacy is being wiped out rapidly. Though the territory reported a literacy rate of 20.79 percent in 1981 census compared to the all India average of 36.23 percent, the expectations are that the territory will be level with the all India figure by the end of the seventh plan. While the major stress of the government has been on elementary education; adult education and higher education have not been ignored. Three degree colleges have been set up at Itanagar, Pasighat and Tezu. The Arunachal University and the North-Eastern Regional Institute of science and technology, both located in the capital complex at Itanagar, have started functioning from 1986.

The health infrasture was not as abysmal as the education infrasture at the time of Independence. 34 Health Units and 14 dispensaries had been set up prior to 1954. This network had

expanded to include 17 hospitals, 60 dispensaries, 61 health units and 17 homoeopathic dispensaries, by the end of the sixth Plan. These gains will be further consolidated during the Seventh Plan through restructuring of the existing network on all India pattern.

The territory has a rich heritage of arts and crafts, ranging from Tankhas (nice scroll of cloths) and carpets amongst the Monpa of Tawang and West Kameng to wood-carvings and gross necklace amongst the Wanchao of Tirap. Weaving and cane and bamboo work are widespread, it has been the conscious policy of the government to preserve this heritage by encouraging cottage village industries and setting up craft centres. As a result of this effort, the 27 craft centres and 271 village and small industries in 1979-80 had increased to 64 and 1,507 respectively by 1986. The territory has recently set up a cement plant at Tezu, fruit processing factory at Nigmoi, an electronic unit for assembling television sets, Meghaphones and stereos. The industrial infrastructure has been strengthened with the setting up of Industrial Estate at Naharlagun. Pasighat and Deomali, and ten more industrial estates are at different stages of construction. A Rural Industrial Development Centre is being established at Dirang in collaboration with Hindustan Machine Tools Bangalore, for providing training, production and servicing facilities for automobile mechanical and electrical machinery and machine tools. Technical education has also received emphasis and 275 persons have been trained so far at the Industrial Training Institute, Roing. A new I.T.I. is being established in Upper Subansiri District during the Seventh Plan, while a polytechnic is being set up in Tirap district under



the aegis of a private trust.

The rich mineral resources of limestone, dolomite, graphite, coal and oil in the territory have remained untapped so far, and it is only in the recent past that leases have been given to Coal India Limited., and Oil India Limited for survey and extraction of coal and oil in the Tirap district.

The grandeur of Arunachal Pradesh lies not only in the colourful heterogenous tribes but also the environment which supports them, forests and wild life in their primeval glory. The forests range from the tropical evergreen in the foothills to coniferous and alpine in the higher ranges. Forest cover extends over 51,540 sq.kms., accounting for 61.5 percent of the total area of the territory. Major area had been brought under Reserve Forest. An important component of the forest programme has been to set up Anchal Reserve Forests by involving local village communities. The government has recently launched the Waste Land Development Programme which further, seeks to strengthen peoples participation in the conservation movement. The Arunachal Pradesh Forest Corporation was established in 1977 and has since set up saw-cum-plywood factories in the Tirap district. The Corporation has also developed coffee, tea and cardamon plantations with a view to popularizing these crops in the territory. The flora and fauna of the territory present a dazzling spectacle. More than 500 species of orchids are found in the territory; and an orchid research station has been set up at Tipi, (West Kameng) to study

this botanical paradise. The wild life of the region is equally rich and varied. Four wild life sanctuaries at Fakhui, Lali, Itanagar and Namdapha had been set up during 1979-80, covering area of 3000 sq.kms. Namdapha sanctuary has been upgraded to the status of a National Park in 1983, and 'Project Tiger' was also launched there.

Central Programmes under Integrated Rural Development Programme, National Rural Employment Programme, Rural Labour Employment Gurantee Programme and Integrated Child Development Scheme, have been implemented vigorously since the Sixth Plan and more than 48,000 families had received assistance under Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP). Another 50,000 families are targetted for assistance in the Seventh Plan.

Telecommunication links with the rest of the country have improved greatly with the setting up of satellite earth stations. Radio Stations are already functioning at Itanagar, Pasighat, Tezu, and Tawang, and are to be upgraded in the Seventh Plan. A low power Television transmitter has been set up at Itanagar, the capital of Arunachal Pradesh; and two more are to be set up at Pasighat and Tezu. The government also has plans to install sixteen very low power Television transmitters at various district and sub-divisional headquarters during the Seventh Plan.

Suffice to say that substantial gains have been registered in all spheres of development activity, specially since Fifth Five Year Plan. The economic structure has acquired a new vibrancy and dynamism, and the per capita income of the territory had

increased to Rs.2,160 by 1984-85, at current prices. The basic strategy behind the development effort, has been to foster local initiative and effort, to encourage Panchayat Raj Institutions, and tribal councils, thereby enabling the local people to set their own pace, at their own accord. The Panchayat system was introduced in 1967, and Arunachal Pradesh perhaps presents the unique case where the apex body of the Panchayat Raj System, the Agency Council, was upgraded to Pradesh Council in 1972 which in turn became a provisional Legislative Assembly in 1975. The Panchayat Raj Institutions of Zilla Parishad, Anchal Samity, and Geram Panchayat co-exist in harmony with the local tribal councils. It has been a basic tenet of government policy to work through local institutions, and village authorities and tribal councils have been vested with judicial powers.

Arunachal Pradesh has come a long way since 1914. The transformation has been miraculous, and the conflicts and tensions which such profound changes normally generate have been avoided. The credit for this must go to the local people, the dedicated band of administrators, and the humane foresighted policy formulated by our national leaders at the dawn of Independence. Arunachal Pradesh ~~has~~ very recently, the 20th February 1987, has attained statehood, and now she stands confident and strong, poised to become one of the most dynamic and prosperous states of India.

Having an idea of development programmes, schemes and activities of the government of Arunachal Pradesh as a whole at surface level, let us now examine its impact and its problems

on the people at grass-root level, at community level.

The problems of the Lisu are strikingly different from those of other tribes or ethnic groups of Arunachal Pradesh who are living in easy accessible areas. The basic problems of the Lisu as reflected through careful and minute observation are the followings, which are to be solved by the government if really interested to uplift them.

#### Problem habitat

The habitation of the Lisu itself poses a great problem for promoting any kind of development. Three sides-west, east and south of their habitation are surrounded by inter-national border and the snow-clad hills and mountains of Burma, the Patkai range.

Almost the entire are hilly and mountainous. The Lisu live in the river-bed valley of Noa-Dihing of sub-Himalayan mountain range. As indicated before nature reigns supreme here always vigorous and hostile. The rugged terrain, the high hills, the rocky mountains, the sky piercing peaks, incessant rainfall, dense forest, slippery slopes etc., stand against smooth sailing of human life. Killing of life by snow-storm, rolling boulders, sliding land, falling trees, poisonous snakes, ferocious animals, dashing current of the rivers etc., are common happenings of the day to day life of the Lisu. One requires to live a life of adjustments with the vigour of nature, otherwise, living becomes very hard and often miserable in this tumultuous environment of

nature. This natural environment of the Lisu prohibits any kind expansions for homestead and agricultural land. Moreover, the area has been recently ear-marked and reserved for wild life sanctuary restricting the free movements of the Lisu in the forest, and ceiling any future plan for the extension or expansion of their agricultural and homestead land in the area, though certain area, not at all sufficient for them, has been left out for the Lisu. Preservation of wild life is undoubtedly an important part of modern living, but it should not be encouraged at the cost of human living for whom it is meant for. Strategis or poli<sup>ti</sup>cis for the preservation of wild life should be formulated in such a way that it benefits both kinds of livings-man and animal.

### Problem Identity

The Lisu are facing a problem of identity. The name of this ethnic group is apparently controvertial; As stated before they are identified with several names like Lisu, Yobin, Lishifa, Khinu and Lisaw. The original and correct name of this community or ethnic group is Lisu, and Lisaw is another spelling their original name, and by this very name- Lisu, they introduce themselves to the outsiders. But their neighbouring communities- Singpho, Khamti and Rawang never use the term- Lisu to identity them. Instread, the Singpho use the term- Yawyin or Yoyin to designate the Lisu. Similarly, the Khamti and the Rawang call them Khinu and Lishifa respectively. It is said that the Lisu came in contact with the British as well as Indian administration first through a Singpho interpreter who introduced the Lisu as

Yawyin or Yoyin playing a hoax and despising their status, but not as Yobin written in census of India 1971, which is considered a bonafied scheduled tribe of Arunachal Pradesh. Incidentally, it was again a Singpho interpreter who introduced them as Yoyin to the Indian Military Officers and the census people who made an expedition to the present home i.e. Gandhigram of the Lisu. As it is appears, the term-Yobin is simply a spelling mistake or a mistake in the pronunciation of the term-Yoyin which has no meaning in the Lisu language. The Lisu do not know the actual meaning of this term, but they conceive its meaning as something derogatory, something not worth-mentioning which stands against their traditional social status. Lisu do not like them to be called-Yobin because of its derogatory implication. Actually, the Lisu and the Yobin are one and the same ethnic group or tribe, and there is no separate community or a tribe as Lisu and Yobin as thought by the administrators or by the public. The present problem of the community is that they are not going to get the facilities of a scheduled tribe if they write their name as Lisu. In the long run, the community may change over to Yobin to get the facilities and benefits of a scheduled tribe, as advised by the concerned authorities.

### Problem People

The Lisu are considered to be the last group of people who entered North East Frontier Agency now Arunachal Pradesh, recently during the second world war from Burma. Their origin is traced in the Yunan area of China. The Lisu live in the border

area between India~~x~~, and Burma- which was no man's land, neither Burma's nor India's. In the recent past, the border between India and Burma was demarcated and they fell into the administrative control of India, and their kith and kin remained in the territory of Burma. It is a historical experience or a fact that people living in the border area have interest or tendency to indulge in different kinds illegal activities. Similarly, the Lisu are said to be engaged in the smuggling of gold, Agar wood, (used for preparing cosmetics), tape recorder, garments and so on. The entire community is believed to be engaged in these prohibited activities according to local administration. Moreover, the Lisu are thought to be self-centred, hostile, notorious and have remarkable ethnocentric attitude. Present observation of the author negates this general malicious views against them; and according to the Lisu, this is nothing but a rumour spread by a vicious circle, to denigrate their position. The Lisu are labourious, courageous and energetic people having tremendous imitative and receptive capacity who can be utilised as trustful soldiers, and award winning sportsmen. They are very much loyal and submissive. If the authority is doubtful about the loyalty and integrity of the Lisu, they may be easily shifted or rehabilitated in the Lohit district where suitable arable land for wet paddy cultivation is available.

### Problem Administration

Guided by the false notion, the local administration sometimes creates more problems either by failing to understand the problem or the situation in reality or to implement the programmes of economic development meaningfully to caterate their needs. The officials fail to understand their basic problems in many cases,

because of distrustful, passive and apathetic attitude towards the Lisu. As a result of this negative attitude of the local administration, the Lisu do <sup>not</sup> get any benefit or help of the welfare and development schemes. During North East Frontier Agency period, i.e. when they were directly under the administrative control of the centre, they got all the materials- the bullocks, agricultural implements, improved variety of seeds, drinking water facilities and so on as part of economic development programmes, which they utilised successfully to better their economic condition. Now, the Arunachal Pradesh has attained the status of a state, and the new government should immediately look into the problems of the Lisu with sympathetic attitude and new initiative and solve them without any further ~~delay~~ delay.

### Problem Political

Politics is a dirty game, and the Lisu have metaphorically become a ball for political game. The Lisu are a bonafied citizen and scheduled tribe of the present Arunachal Pradesh. They exercised their adult franchise last during Janata regime which proved that they are citizen of India. Since then, they have been deprived of the right of voting and citizenship for the reasons unknown to them. They are earnestly trying to regain their lost right of adult franchise and citizenship, but in vain. They gave representation to the concerned authorities, and communicated their grievances to Deputy Commissioner, M.L.A.; M.P., and Chief Minister who have not yet been able to do anything good for them.



Unfortunately they are now treated as foreigners, they have been labelled with the Chakma and the Tibetan refugees, though their case is completely separate. The Lisu have been living in India with citizenship right and availing all the facilities provided by the government of India long before the Chakma and the Tibetan refugees arrived in India. Political parties and leaders are least interested and attracted in the development of the Vijaynagar circle as a whole including the Lisu, because the circle area does not have sufficient number of voters to change the fortune of the political leaders. The Lisu and the Nepali settlers (ex-army) are not included in the voting list; and only few government officials exercise their adult franchise which makes no difference for the political leaders. Arunachal government should immediately take necessary actions to grant the Lisu the right of adult franchise and citizenship, and provided them all the facilities of welfare and development schemes taking into account the all round developments of the state.

### Problem Agriculture

The Lisu were scatteredly living in the Vijaynagar circle. The administration forced them to live in one place i.e. the present village- Gandhigram, without bothering about their style of life and social system. The land, both agricultural and homestead, vacated by them were allotted to the Nepali settlers- ex-army men. This process of rehabilitation or settlement in one place poses several problems to the Lisu. Shortage of agricultural land is one of the acute problems. The Lisu reclaimed all

the fallow land available to them in the river-bed-valley of Noa-Dihing which is insufficient for the subtenance of a community with 1300 souls. Moreover, the yearly flood of Noa-Dihing river is accelerating the degradation of cultivated land. This degradation of agricultural land can be halted by embanking the river Noa-Dihing which can be done only by the effort of the government. The extra-flow of river water can be stored in a reservoir for the purpose of irrigation; rain water is the only source of irrigation available to them at present. In addition, the Lisu are facing a serious crisis of the shortage of land for shifting cultivation. The Lisu can increase their agricultural produces, if they are supplied with improved variety of seeds; fertilisers, and insecticides. The hill forest around the habitation of the Lisu can be a very suitable place for horticulture garden if the concerned authority desires to do so. Pear, pineapple and guava can be grown abundantly in the area which may help to improve their living condition.

### Problem Energy

The quality of life of a community, more precisely the rural community, can be measured by the nature of energy consumption. The more the quality of life improves the more sophisticated form of energy is used. Sufficient amount of food grains possessed by a man may be useless if he does not have sufficient energy to cook them. As environmentalists have emphasized, the energy should be treated as a basic need of the people. Man may pass nights sleeping under a free or open sky,

but he cannot cook a single meal without fuel. Because of their concentration in one place which goes against their social norm, the Lisu are facing a crisis of energy resources i.e. firewood. In high altitude hilly forest, trees are the only source of fuel for cooking food. Forest trees are gradually decreasing day by day and there is no proper policy for its conservation; and there is no alternative resources of energy available to them. In the near future the Lisu will face a fuel-famine. Realizing the gravity of the problem of the resources of energy, the Lisu have stopped felling trees of the nearby forest, specially the young ones. In other words, they have started preserving the forest around their habitation. This a wise move on their part; moreover the writer repeatedly impressed them to plant a tree before felling a tree.

#### Problem Communication

No welfare ~~scheme~~ or development programme can be successfully implemented in the high altitude Vijaynagar circle because of its problem in communication. At present, there is no road to link Vijaynagar with plain area, i.e. Miao. One road named Miao-Vijaynagar, in short M.V.Road, was constructed to connect Vijaynagar with the plains in recent past, spending huge amount of money along the bank of Noa-Dihing river. The road was usable for about one year only then it was blocked by the land slide which is a constant feature in the area. Since then it has been left out dilapidated, and there was no effort to make it usable again. Now, almost the entire area has been reserved for wild life sanctuary; and there is little chance to reconstruct it

which may disturb the free movement of wild animals according to experts of wild life. But instances are not rare where regular bus plies through sanctuary in Mysore, Maharashtra and so on. Development experts should try to rebuilt the road to ensure speedy development in the Vijaynagar area. The Lisu are still using this M.V.Road to go down to Miao for urgent domestic business. It is about seven days foot march. Miao, is the sub-divisional town of Tirap district, well-connected with the big towns of Assam. The only alternative way to reach Vijaynagar is by sortie. Sortie is a small aircraft used to supply or carry essential commodities food articles, building materials, stationary articles, electrical goods and so on to place of human habitation where there is no other form of communications. It is mainly used to supply rations to the army men posted in remote and border area, by Indian Air Force. Sortie operates from Mahabanbari and Chabua airports. To board sortie, one needs prior permission from the concerned authority, and then one has to give a declaration stating that he or she is embarking the plane at his or her own risk, and the authority will not be responsible for any loss of life. Unless that bond or declaration is signed properly in three copies nobody is allowed to enter into the plane. At Vijaynagar, run-way has been prepared by spreading corrugated sheets of iron. Only small aircrafts-Dakota, Otter, Caribou and the like can land and take off from this type of runway. Flight of the sortie is most uncertain, because of non-availability of aircraft and its pilots; and very

fluctuating weather of Vijaynagar. If luck favours, after enlisting the name in luggage manifesto (L.M), one may reach Vijaynagar within a week otherwise one is to wait at Mohanbari for even two months. Now flight of sortie has been increased by importing new planes called N-32, from Russia which takes about half an hour at present, previously one hour, to reach Vijaynagar. Inside the sortie, practically there is no sitting arrangements. One is to sit on a potato or onion or rice bag holding a iron chain or a wire used to bind the luggage tightly. After reaching Vijaynagar by sortie almost one day's foot-march through jungle is needed to reach the settlement of the Lisu. Through dense forest, no outsider can dare to reach the Lisu village alone. The road that links Lisu village with the circle headquarter at Vijaynagar needs urgent repairings.

### Problem Education

In developing countries including India, education is widely accepted as a necessary tool for the attainment of developmental goals; and as a social process, it attempts to create an awareness to make individuals or a community more responsive to the needs of developments, and to equip them with necessary knowledge and skills. Education, no doubt, helps to improve professional efficiency, but it also provides general knowledge and creates social awareness thereby improving the living conditions of the people; it makes a person or a community functionally more effective. The role of education; in India, in creating awareness in the form of intelligent consumership, enlightened

citizenary, positive attitude for change, an openmindedness and a suitable value system, can hardly be over-emphasised. Education as such leads political consciousness and awareness of rights and duties among the people so that they realise their duties towards themselves and country at large. Seen from this angle, the scope of education is a process of all round development. One cannot deny the fact that education leads to the increase in the number of people who have perception and tenacity take society or a community forward. But, it is a pity that in the 40 years of Independence, we have not been able to make even 40% this republic literate. We have to acknowledge that shame having kept more their 60% of our people unlettered has to be shared by each one of us who has had the blessings of education. It is necessary to rejuvenate endeavours towards liberating our people from the bondage of ignorance. Let us hope the new education policy formulated by the government of India with its 'Operation Black Board' ~~will help~~ liberate our people from the bondage of illiteracy, as well as improve the social condition of life. For achieving this goal; it is of paramount important to known the basic problems of education faced by our people, at the grass-root level, the problems faced by the Lisu in educating their children. Education has gained popularity among the Lisu, and they are very keen to send their children to school. But education has not yet become a moving force in the Lisu community because of the following reasons or problems:-

### 1) School

There is only one Middle English School in the Lisu area. After passing Class-VIII in the village school, the Lisu students cannot continue further studies because there is no high school or higher secondary school nearby nor even in the whole of Vijayanagar circle. Because of poverty, the Lisu cannot afford to prosecute their studies in Miao Higher Secondary School which is seven day's foot-march from their habitation. Moreover, educational facilities- stipend, scholarship, free books and copies, and free hostel accommodation are not available to them. So drop-outs from the school are increasing every year. A secondary or a Higher Secondary School is badly needed in the area to meet the demand of high school education. Facilities of education should be provided to the Lisu with immediate effect.

### 2) Medium of Instruction

Officially, English is the medium of instruction in the school. But very few teachers instruct the students in English. Instead, Hindi is used as medium of instruction un-officially. Even English teachers are found using Hindi to instruct the students. Bengali and Assamese are also used sometimes. This haphazard use of different languages poses a great problems not only to the Lisu students but others as well; to pick up subject-matter. The Lisu do not know Hindi nor Assamese. For the benefit of the students local teachers should be employed upto lower primary level as far as practicable. Lisu teachers for Lower Primary School in the Lisu area will of immense help to the students

To improve the standard of education, the medium of instruction as prescribed, should be followed strictly, and the concerned authority should maintain a strict vigilance on the matter.

### 3) Teacher

In the remote and inaccessible area of Vijaynagar, no teachers would prefer to come and serve in the school of Vijaynagar and Gandhigram. Posting in these schools is generally treated as punishment though extra incentives, in the form of allowance is given to them. Therefore the schools of this circle always run short of teachers, same is the case in the schools of other remote area as well. Since its inception in 1964, Gandhigram Middle English School has never been provided with more than four teachers, and at times, only two or three teachers share the immaculate responsibility of running the school. In such sorcery state of affairs, what the teacher will teach and the students will learn! There is immanent problem of good and efficient teachers. While collecting data on education as a part of development process, majority of the guardians in the Tangsa, Mishmi and Lisu area told to the writer "we want efficient teachers, we want sincere and dedicated teachers." It is found that majority of the teachers lack efficiency and sincerity, they are more interested in getting their monthly salary than the job of teaching, because, monthly salary rarely reach them in proper time. Against all odds, some teachers with their efficiency, sincerity and dedication are silently and relentlessly working to improve the quality of education in Arunachal Pradesh, and thereby enriching the concept



of citizenship. They deserve congratulation, though their number is very few.

With all constraints, the Lisu have remarkably been able to increase their rate of lettered persons. According to the survey conducted by the writer about 80 percent of the Lisu are literates who can sign and write ~~letters~~ in the Lisu language. The Lisu have so far produced one arts graduate, two under graduates and eight matriculates. Unemployment problems is having a bad repercussion on the education policy of the Lisu. Education, as a way of getting employment, is becoming useless to the Lisu. It is said that first graduate of a community in Arunachal Pradesh gets the job of a Circle Officer. But it is not followed in the case of the Lisu.

### Problem Health

Health is considered a non-economic factor of development. A community or an individual cannot prosper in any sphere of life without possessing sound health. The success of welfare activities and development programmes depends on the standard of health of the community or the people possessed. Health is wealth goes the saying. A sound body is a prerequisite of a sound mind. And a sound mind of a community is the prerequisite of any kind of development. Because, a healthy mind can easily utilise the welfare schemes and development programmes to improve the quality of life or the social conditions of life. In other words, a community with healthy mind is supposed to have adaptive resilience.

General condition or standard of health of the Lisu is satisfactory. They use indigenous medicines to protect their health. Attitude of the Lisu towards modern medicine is favourable, they have realised fully the utility and efficacy of modern medicines and medical care. But, unfortunately, there is no dispensary or primary health centre or unit in the Lisu area. So, the benefit of modern medical care or treatment is not reaching them. Death due to non-availability of modern medical care is not uncommon in the Lisu village. A health unit in the Lisu village is an immediate necessity. There is one Health Unit at Vijaynagar the circle headquarter which is about twenty two kilometers away from the habitation of the Lisu. Moreover, the health unit is marked by the frequent absence of a qualified doctor because of communication difficulties. No experienced doctors would like their postings at Vijaynagar circle though extra allowances are provided to them. Posting at Vijaynagar is generally considered a punishment. A road communication is urgently needed for all round development of the area.

Attitude of the Lisu towards family welfare planning is not favourable. The Lisu are a little community, hence they have a tendency to increase their population size. They need more working hands for agricultural work, collection of firewood, hunting games and so on. Hence, the Lisu do not like to restrict childbirth at present. Moreover, after getting two children, if they resort to family welfare methods, then where is the guarantee for their survival, the question asked by the Lisu frequently for

which the author has no answer. At least two or three children will definitely survive out of the children a Lisu couple can produce in their span of life. This is the common belief and the logic behind the negative attitude of the Lisu towards family welfare planning. It is reported that after producing the desired number of children which is invariably more <sup>than</sup> four, some Lisu couples have adopted the method of birth-restriction or control.

Facilities of Public Distribution System, Integrated Rural Development Programmes, Integrated Child Development Scheme, Nutrition Programmes, Insecticides, Fertilizers, Improved Variety of Seeds, Irrigation and Electricity are not available to the Lisu. One part of the village-Gandhigram, gets the facility of piped water (drinking), its condition is deteriorating day by day as there is no effort to repair the damage pipes and its accessories. The rest drinks water from Noa-Dihing river and streams.

Looking into the problems of the Lisu, it is evident that the benefits of development programmes have not reached them or to the grass root level to the desired extent. These problems of development are not unique to the Lisu alone, they are the innate problems of all the tribes or communities of Arunachal Pradesh who are living in remote and inhospitable terrains.

The author has great confident, and expectation too, in the working of the new government of the state of Arunachal Pradesh, and earnestly desire that the new government will look into the problems of the Lisu immediately rising above all parochial considerations and narrow sectarian feelings poised by vicious circle.

Humane attitude or approach is urgently needed to solve the problems of the Lisu. The Lisu are a receptive community i.e. they have tremendous recuperative power. If their problems are solved, they can easily climb the peak of the development ladder.

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## C O N C L U S I O N S

This thesis is a purposive ethnography on the Lisu, a little ethnic group or a community of the present state of Arunachal Pradesh. In fact, this is a total ethnography and a new ethnography as well. Here by ethnography I mean the scientific description or study of the cultures of living people. And any description is a set of assertions. Ethnography is the solid pillar on which the whole discipline of Anthropology more specifically the social and cultural anthropology stands. This is not a graphic description. This study is a synchronic description as well as a diachronic <sup>now</sup> description of the culture of the Lisu. Through synchronic and diachronic description this thesis tries to understand the culture, a means of survival, and the problems of the Lisu in terms of historical perspective, linguistic affiliation, folklore, material culture, economic organisation, life cycle rituals, social organisation, social control, religious organisation, world view, etiology and medical system and transformations. In other words, all these component parts of the life of the Lisu together constitute the Lisu culture, and its present shape is the changed facet of the past. In fact, this ethnographic study aims at constructing the Lisu culture as a whole which <sup>is</sup> most vital and basic to the growth and refinement of anthropological knowledge. Lisu culture, like every culture,

primitive or non-primitive, is a complex whole. This culture is not without inner contradictions or contrasts, which, in fact, designs its own colourful tapestry. Though it is plausible to discover and arrange the patterns of a culture in a systematic whole, it may not be possible to predict precisely in what forms they will appear and arrange themselves. Following Edward Sapir (1949), Lisu culture may be designated as a genuine culture in which the opposition between freedom and conformity is minimised because their existing behavioural standards provide an efficient means by which a free individual can achieve his or her goals without causing harm to others.

Language is the vehicle of culture. The study of language to the anthropologists, more particularly to the social and cultural anthropologists, is of paramount important not only for practical purposes, but also for the fact that linguistic studies have proved essential to an understanding of the deeper meaning of human behaviour, furthermore, peculiar characteristics of languages are clearly reflected in the views, custom, and culture of <sup>a</sup>community or a group of people. The Lisu language has been studied from anthropological perspective as well as perspective of linguistics. The Lisu language falls in the Proto-Loloish category of the Pro-Lolo-Burmese sub-group of the Tibeto-Burman group of languages. Roman script written reversely is used as the script of the Lisu language; it has 28 consonants and eleven vowels, but no semi-vowels. All the vowels are nasalised which are resolvable into five front and six back vowels. The Lisu language is characterised by its tone. Three distinctive tones-

rising, falling and level are observed which split apart giving rise to seven tones.

The folklore materials of the Lisu reflect different aspects of their culture and character. It indicates the social personality of the Lisu which is more expressive of happiness and honesty than unhappiness, melancholy and dishonesty. Their life is inseparable from the supernatural deities and evil spirits. They are good and brave fighters. The Lisu are a poor community, they desire to become rich and aspire to achieve high status in the society. Folktales of the Lisu are dominated by the narration of orphan boys. It also reflects the prevalence of cross cousin marriage; intelligency of the Lisu wives and shifting type of cultivation. Lisu songs are classified on the basis of age, but not on the basis of sex. To the Lisu, song means vocal music competition, no competition, no song. The Lisu songs are characterised by the absence of musical voice i.e. there is little tune in their songs. It hears like conversation. Wakhikhi and Cheyngo are the two varieties of the dance performed by the Lisu.

The distinctive traits of the Lisu material culture are dresses, ornaments and cross-bow. In other words, the Lisu can be easily identified by the characteristics designs of their dresses, ornaments and cross-bow. The two traditional upper dresses of the Lisu women are called chito-betsi and chidu. Chito-betsi is like gent's full shirt; but its collar is small and round in shape and both sleeves remain loose or open. Chidu is a type of black jacket worn over the chito-betsi. The lower dresses of the Lisu women are respectively named yegaw and shikaji.

Yegaw is like very loose peticoat blue or black in colour and its border reaches well below the knees. Shikaji is a long piece of cloth worn under yegaw. Both male's shirt and female's skirt are known as chito-betsi. Male's chito-betsi is more loose than that of female's chito-betsi. Its sleeves are black or blue at the end, and its front is open. Over the chito-betsi, an overcoat like dress referred as Betsi-Jala is worn by the Lisu males. A piece of cloth about 15 feet long and seven inches wide wrapped in the waist over the shirt is known as ye-Jihu. The ornaments worn by the Lisu women are respectively known as wulu (head ornament), Nakho (big earring made of silver or aluminium), Ooty ( a string of stone beads which connects the two earrings over the head), Lewo (a big necklace made of stone beads), Lewu-Lewo ( a small bead-necklace white or red in colour), Wooja (a big necklace made of conch's discs) and Leju ( bangles made of silver or aluminium). Their cross-bow is known as chey; it is made of wood, and it has different sizes. Chey is the speciality of the Lisu which is handed over from one generation to another. By counting the number of cross-bows one can easily find out the number of male persons in a Lisu family.

The economic organisation of the Lisu is of subsistence type, that is, it falls in the broad category of production-consumption economics. Chohi (household) is the unit of production and consumption. It is composed of two aspects; producers and consumers. Some members of the chohi consume but do not produce, for example, old persons and children, others both consume and produce. The Lisu produce only one crop of paddy. The Lisu are at various



levels of economic development, they are food gathers, hunters, fishermen, agriculturists- both settled and shifting cultivators, business men and service holders. The distinctive feature of their economic organisation is that they do not abandon one occupation or economy to adopt another. At present, agriculture is their main occupation. Land and forest are the two major economic resources of the Lisu.

Their life cycle rituals revolve around the Somimi, the name giving ceremony observed on the third day of birth of a baby; the Lephecha, the marriage ceremony and death. Dead bodies are disposed by the method of burial following Christian rules. No pre-birth or adolescence rituals are performed by the Christian Lisu.

The Lisu are organised into a number of consanguineal or patrilineal descent groups such as Ngawza; Jayza; Nofa and so on which are commonly known as chowo, the clan like organisation. But these descent groups of the Lisu do not fully connote the features of clan. If I term these groups clan, then I find that the Lisu do not follow clan exogamy i.e. they can marry within the clan as well as outside the clan. There is no clan hierarchy and the stories connected with the origin of these groups mostly depict different types of occupations or specialisations in certain jobs such as expertising in fishing (Ngawza), in collecting honey or bee keeping (Jayza), in catching mouse (theyza) and so on. These groups, as it appears, are nothing but occupational categories originated from the specialisation in certain spheres of life. The Lisu term chowo includes many more features than the

English term clan does; cho means human beings, and wo means bundle. Hence literally, chowo denotes a group of Lisus or people originated from the same stock. Besides, the term chowo is appended in the following manner: Lisu + chowo = Lisuwo, Nepali + chowo = Nepaliwo, Assamese + chowo = Assamesewo and so on. Lisuwo, or Nepaliwo or Assamesewo means the entire people of the respective community wherever they may live. Therefore, it will not be justified or scientific to regard chowo as clan which has no equivalent term or word in English. But besides chowo there is no other term comparable to clan. Should I call them lineages? Similarly, the Lisu, as it appears from the current investigation, do not have the term for the kin group referred as lineage. The Lisu term- Shiza-woza and Nihwa-Niza are used to designate respectively all the kins of male line and female line upto infinite number of generations which can be remembered or cannot be remembered. This kin group never resides in the same place.

The unit of Lisu social organisation is chohi. Chohi does not mean what is meant by the anthropological concept of family. The term chohi means both husband and wife with their married and unmarried children, the place of living (house, household, home, etc.), the livestock, the trees and all the movable and immovable properties that belong to them. Authority in the chohi is vested in husband (Hisifa) who generally takes major decisions for all outside business, but inside the house, wife (Hisima) predominates, husband cannot dispose or lend any thing without wife's permission. In ideal chohi called Chojihi husband and wife always eat, work and move together. The characteristic feature of the chohi is that the first son after marriage before any issue, rarely after

an issue, establishes a separate chohi which is aided by his parents in all respects (social, economic etc.). Similarly, the second son, the third son, the fourth son and so on makes a separate chohi. Youngest son referred as zadi remains with the original or old chohi to look after the old parents who generally inherits all the movable and immovable properties of the chohi. In chohi, the rule of inheritance is ultimogeniture.

Non-Christian Lisu consider marriage a civil contract, but never a sacrament. Therefore, religious solemnisation does not take place in the traditional Lisu marriage referred as chozadi. But after embracing Christianity, the marriage has acquired the merit of religious sacrament, and the marriage is known as Lephecha. The Lisu consider human beings like animal, plants and so on a part of nature. To get married and to procreate children is also a part of nature in Lisu philosophy. Several forms of marriage are extant among the Lisu. Every type of marriage is associated with bride price in the form of several cows and household articles. Except Di, the marriage negotiation, all other forms of marriage are regarded as social offence and it needs to be settled by the chowu, the village headman, for getting social sanction.

Divorce is allowed in almost all human societies, it is nothing new. But the way divorce comes about among the Lisu is unique. At the time of dissolution of marriage it is customary for both the divorcee and the divorcer (divorce suitor) to appear <sup>before</sup> the chowu with their relatives. When a divorce is socially sanctioned by the chowu, the divorcer brings one cup of rice beer

referred as Mejasapi and drinks it with the divorcee at a time from the same cup, and then the empty cup is permanently offered to the divorcee which indicates or symbolises final separation.

The Lisu have a unique custom of making friends. Friendship may be established with a person within the community, as well as outside the community. Friendship is established between males only. A particular day is fixed for the occasion and the man to be designated as friend is invited to the residence of the man intending friendship. Then three cups or mugs (Kuju) of rice beer (Jiphu) are brought in. A fixed quantity of rice beer taken from any two cups is poured into the third cup. Then two drops of blood collected from each male's thumb are mixed into it. Then the rice beer mixed with human blood is taken by them in a sapheta way. Sapheta means the drinking of rice beer by two persons from the same pot at a time. Then a grand feast is arranged to celebrate the occasion. The friendship so established is kept alive till death.

The mechanism of social control in the Lisu society centres round a key institution known as Chowuship. In chowuship all the powers for social control - maintenance of peace, law and order are delegated to a single <sup>male</sup> ~~man~~ person known as chowu. Chowu is a keeper of the Lisu society. He acts as an administrator or a magistrate, a judge, an advocate, a leader and a great soldier of the Lisu. In short, chowu is a secular head. The main function of the chowu is to give impartial judgement in every case. He is required to exercise the vested authority in the maintenance of right, in punishing the wrong-doers and rewarding the righteous

people. Chowu is selected or appointed by the village elders. A Lisu to be appointed as chowu should be intelligent, courageous and physically strong. The man should have presence of mind, sharp memory, imaginative power, sufficient knowledge of the traditional customs and rules and the ability to understand the psychology (swakush) of the mob. According to their belief- a Lisu to be designated as chowu is born with all these noble qualities. The typical feature of the mechanism of social control of the Lisu is that it rarely uses physical force or coercion for the regulation of law and order or <sup>peace</sup> ~~piece~~ in the society.

The religious life of the Lisu is dominated by the evil spirits commonly known as Ni. The interesting feature is that all the malevolent spirits are believed to be originated with the Lisu from the same mythical gourd. The only difference between malevolent spirits (Ni) and the Lisu is that the Ni did not get the physical shape of human beings whereas the Lisu did. And for that reason, as they believe, Ni always remain in angry mood and try to harass or disturb the Lisu by inflicting different kinds of diseases.

Under etiology and medical system, the Lisu taxonomy of diseases, health care and the beliefs associated it and the treatments for remedy of diseases have been dealt with. The Lisu approach the problem of diseases from two points of view: causal and symptomatic. Every community or ethnic group has its own medical theory however advanced it may be technologically, industrially and economically which is transcended from one generation to another. The Lisu medical theory reflects both culture bound and

universal elements. The Lisu, after embracing Christianity, have abandoned the concept of diseases created by evil spirits and its treatments. But the diseases inflicted by the germs and other forbidden eatables and its treatments by medicinal plants, herbs and by some parts of animals, birds and fishes are still continuing. Facilities of modern medical care and medicines are not available to the Lisu, but they have realised the efficacy of modern medicines and their responses are favourable.

The Lisu confront many visible and invisible things in the natural and supernatural domains and in their ecological and social circumstances, and by creating a meaningful way they maintain a kind of intimate relation with them. The human world of the Lisu, the natural and supernatural domains, the habitat and ecological setting and their neighbours are linked together to form a meaningful world of living for the Lisu. Explication of the concept of illness and curing in the Lisu community is closely associated with their religion and magic to form a cohesive world view. The central ideas of the Lisu world view are those of fate, honour, shame, wealth, blessing and obligation.

The problems of development of the Lisu are strikingly different from those of other tribes or ethnic groups of Arunachal Pradesh who are living in easy accessible areas. The basic problems of the Lisu as reflected through careful and minute observation are the problems of habitat, land, identity, people, administration, political, agriculture, energy, communication, education, and health. The Lisu are a receptive community or ethnic group because they have developed adaptive resilience or recuperative power to wrest benefits from the development programmes and

other welfare schemes for improving the standards of living.

Because they always come forward and become successful to utilise the facilities that come to them from outside. If their problems are solved, they can easily climb the peak of development ladder.

After conversion to Christianity, great changes are perceptible in all the aspects of life and culture of the Lisu. Old values of their culture are gradually fading away and new values and outlook are gradually stepping in with increasing communication facilities and contact with different communities or ethnic groups.

Because of social and geographical isolation, the Lisu have less scope for interaction or contact with any other ethnic groups or communities except the Nepali and the government officials. The Lisu are very intelligent, enterprising, energetic, economically self-sufficient and good looking people who consider themselves superior to the Nepali in all spheres of life. The term Kalafa is used by the Lisu to designate Indians which means black people. But the government officials and the Nepali say that by the term- Kalafa, the Lisu actually mean foreigner. They are very much conscious of their cultural identity, and try to maintain a boundary of their culture and physical superiority over the rest of the ethnic groups or people living adjacent to them. For instance, a Nepali boy (Rai group) married a poor Lisu girl four years ago. The Lisu regarded that marriage as a serious social offence and excommunicated the poor family from their society.

The lower caste Nepalis follow the Lisu way of rearing pigs and chickens. Except the addiction to drinking rice beer and

rearing of pigs and chickens there seem to be no other cultural traits common between the Lisu and the Nepali which may contribute to form a regional socio-cultural pattern. The government staff posted at Gandhigram and Vijaynagar are looked upon as a group foreign to them having no impact on the Lisu way of life. The Lisu make contact with the government officials for getting commodities such as common salt, kerosene, sugar and so on for domestic consumption, and sometimes for medical help. They have learned the technique of playing foot ball, volley ball, badminton, and table tennis from the Jawans (young men) of Assam Rifles, a para-military organisation. The Lisu participate in the friendly or yearly competition of these games organised by the circle officer or by the Assam Rifles which are won mostly by the Lisu. They interact with the Marwari only on business front; the Lisu collect agar wood (used for preparing cosmetics) from the forest and sell them to the marwari. The Lisu have established good business relation with the Marwari and get business commodities on credit. The Lisu have some similarities in material culture-house pattern, dress, food and drinks with the Tangsa, the Rawang and the Singpho. In their old age, the Lisu, like the traditional Hindu parents, aspire to be looked after by their sons, specially by the youngest son.

In India, more precisely in Arunachal Pradesh, the Lisu are an independent socio-cultural entity because of the peculiarity or distinctiveness in their language, folklore materials, material culture, mythology, breeding structure or pattern, ecology or habitation, religion, social, economic and political organisations,



medical theory, ways of treatments, and word view. They are an ethnic group or a community because they share the fundamental cultural values or some aspects of a common culture. Because they are a body of people that traces or believes in the same mythological or historical origin, that has a typical standards of living, a distinctive social and cultural heritages and a unique organisation of life which is subject to some degree of social control and inspire by a feeling of oneness or possess a feeling of belonging together. The Lisu way of life does not form a coherent part of Indian civilization. On the contrary, it projects more elements of diversity than unity; in other words, the Lisu add one more variety to the Indian culture as a whole.

Modern anthropologists particularly the followers of the Functional School of Anthropology do no longer remain satisfied with the mere recording of the details of the life of an ethnic group or a community as their predecessors used to do. They have now amply demonstrated that ethnographic studies scientifically—Conducted can be profitably utilised at least for the economic development of the concerned community or to solve their basic problems. In fact, the ethnographic knowledge is a means to an end but not an end in itself. Following T.C.Das (1945), I would like to emphasize that, at least in India, application of ethnographic knowledge for improving the social conditions of living or the quality of life of our people is the ultimate aim of the modern ethnographer. He is now not a mere academician

but a specialist to offer practical suggestions for the betterment of the people or the community he has studied following a research methodology and acquired scientific knowledge on their life and culture and their problems or stigmas. This ethnographic knowledge on the life and culture of the Lisu may be fruitfully utilised by the administrators, the political leaders and the policy makers of Arunachal Pradesh for the efficient functioning of its government, because this study not merely poses or raises the basic problems of the Lisu but also offers practical solutions to them which are common to many other ethnic groups of the present state of Arunachal Pradesh.

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