INTRODUCTION
TABLE 2

MANIPUR

NAGALAND

SENAPATI

TAMELONG

JIRIBAM

CHURACHANDPUR

CHANDLI
INTRODUCTION

The scope of study

The study is to reconstruct "A socio-cultural history of Šüpfomei ¹ Naga ² tribe – a historical study of Ememei, Lepaona, Chüluve and Paomata, generally known as Mao Naga tribe".³ The approach is by investigating their origin, migration, settlement, culture and their social life based on the oral tradition such as folksongs, folktales, sayings, legends, proverbs, and also the written books, manuscripts, unpublished works, etc.⁴ It is to ascertain the foundation of the tribe tracing back to their ancestral homeland and their forefathers.

¹ Cf. Chapter one: (Ref. 1. The term Šüpfomei). “Šüpfowo” is the subject we shall be dealing in this research work. Many of the Naga tribes called the present nomenclature “Mao Naga tribe” as “Šüpfomei” or “Shepoumai”. The oral tradition of Šüpfomei tells that “Šüpfowo” was the great grandfather of the present four groups namely, Ememei, Lepaona, Chüluve and Paomata. While the descendants of “Šüpfowo” are known as “Šüpfomei”. The term “Šüpfowo” stands for a person’s name and “mei” stands for people. Thus, “Šüpfomei” are called the descendants of “Šüpfowo”. The original nomenclature was known to all the Naga villages and even today Angami villages called the present “Mao Naga tribe” as “Šüpfomia”.

² Cf. Chapter one: (Ref. 1.6.1. The term Naga). The term “Naga” is a generic and inclusive terminology which is understood as having the same mode of life and culture. Various researches are going on by historians, anthropologist and social scientist how the term “Naga” came to be called. There are as many as 35 Naga tribes spread out in Manipur, Nagaland, Assam, Arunachal pradesh and Burma. Most of these tribes are recognized by the government of India, while some are on the process of being recognized.

³ Cf. Chapter one: (Ref. 1.31.) The “Mao Naga tribe” is recognized by the Government of India as a Scheduled Tribe. The Mao Naga tribe is a major tribe in Manipur state and enjoys many special quotas offered and privileges All India Radio (AIR), programmes, Tribal concessions, Scholarships etc. “Mao dialect” is recognized by the Government of Manipur introduced in schools. For etymology of the word refer Chapter one:1.3.1. At present the four groups namely, Ememei, Lepaona, Chüluve and Paomata are generally called “Mao Naga tribe”.

⁴ Cf. Ref. Bibliographies
**TABLE 4**

Estū pfoki 8,982 ft (2,994 meters),
the highest peak in Japfü Range
We begin with the identification of the geographical location, which will help us in the better understanding of the picturesque place, people and habitat of Shupfome tribe. From time immemorial Shupfomei Naga tribe has inhabited the present Senapati area of the northern district of Manipur, which was declared as a district on 14th September, 1968.

The district is situated between 94.0 north latitude and 25.15 east longitude. According to 1991 census, Senapati district has a total population of 208,406 persons comprising of 107,310 males and 101,096 females, and a total area of 3271 sq. km. The density of population is 48 per sq. km. Senapati district is border to Nagaland state in the north, Imphal, Thoubal and Bishnupur districts to the south, Ukhrul district to the east and Tamenglong district on the west. Shupfomei Naga tribe is surrounded by different Naga tribes and people. In the north, i.e. along the Nagaland border live the Angami, Rengma and Chakhesang Naga tribes. The Marams and Zemei Naga tribes reside in the west, the Tangkhul Naga tribe in the east and Kabui Naga, Kukis and Meitei ( Manipuris)

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5. Cf. Map of India, specially indicates Manipur state and Senapati district where Shupfomei tribe inhabits.
6. Cf. "Manipur" was a princely state before the British administration and Britisheers had great admiration of the landscape and they even to the extent of calling Manipur as "paradise on earth". Manipur is one of the north eastern states of India with a area of 22,356 sq.kms. and a population of 18.4 lakhs according to 1991 census. Manipur state is divided into nine districts for administrative convenience. They are Imphal East and Imphal West, Bishnupur, Thoubal, Ukhrul, Chandel, Churachandpur, Senapati and Tamenglong districts. Several ethnic groups inhabit the land. Meitei and Meitei Pangals (Muslims) are dwellers in the valley, while the two broad Hill tribes. The Nagas and Kuki-Chin-Mizo tribes occupy the hill regions.
7. Cf. The Encyclopaedia district gazetteers of India, North-Eastern Zone (Vol.11), p. 441
8. Cf. These tribes are living in the state of Nagaland and they are living close the Shupfomei tribe and have very similar in everything, in language, culture, mode of cultivation and worship.
View of Barak River (Shovo koru)

Different views of the sources of Barak river (Shovo koru)
in the south. (The area stretches along the foot hills of Mt. Esú (Esú pfoki) on Japfü mountain ranges in the west which is the highest peak with 8,982 feet (2,994 meters) towards the south-eastern side.)

(Mt. Ngapu (Ngapu pfoki) marks the northernmost extent while Mt. Houdu (Houdu pfoki) is at the eastern most part and Mt. Khuochi (Khuochi pfoki) is at the south respectively.  

10 Tungjoy (Sochumei), Liyai (Ozhimei), Phuba (Ephremei), Chingmei Khullen (Mahavümei), Chingmei Khunou (Zhobumei), Phaibung Khullen (Epśumei), Lakhamei (Leamei) Thingba Khullen (Chonamai) and Thingba Khunou (Shomai) are within these limits.)

This area is the source of many well known rivers, Barak 12 (Shuvorū korū) has its original source starting from Liyai Khullen (Ozhimei). Chuherū 13 (Chuherū korū) has its source between Tadubi (Ethupfüi) and Maogate, and further more Laini (Laini korū), Ngari (Ngari korū), Imphal (Mikrū korū) and Iril (Iril korū) spring from eastern, western, northern and southern parts of Shüpfomei area respectively. Some of these rivers flow to

9. Cf. N. Salew, Records of Mao-Maram sub-division. P.1
10. Mt. Ngapu is the highest peak in the northern Shüpfomei area, and it lies between Tungjoy and Liyai. While Mt. Houdu stretches from Phaibung and extending to connecting to Mt. Khuochi in Lakhamei area. These peaks brings water sources and vegetation for the people in the area.
11. The different village names in Lepaona, Chulue and Paomata areas.
12. Cf. N. Salew, Records of Mao-Maram sub-division. P.1. The main source of the river is from Liyai and the many river streams along the surrounding villages feeds the Barak river. The particular river bring perennial water source for agriculture.
13. Cf. Chuherū river is the original source flowing from the state of Manipur to the north of Senapati and flows to Nagaland. The many small streams joins together and flows to southern Anagami, Chakhumsan, Rengmas areas and to Wokha district in Nagaland with a name Doyang.
Nagaland state with a different name like Doyang \textsuperscript{14} river, while other rivers flow to Burma (Myanmar), Assam, etc.

\textsuperscript{14} Cf. Doyang river is the perennial water source for agriculture and hydro electricity for the state of Nagaland. Its original source starts from Manipur in western Shuplim area.
Senapati district has six sub-divisional offices (SDOs) namely, Tadubi, Paomata, Kangpokpi, Saikul, Purul and Sapermaina. It has the following Manipur legislative assembly (MLA) constituencies: Saikul constituency No. 46, Karong constituency No. 47, Mao constituency No. 48, Tadubi constituency No. 49, Kangpokpi constituency No. 50, and Saiu constituency No. 51.\(^{15}\) Senapati district has the maximum temperature of 33.0 celsius and a minimum temperature of 4.0 celsius. The average annual rainfall is 1135 mm. Early rain starts from mid-May until mid-September. Abundance of rainfall brings an evergreen scene, abundant agricultural products and ensures a cool climate. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people in the region.\(^{15}\)

Wet terrace cultivation is the main method of cultivation. Practice of jhum (slash and burn) cultivation is almost abandoned because the people have come to realize the danger to the eco-system. Rice and rice beer is the stable food of the people. Vegetables like – cabbage, tomato, mustard, maize, pea, bean, pumpkin, squash, etc. grow abundantly, and fruits like peach, plum, pear, lemon, bananas, are considerably grown in the region. Animal farming, pisciculture and modern forms of agriculture are also carried out in a small scale; agro-forest based industry experiments by the government, handloom and handicrafts are the prospective economic activities of the region.\(^{16}\) National Highway No. 39 passes through Senapati district connecting to the rest of India.

\(^{16}\) Cf. The Shepoumaramth in the Naga National Movements. P.3
Specific subject of study

Let us clarify some of the terms that form the subject matter of our study, namely, “Shüpfowo” and the progenies of Shüpfowo known as “Shüpfomei”. Shüpfomei Naga tribe is one of the major Naga tribes in Manipur state.

In the 1950's and 60's the Government of Manipur called them “Hill tribes”. According to the Government of India, they are known as “tribals”. But we shall not label “Shüpfomei Naga tribe” and for that matter the rest Naga tribes to be called “tribals”. The term “tribal” denotes something primitive, savage (uncivilized), underdeveloped, illiterate and poor.\(^7\) But we shall defined Shüpfomei Naga tribe as well as the Naga tribes as a “tribe”. It conveys a clear identity of the people. The characteristic features of a tribe are clearly manifested and marked out. The essential elements that required to be constituted a “tribe” may be seen from different definitions. Neither many scholars agree on one definition of a tribe, nor there can be universally acceptable definition of a tribe, and we shall not force any one to accept it by force.

According to the World Encyclopaedia Book, “Tribe is a group of people who live in a particular place, speak the same language and obey a chief or elders. Its members have a common way of life and are usually related, although some persons may be adopted as members. The tribe is one of the earliest forms of society”.\(^8\)

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\(^7\) Cf. The NBCC Souvenir Nagas 90. “Nagas and Education” written Tuisern Shishak, P.22
In the Encyclopaedia Britannica, we find, it defined thus: “Tribe is a group of people...observing rules of social organization, and working together for a common purpose such as trade, agriculture, or warfare. Other typical characteristic include a common name, a contiguous territory, a relatively uniform culture or way of life, and a tradition of common descent”.

According to some dictionaries a tribe is a human community preserving its own identity of common custom, culture, beliefs and organization. And according to the anthropologists, a tribe is a primitive society living in the backward areas having the distinct identity with common dialect, culture, customs and usage. There are several striking common essentials to a tribe among the Nagas in general and particularly the Shüpfomei tribe. Firstly, it is primitive society; secondly, a common territory and living backward areas, thirdly, having a distinct identity with a common dialect, culture, customs and usage.

Shüpfomei Naga tribe and Nagas in general have such distinctive elements, which often marks out the difference between the rest of India and the tribal societies. External distinctive marks which can be seen clearly in the North Eastern states of India, like Mongoloid physical structure, the complexion, culture, language, etc. And at a closer look, the different habits, life style, art and crafts, dresses, honesty and hospitality, simplicity, etc.

The objectives and purpose of study

Various critical questions are being raised by different section of the people regarding the Naga tribes, their origin, migration, settlement, culture, etc. In the same way the younger generation from Shüpfomei tribe and especially the intellectual have set out to search for the true identity as to who is called Shüpfomei tribe? How are the four different sub-groups called – Ememei, Lepaona, Chüluve and Paomata groups? Who is Kapeo, Lepao and Memeo? Who are Ememei? Who are Kapematas? Who are Tolupematas? Who are Chüluvemei?

It is to clarify the meaning of "Shüpfomei" in order to ensure a correct understanding of term and to go beyond mere evaluation of the term but put broader vision and new commitment binding the whole Shüpfomei area. It is also to make a proposal to change the new nomenclature "Mao Naga tribe" in the schedule tribe list to "Shüpfomei or Shepoumai Naga tribe" which is the inclusive term for the four groups i.e. Ememei, Lepaona, Chüluve and Paomata.

The winds of change has practically touched every aspect of Shüpfomei life. Everything, everyone is on the move. Such movements lead to change – to a change that is ever changing. The very root of Shüpfomei culture, tradition and the core of their being is being questioned. This deep aspiration of change is a birth pang of the "hopes" and "fears" of Shüpfomei Naga tribe and it gives a sense of identity and also a sense of
insecurity. A “hope” that makes Shüpfomei that he or she belongs to a nation or tribe and a “fear” which reduces Shüpfomei tribe to a mere cog in the wheel in the sea of humanity having no say in their lives – that will lead to the eventual death of Shüpfomei and the whole Naga race. 20

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\checkmark \text{Makhel – Makhrefü} \quad \text{is considered by all the Naga tribes as the original homeland and the place of departure. Most of the Nagas tribes trace back their root to Makhel and their oral tradition, folktales and folksongs record their origin, migration and settlement to Makhel. And there are still some theories considering Makhel as the second place with regard to their origin, migration and settlement theory. We shall deal about this particular topic in the following chapters.}
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Today the greatest tragedy being faced by Shüpfomei is the lost record of their unwritten genealogical history, their former culture and whereabouts of their ancestral home. Older generation often moan within themselves saying that the root to which they belong is being uprooted by a new culture and modern ideologies, concepts and theories. While many races have various sources to re-trace their ancestry, one thing is for sure that the Nagas in general and Shüpfomei in particular do not have such a cocoon to fall back upon and construct written records to dig up.

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20. According to the Shüpfomei Naga tribe, and the Nagas in general. Makhel is the place of origin, and without which it is the loss of their tradition and culture, and it would be same as death. Here death is seen as loss of identity and once tradition, culture, values and identity is not longer surviving it is equal to death.
21. Cf. Chapter one: (Ref. 1.7, 1.7.2.4.) According to Shüpfomei dialect “Makhrefü” means “secret”.
“Makhel” is the Anglo-Manipuri tonality.
How to reconcile and bridge the gap between the past and the present? There are many current issues that confront the present generation today and the present issues have become more important than the history, culture, origin, migration and settlement, their homeland, etc. The wealth of folksongs and folktales stored regarding Naga history, Naga culture, Naga nationalism, etc., are just mostly myths and yet these myths are to be studied to understand who the real Nagas and Shüpfomei are. Shüpfomei Naga tribe has the greatest role to play and to contribute in every field. The crisis in the Naga history and the identity crisis within the Nagas and Shüpfomei can be only solved with the involvement of Shüpfomei.

Doubts and tensions, problems and questions are posed by young generations today and whenever such doubts, tensions and questions are raised the older generation must be able to give them a satisfactory answer. Here are some of such questions being raised by the young generation –

Who are Shüpfomei?

Where did they come from?

Who are their ancestors?

Did they have any literature or manuscripts?

What is their culture and tradition?

Is there anything such as the so-called Shüpfomei ness?  

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The quest to know the answers by the young generation is quite obvious and positive, genuine and legitimate. It is the right and duty of every Shüpfomei child to know his or her true nature and identity to which they belong. Modern society is conditioned by various economic, political, social and cultural constraints and influences. In the environment of such complex problems of globalization and multi-nationalization, it is the duty and responsibility of the parents to instruct and give the right information and knowledge to their children. Therefore one has to stand up and prove his/her true identity, uniqueness and true self in this mega-society. Hence the need to write a real history basing on historical facts and records, which calls for preparedness in order to confront and be confronted, to prove his or her worth.

Reflecting on such issues like identity crisis, social tensions in modern complex society, the question that can be raised about the past and present can serve as a bridge towards a better future. The inner longing for the past history or often as we call the glorious past which we can only relive in theories and speculations, nevertheless is alive within the ‘chests’ of a mighty tribe as a fond dream today.

There is myth to be re-discovered. The search is painful, but the hope that is to be sustained to the last. One can only lament and say, is there anything worth studying about that particular tribe which has lost everything? Is this applicable to “Shüpfomei ness”?

Other critical issues which ever remain in the mind of Shüpfomei Naga tribe is their inborn love and concern, their struggles and crisis, their pains and conflicts to be
what he or she is. We are all navigating with self-control that is to be just, upright in the sea of corruption and to remain a pure blood in culture would be sometimes suicidal. But the daring spirit knows no limits and boundaries have to be re-charted and the new map to be drawn. The interest in the genesis and evolution of Shüpfomei tribe is to be provoked by the experience of the inner cry within the structure, viz. where man have to go through exploitation, struggle and miseries, pains and difficulties. The struggle for survival is a basic need for every social animal and this struggle chokes the growth and progress of the very culture, which ultimately leads to a slow death. This stage of survival is called an evolutionary process, the dynamics of a dilemma. There would be stagnation, if man’s initiative is not given due importance at this evolutionary process. But the hope that leads to a point of equilibrium and in this undying hope, is the spirit of preserving their culture the bedrock of Shüpfomei.23

**Specific contribution and relevance of study**

This study also seeks to answer similar questions as to how the coming of Christianity and modern education have changed the world-view of Shüpfomei. The new perspective of Shüpfomei Naga tribe is going higher and seeing more of the

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23. There is a cultural revival among the younger generation and especially the student community in matters of external dresses and wearing of traditional customs. The student community during the annual conference, seminars, workshops and social occasions bring out their own cultural dresses, customs and way of life. The educated groups also started imparting their children by teaching them in the homes and many schools are taught their mother language as the forth language in the state. Government officials who are working in towns and cities are conscious of the social celebration and do participate in such traditional celebration and reviving their native village atmosphere and re-living the moment of their forefather culture. To preserve Shüpfomei culture and tradition – the core of identity is through imparting them in the school curriculum and teaching the methods with modern means. The government should also make a policy to insist on compulsory teaching in the elementary stages for the children to learn their mother tongue.
unreachable horizon where they will never be able to turn back. The educational methods of today, play a great role to make changes in this area and changes are very radical. There is no doubt that it has brought enlightenment, progress, development, spirit of nationalism, contact with outside to become world, economically viable, politically stable and socially refined in every race and nation. Yet it rocks the belief system, dichotomy in the social-cultural structure, moral and spiritual tension, bringing heavy toll in the present situation. It touches the very core of the society and the society has to face it squarely. The process of modernization has really disrupted the social system where the one society that is equalitarian society is faced with the division such as the rich and the poor. Christianity with the victory of the cross of Christ and Shüpfomei democratic village structure is meeting for the first time face to face with this development. Thus, indigenous religion is on the verge of the dying and the new religion (Christianity) is at the upward/rising scale. And Shüpfomei tribe is passing these cross roads of their lives. Shüpfomei tribe has only alternative to accept such changes and adapt herself to the changing of time.

By mere averting to changes with cold feet will bring opposite reaction to the tribe. The ethnic clashes and village defense mechanism is something to be resolved with the spirit of forgiveness. Christianity and westernized method of education is the source of conflict and has to take the blame. It is the combination of the two that has disrupted the social harmony.

24 By becoming Christian Shüpfomei tribe feels that Christ who died on the cross did save them and wash their sins away. With the resurrection of Christ the old concept of head hunting, village feud, hatred for another village slowly disappeared. The new understanding that Christ became their saviour is the message.
The old head-hunting system of the Nagas which was governed with the maxim ‘blood for blood’ or ‘head for head’, cannot be just written off by just professing and becoming Christian, because it is the inborn Naga nature and that takes generation to live as normal Naga brothers and sisters. It looks that old system is longer happening, but in reality it is occurring and happening even today in the form of ideological, villagism, tribalism and insurgent groups. Against this background, the study will try to bridge the two cultures, two religions, two ideologies, two approaches and two outlooks without undermining each other is influence.

Main aim of the study

There are books and literatures written by outsiders and even by Naga writers’ themselves which deals on the generic term “Mao Naga tribe”. So far we have no single book that deals elaborately on Shüpfomei Naga tribe. Many of the authors did make a passing reference on “Mao Naga tribe”, but rarely on “Shüpfomei or Shepoumai”. It is the wish of the researcher that Shüpfomei Naga tribe be known by the original name “Shüpfomei” or “Shepoumai” rather than “Mao Naga tribe”. Thus, here are some of the aims and goals which the author to undertake this research work.

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25. Cf. Chapter one: (Ref. 1.3.1.) “Mao Naga tribe” is the official recognized term and stands for the people as well as the language. The term “Mao Naga tribe” is not favoured by many because of the wrong concept of the term and at the same time many do favour the word. Whatever may be the viewpoint for and against, till the next alternative option is proposed we have on other option, but when alternative terms are put forward and considered as the best, then the community can pursue the concerned authorities to put the matter to the next higher authorities.

26. “Enemei” the western group of Shüpfomei pronounce and write “Shüpfomei”

27. Lepaona, Chiluve and Paomata groups pronounces “Shepoumai”, by removing “ü” and with more stressed on “pou” to trace back their forefathers of the area.
(a) To unfold the past, by recalling the memories of the oral traditions such as folktales, folksongs, proverbs, wise sayings to the benefit of the present generation, and to appreciate them in the present situation as an answer to the present identity crisis.

(b) To recreate and interpret the meaningful values of the forefathers and extrapolate the best among the future generations and also to rediscover their base for the Shüpfomei tribe.

(c) To identify the moral values and integrate them into the modern form of teaching in the school curricula.

(d) To address some of the doubts, questions and queries about the origin of the Nagas in general and Shüpfomei Naga tribe in particular. It will be also a critical study of the different mythologies of their forefathers regarding the myths creation, migration, settlement and dispersion.

(e) To understand the inter-relationship within a group of human beings as possessors of a culture and the land where they dwell in and move about and find a living. It will give a panoramic view of the Shüpfomei tribe.

(f) To evaluate Shüpfomei socio-cultural history in different stages, namely socio-cultural stages of life, marriage and death.
The material culture consists of technology, implements and artifacts, while the non-material culture consists of values, norms, rule of behavior, expectations, properties and conventions of a people. This study will deal particularly with the non-material aspects of a culture, viz., the living and changing aspects of social behavior and its underlying norms and values by taking Shüpfomei life crisis, events such as birth, marriage and death in consideration.

**Methodology and primary sources**

The methodology adopted in this present work is mainly from three sources, the first of which is by the study of oral tradition – *Opfo ope lo*. Oral tradition and oral literature, which is the habitual way of transmitting from generation to generation through folktales, folksongs, riddles, sayings, proverbs, poems etc., is the primary source of historical investigation. These oral traditions are a powerful material revealing the inner source of the origin, migration of their ancestors, their forefathers, their struggle for settlement and their cultural traits, their belief system and their rites and rituals.

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28. Cf. S.M. Dubey, Dinesh Sharma, Sociology an introduction. P. 199
29. It is the traditional folksongs communicated through means of oral language. The young generation finds very hard to understand and learn. It is much harder to learn because of the modern education where children have to leave their parents and study outside their homes and villages. Their contact with the old generation is during their short holidays and even after their education they settle down in towns and cities away from the native village;
(Secondly, the fieldwork includes going to different villages attempting to verify the assumptions by cross-examining it with the data collection. It is the synthesis of the one common unit regarding the origin, migration and settlement of each village and a close study between the different villages and their views. The field study also includes the information and experiences through personal interviews with those who are well versed in the oral folk tradition and compilers. The different informal meetings with the village headmen, elders, and informal groups as well as through responses to prepared questionnaires given to these who have the knowledge and information of Shüpfomei myths, rituals, folktales, lyrics, etc.)

And thirdly, from written books, articles and materials published and unpublished. This research work is the immediate encounter with the different section of people on the oral tradition. We can say that such an oral tradition is the living document to ascertain and establish their origin and migration.

Jan Vansina described oral tradition thus:

("Oral traditions are historical sources of a special nature. Their special nature derives from the fact that they are 'unwritten' sources couched in a form suitable for oral transmission, and that their preservation depends on the powers of memory of successive generations of human beings." 30)

With formal education, many people started writing down the oral traditions in booklet forms, articles in the newspapers and seminar papers are presented basing themselves on the oral tradition. Such printed matters, such as booklets, monographs are included in the study for our better knowledge and for our future. (Ref. In the Appendix)

The work comprises of five chapters, the first four chapters deal with the actual thesis that is mainly historical approach and preliminary remarks on the content. The first chapter touches the core of the paper, "Shüpfomei Naga tribe, origin, migration and settlement". In detail it brings out the etymology of the word, "Mao" vis-à-vis "Shüpfomei" and the nomenclature of "Shüpfomaramth". It highlights the different theories of origin, migration and settlement based on the oral tradition of Shüpfomei Naga tribe. It deals with the various theories regarding the origin, migration and settlement of Shüpfomei tribe and the Nagas. It not only deals with the hypothetical evolution of Shüpfomei tribe but also the different human race according to the concept of the people. The different races as the Aryans, Dravidians, Anglo-Indians or the Mongoloids, etc. where Shüpfomei called them "Mayangs = outsiders" and "Meitei = Mikrümei or Manipuris (Valley dwellers)."

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31 Cf. The Shepoumaranath in the Naga National Movements. P. 22
32 "Meitei" = "Mikrümei" in literally translation means "different people or other people". In Shüpfomei dialect, the Manipuris are called "Meitei" which is same as Manipuris.
These races are different from the Naga tribes in culture, religion, language, mode of life, habits, socio-economic and social practices. Every language and dialect is in the process of development, at the same time the difficulties faced by Shüpfomei tribe is acute and that is the main problem that needs to be settled amicably.

Finally, chapter one closes with the relationship and with the departure between the evolution and concepts like that of the tiger, spirit and man. Shüpfomei folktales assert that “Man” was the real heir of the present fatherland – Makhel-Makhrefü, the historical reference for all the Naga tribes regarding their root of migration, settlement and dispersion. There are inadequate syntheses in the first chapter due to lack of space and by virtue of the fact that it is beyond the scope of this paper.

The second chapter examines “birth” as rite of passage of the socio-cultural life of Shüpfomei tribe. Different rituals accompany the birth ceremony where the child is introduced to the society. From birth till death is the community, especially the khel (clan) that supports him or her. In marriage ceremony, the two families are bound together in marriage. And the final ritual is death ceremonies of a person. These three stages of Shüpfomei life are very significant and taken as important events.

The third chapter discusses the feasts and festivals and its historical significance. It also explains the deep meaning in such celebration. It brings out two important aspects firstly, religious education, that is performance of rites and rituals in the celebration of feasts and festivals bringing God’s blessing. It also brings the physical, mental
satisfaction to the performer and the performed. Secondly, it is a medium of instruction to
the young generation as cultural habits. During such festivals the elders instruct the
young generation the oral tradition of their forefathers. Shüpfomei feasts and festivals
revolves around agriculture and community celebration.

The fourth chapter examines the traditional religion in historical perspectives. It
discusses the old understanding of the notion of religion and clarifies it from modern
understanding on the concept of Christianity. The traditional concept of benevolent God
(Oramei) and also the host of malevolent spirits (ora kashü) are explained. It
differentiates good and evil spirits according to the place and location. It also analyses the
different gennas – the restriction imposed by the society and taboo that binds Shüpfomei
community. Gennas and taboos are social conventional laws, restrictions instituted by the
society, which help the person to follow the law of nature. In the same chapter it also
explains the different lunar months and its significance. It further explains the signs and
symbols attached to Shüpfomei life.

The final chapter is an attempt to evaluate the socio-cultural change in the wake
of Christianity and education. It is not only critically appreciative and beneficial, but also
evaluates the sudden departure from the social ambience, resulting in the present social
tension. The specific contribution of Christianity and education is the progress,
development in every sphere. It is a radical movement of progress which have no much
root to hold on bringing identity crisis in the society. The opposite effect of such sudden
external transformation leading to westernized and not modernized.
In conclusion, it summarizes the whole exhaustive postulates and presentation of a study of Shüpfomei Naga tribe their socio-cultural history. Shüpfomei tribe having contacted with the changing world is also caught up in the tide of change. As a result their socio-cultural society is on the verge of creating generation gap between the old and young.