CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

Anthropology sets as its goal the study of mankind as a whole. The human being is a culture-creating and culture-bound animal. The study of science subject is always involved two parts i.e. theoretical and practical. Both are closely related to each other. Knowledge remains incomplete if proportional emphasis does not put on both the aspects.

The basic objectives of the present study are to bring out the descriptive account of the socio-demographic condition of the Tarao society in Manipur, to delineate the forces of change that have successfully affected their ways of life, to evaluate the nature and extent of change and stability in the socio-cultural life of the people.

Geographical Location of Tarao:

Manipur lies in the North-Eastern corner of India. The state is bounded on the north by Nagaland; on the north-east and south by the Kabow valley and the Upper Chindwin areas of Burma; on the south-west by the Union Territory of Mizoram and on the north-west and west by Assam. It extends from latitude 23° 83' N to latitude 25° 68' N. Its westernmost
tip is 93°03' E longitude and easternmost one is 94°78' E longitude. It has an area of 22,327 sq. kms. and its population is 14,20,953 persons. The state is broadly divided into two natural regions, namely, Hills and Valley. Out of the total area, hills occupy an area of 20,089 sq. kms. comprising of 5 districts and the valley constitutes 3 districts in an area of 2,238 sq. kms. Therefore the state has eight districts altogether. Manipur has an area of 15,154 sq. kms. for Forest Ecosystems.

About two thirds of the total population is concentrated in the valley and one third in the hills which are sparsely populated. Ethnic groups are the Meiteis, the Pangan (Muslim), and a large number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. According to the 1981 census, the Scheduled Castes constitute about 12.25 per cent and the Scheduled Tribes 27.30 per cent to the total population. It is a fact that the Scheduled Castes live in isolated pockets scattered in the 3 valley districts and the Scheduled Tribes live predominantly in 5 hill districts.

The Taraos are now mainly concentrated in the hills of Chandel district. The number of villages have now increased to four. They are Tarao Khullen (Tarao Laimanai), Lei-
shokching, Khuringmul and Heikakmul with respect to their establishment. The village Heikakmul is the latest one which is situated nearby Pallel. About 8 families are still

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Area in sq. km</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Density per sq. km</th>
<th>Inhabited village</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>VALLEY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Imphal</td>
<td>1,708</td>
<td>5,56,146</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>377</td>
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<td>2. Thoubal</td>
<td>2,31,781</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Bishenpur</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>1,41,150</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HILLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Senapati</td>
<td>3,271</td>
<td>1,55,421</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>473</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Churachandpur</td>
<td>4,570</td>
<td>1,34,776</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ukhrul</td>
<td>4,544</td>
<td>82,946</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Tamenglong</td>
<td>4,391</td>
<td>62,289</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Chandel</td>
<td>3,313</td>
<td>56,444</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Manipur**   22,327  14,20,953  2,082

(Source: Statistical Handbook of Manipur, 1985 : i -vi)
at Shanakeithel (Ukhrul district) where the Tangkhul Nagas are also inhabiting. Once some of the Tarao families had tried to merge into the Tangkhul Naga.

**Land and Origin of People:**

The two regions, valley and hill, set the geographic limits for two types of cultural phenomena. From the geological point of view, the valley is of recent origin by historic tale and supposedly it might have been formed out of a large lake which gradually filled up by deposits from the surrounding heights (hills).

The valley is the homeland of the Meitei and Meitei Pangan (Muslim) whereas the hills are the abode of Manipuri Haos (Tribes). Some of them are found in the valley also where they do live under the shadow of the Meitei. There are as many as 29 scheduled tribes in Manipur. They are the Aimol, Anal, Angami, Chiru, Chothe, Gangte, Hmar, Kabui, Kacha Naga, Koirao, Koireng, Kom, Lamgang, Mao, Maram, Maring, Mizo, Monsang, Moyon, Paite, Purum, Ralte, Sema, Simte, Sokte, Tangkhul, Thadou, Vaiphei and Zou. Besides, steps taken by the Government of Manipur for the recognition of some more tribes were recommended in the Manipur Legislative Assembly Committee on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Memo No.
3/19/82-LA(SC & ST) dated, Imphal 16 November, 1985. Those recommended tribes for recognition as scheduled tribes against 29 in the state are Rongmei, Zemei, Lengmei, Inpumi- mei, Tarao, Thangal, Khasi, Paomei, Guite, some Kuki tribes -- Haokip, Khongsai, Baite, Chongloi, Manlun-Manchong, Mate, Milhem, and Kipgen. Therefore, there are about 10 more tribes who claim for recognition as scheduled tribes in the state. It shows from the above discussion that there are as many as about 40 tribes (both recognised and unrecognised in Manipur).

For the sake of convenience the people of Manipur may be divided into Meitei, Loi, Pangan (Muslim) and Tribes. The tribal population again may be classified further into two major groups — the Naga and the Kuki. In the recent times, the Kukis are in two groups — the Old Kuki and the New Kuki. The Old Kukis include the Aimol, Anal, Chiru, Chothe, Gangte, Koirao, Koireng, Kom, Lamkang, Paite, Purum, Simte, Hmar, Vaiphei and Zou. The New Kuki represents by a single tribe known as the Thadou. Most of the earlier scholars refer the Tarao as Old Kuki tribe of Manipur since the Tarao marriage system is closely related with Chothe, Chiru and Kolhen (Shakespear, 1912 : 173; Bose, 1934b : 1–9; Levi-Strauss, 1969 : 270). But they have recently claimed Naga identity.

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In fact the Taraos are no longer interested to identify themselves as Kuki.

In the hills, we find different tribes, some of them are still not recognised as scheduled tribe like the Taraos of Manipur. Generally speaking, the people living in the hills are almost near to Mongoloid in appearance. However, the tribes differ very much among themselves in culture and customs, in height and body-build. The Marings living in the hills in the south-eastern part of the State are of slender built with medium height. The Tangkhuls living in the north-eastern hills are tall and usually slender. The Maos living in the northern extremity of the State are usually stoutly built. The Kabuis inhabiting the western and the north-western hills are usually of slight build. The Kukis live in the south-western hills in small settlements.

Generally, the Naga tribes live in compact, bigsized villages in east, north and west districts of Manipur. The Kabuis (Ruongmei) occupy the hills between Cachar and the valley of Manipur on the west. The Tangkhul Naga occupy the eastern hills. The Tangkhuls in the north and those south of them reveal some differences, which may at best be termed regional differences. Mao and Maram Nagas occupy north-south
of the State. The concentration of the Kacha Naga is towards north-west. But they have a wider distribution in Nagaland and north Cachar hills of Assam. The so-called Kuki tribes are mainly concentrated in the south and Tengnoupal sub-division of Chandel district. The Taraos are also confined in this district. Almost all the Maring villages are distributed along the northern part of the Chandel district. Small tribes such as Chiru, Koireng, Koirao, Kom, Chothe, etc. occupy the intermediate position between the hills and the valley, or to be more precise, the last stretch of the hills where it meets the valley. Some Maring villages are situated on the south-eastern part of the State.

**Brief Review of Literature:**

There is a legend among the hill peoples which says that the Nagas, the Kukis and the Meiteis are descendants from a common ancestor, who had three sons. The Nagas are descendants of the eldest son, the Kukis are descendants of the second while the Meiteis of the youngest. The tradition varies from one hill tribes to the other. Even in Tarao Legendary tale people believe that once there were two brothers of Katrimsa clan (Tarao), out of which, the Meitei king (Naethingkhong Maharajaha)
was the descendant of the younger brother whereas the Taraos (those who belong to a particular clan called Katrimsa) are the descendant of the elder brother. Therefore the people believe that the Meiteis and the Taraos have originated from a common ancestor. Another example is that, in the past, the Meitei Maharajah used to worship the Shangkhu, a godlike daughter of Khulpu clan. It is also said that this Meitei Maharajah gave a white buffalo, gong, other items like tong, spoon, etc. to the people of Tarao in connection with this worship. The Tarao worshipped Shangkhu annually but the Meitei Maharajah after every sixth year. It was reported that the Meitei king himself came to participate the worshipping. When he was unable to come personally he sent his representatives. Thus, it is evident that, there must be a close relationship between the Meitei and the Tarao.

The Tarao, a small tribe inhabiting in the Chandel district of Manipur, possesses a distinct identity with reference to other tribes of Manipur. When we trace back their origin we must peep into the origin of Old Kuki tribes, because the Taraos are put under it by earlier writers.
While describing the ethnological affinities of Manipur, Hodson (1908) made a statement, based on what R.B. Perberton (1835) says "We may safely conclude them (tribes) to be descendants from a Tartar Colony from China", as follows:

"I can see no reason and think there is far more ground to conclude them to be descendants of the surrounding hill tribes. Tradition brings the Moirang tribe from the south, the direction of the Kookies (Kukis), the Koomul (Khumal) from the east, the direction of the Murrings (Maring) and the Meithei and Looang (Luwang) from the northwest, ...... The Languages of the Murrings, Kookies, and Koupoees, are all very similar and as the Koomul, etc., the offshoots of these tribes were, as said before, at different periods the dominant tribes in the valley ......"

Again T.C. Hodson (1908) described as under:

"While accepting with due reserve the familiar distinction between Naga and Kukis, it may be pointed out that the tribes commonly classed together as Naga and Kuki occupy definite areas in these hills. A line drawn following the Kubo valley road via Aimore and joined to the Cachar
road which traverses the western hills from the Kuki area without excluding more than a few small Kabui villages which lie to the south of Nongba. North of that line we find Naga villages and to the south of it Kuki settlements, although for various reasons, economic and political, Kuki settlements exist not only in the British district of the Naga hills ... ... Indeed the Kuki is to be found almost everywhere in the state except in the territory occupied by the Mao confederacy".

According to Shakespear (1912) the so-called Old Kuki clans such as the Aimol, the Chothe, the Chiru, the Koireng, the Kom, the Purum, the Anal, the Lamkang, the Moyon, the Monsang, the Gangte and the Vaiphei came to Manipur from the hills, south of Manipur, in Burma in the 16th Century. Others like the Simte, the Paite, the Zou and the Hmar, etc. came to Manipur in A.D. 18th and 19th Century. The large scale immigration of the Kuki tribes in Manipur in the 19th century is on record2.

From the above discussion we can now easily conclude the origin of Tarao tribe in Manipur. It is one of the oldest tribes in Manipur because they arrived in

Tengnoupal area (Manipur) before 14th century as reported by G. Kabui (1976) that follows:

"The Taraos strongly believe that they emerged out of a cave in Haobiching. Tarao, therefore, literally means 'joyfully emerging out with a spear'.

The Haobiching hill can not be easily identified (Kabow of Burma). Some believe that this place may be somewhere to the south of Sugnu or near Sagang ...

It is most likely that the Taraos arrived at the Tengnoupal hills (Manipur) before the 14th century A.D. or even earlier". Kabui (1976) further says" ... a short glance through the history of Manipur will clearly indicate that the Taraos are a distinct tribe with a separate cultural identity.

They (Tarao) had come to the notice of the ancient kings of Manipur. The old chronicles of Manipur, particularly, the Loiyumba Shilyen, the Royal Edict of king Loiyumba (1072 - 1122 A.D.) refers to the duties to be performed and tributes to be paid by the Tarao of south-east Manipur".

In fact the tribe Tarao, let it be of Kuki or Naga for the time being, came to Manipur earlier than others. There are contradictory opinions with regard to Tarao identity and it is very difficult to say whether they
belong to Naga, Kuki or Maring. According to Shakespear, the Taraos are under Old Kuki group. In his writing he says:

I have found two more small clans, which evidently belong to the Old Kuki group -- Lonte or Ronte, of whom there are only nine households, living alongside of the Burma road, close to the Chawte hamlet, with whom they are classed by the Manipuris; and Tarau, eighteen households living slightly to the south of the Burma road.\(^3\)

Thus, Shakespear placed the Taraos as Old Kuki groups. He further stated:

"The Tarau clan is divided into four families, and marriages are restricted as among the Chawte (Choth), Chiru and Kolhen (all are Kuki tribes)."\(^4\)

After Shakespear, Levi-Strauss says as under:

"Generalized exchange, in a more or less pure form, extends over a vast area of southern Asia. It is found among the so-called 'Old Kuki' groups (including the Taraos) of Manipur, where, although it has been less well studied, it appears in a form which seems to be very close to that of the Kachin.\(^5\)"

\(^3\) Shakespear, J., 1912 : 173
\(^4\) Shakespear, J., 1912 : 173
\(^5\) Levi-Strauss, C., 1969 : 269
We have come across that the Tarao marriage system is asymmetrical based on external limits of Generalized Exchange by matrilateral cross-cousin (Mo Br Da). It is no longer applicable today. According to Levi-Strauss, the Tarao marriage system was said to be very close to that of the Kachin Burma and extending a vast area of south Asia. While looking at the traditional customs and norms of the Tarao one can find enough similarity with some groups of Burma.

Bose states categorically that the Garo, a matrilineal tribe of Assam, have a tripartite system of organisation (marriage), like the 'Old Kuki' tribes viz., Chothe, Chiru, Purum and Tarao. But there are certain differences. The Tarao still has the tripartite organisation but during those old days the marriage cycle moved to clockwise direction. The field experience has shown that the exchange system at present moves on both sides -- clockwise and anticlockwise. Besides, tribe exogamy is becoming a common practice today. There are three groups of people, so-called three clans, who are intermarrying with each other.

While searching the language classification of the Tarao Shakespear says:

"Although the Tarau, from their language, are evidently closely allied to the Lushais, they are the only Old Kuki clan I have met which does not worship Pathian. They denied all knowledge of that names, affirming the name of their god was 'Rapu', to whom the Manipuri (Meitei) name of 'Sankhulai-renma' has been given. Rapu has a shrine just above the Burma road near to Tengnoupal, where every year fish, rice, and Yu are offered to him. When the rice begins to fill in the ear there is a five days' feast in the village, during which time the young people dance and drink. A pig is killed, and the liver, ears, feet, and snout are offered to Rapu. These are called 'Ser' (c.f. Lushai 'Sherh'). Before the cutting of jhums commences a small pig or a fowl is sacrificed to Rapu so that no one may be cut with a dao during the clearing of the jhums. Dogs are not eaten or sacrificed by the Tarau or the Rante; the latter also consider the mithan unfit for a sacrifice. In these particulars they form an exception to the general custom of Kuki clans.\(^7\)

Therefore the Tarao language is closely allied to the Lushais. So far we have found the Tarao in the Kuki groups:

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7. Shakespear, J., 1912: 175
Another confusing as well as interesting matter is that some writers like Das (1985: 17; 1988: 36, 191) state that the Tarao is an allied tribe with the Maring and they are closely related to Maring by customs and social structure. However, majority of the earlier scholars who studied Tarao tribe put them into Old Kuki groups. This supports the view that the Taraos are closely related to the Kuki. Most writers think that the tribe Maring is different from other tribes -- the Nagas and the Kukis. It shows that the Marings are either of Naga or Kuki. But from the very beginning of the century the Taraos were referred to Old Kuki groups. Very recently Das (1985; 1988) reports they are closely allied to Maring.

Let the Tarao belong to Kuki or Naga or Maring as reported by various scholars. Here I do not bother to classify them. Simply I take into account the opinion of what the present Tarao people claim for. Now they themselves claim as a Naga tribe. Shakespear says the Taraos are definitely close to Lushai Kuki; Levi-Strauss -- External limits of generalized exchange; Bose -- tripartite organisation; Das -- an allied tribe with Maring and so on.

We have already discussed enough about the relationship between the Tarao and the Old Kukis in Manipur. Here, Das (1988) says:
"both Maring and Tarao belong to the same geographical area. Not only that, they fall into the same cultural area. Both of them had their origin from in and around the Kabow valley of Burma. But this type of interaction is not limited to the Maring-Tarao only. There are other tribes from the same area ... . There is a belief, though unfounded, that the Taraos were originated out of the Maring. They had no separate tribal status of their own because they were a branch of the Maring. The Taraos are also aware of it and resent it very much ... ."

For me it is doubtful. I have discussed somewhere in the preceding part of this Chapter that the Tarao is seemed to be closely related with the Meiteis. In addition, they reported me that the Meitei and the Tarao have originated from a common ancestor. A clear-cut evidence and examples are required here to prove the matter. Before I present my own findings along with logic, I must go through the relationship between the Tarao and the Maring, based on the reports of Das (1988). According to Das, both Maring and Tarao are simple societies where there customs regulate social behaviour more or less extensively. He says the Tarao shows greater affinity with the smaller branches of the Maring and some 'self-maintaining' rituals. From kinship

terminology point of view, the relationship between the putte (Fa Mo Br or Hu Mo Br) and the marang (Hu Fa) among Taraos is almost the same as that is found between puwa and the marang among the Marings. In short, terminologies between the two tribes have some similarity. To this, he (Das) concludes it as a close relationship between them.

To sum up, let the Taraos may have related with Kuki, Maring, etc. since they are neighbouring tribes to Taraos. It is possible to say that each society is related each other within a particular given geographical area. Besides it, I have also found some cultural relationship with the Meiteis, seemed to be from the very beginning in the history. Now let us see how far the Taraos are related with the Meitei's culture.

For the first instance, in Tarao society, traditionally they have a custom of erecting the first pillar associated a ritual so-called Jatralon in connection with the construction of a new house. Similarly in Meitei society it is found the same which is locally known as Jatrahunba. There is a household deity called Kashalai which is found in each and every Tarao family as the Meiteis keep Shanamahi in every Meitei house. In traditional Tarao society there should be fire in the family hearth throughout the day which was generally looked after either by daughter-in-law or householder's
wife (mother). In the same way among traditional Meitei society it was compulsory to keep fire in the hearth of the family because of the invention of match sticks had not reached them and even after they did by custom. Moreover, the household head offers daily two square meals to the deity of the hearth before he starts eating and followed by other family members. This daily offering to the hearth — Taphei is locally known as Bulon and the same is found in the traditional Meitei family (Phungalairu-da-chak-thaba). A daughter-in-law should not be seen easy going in front of the marang (Hu Fa) and kahancha (Hu E Br) because a Tarao girl must show her attitudes towards them same as in Meitei i.e. to eekubok (Hu Fa) and eetei (Hu E Br). Moreover there are customary restrictions for entering the sleeping room in the family. A man should not enter into the room which may be occupied by his younger brother who is married as the Meitei does. This couple's room is known as Khumchung in Tarao. A father-in-law can not enter the rooms occupied by his married sons but no restriction imposed to the mother-in-law. It is also seen among the Meiteis. Both the Tarao and the Meitei male members are tabooed from seeing enku (loin cloth of Tarao women) and phanek (for Meitei women) as in Meitei. They believe that sight of enku (Tarao) or phanek (Meitei) when
they start going for a particular good work (particularly belonged to their wives or daughter-in-law) may bring failure. Moreover, both the Tarao and Meitei never pass away through the rope or bamboo where enku (Tarao) or phanek (Meitei) is hanging. Even at the sudden break of rains the male members would not take the enku or phanek inside for fear being subjected to failure. The person who does such activities are looked down by the people as a whole, especially treated as a henpecked husband. Thus the Tarao and the Meitei are closely related in this sense.

In the case of Tarao dance which is particularly performed before the statue of Shangkhu at the time of its annual worship which is very closely related to Meitei Lai-Haraoba dance (Lairen-mathek) particularised to the direction, style, way of route followed with dancing; this I have experienced in their annual get-together programmes where they have usually shown such traditional dance. Festive costumes like male head gear is quite similar to the Meitei Shamjin (used in Meitei Lai-Haraoba by male participants). Both are having an interesting musical instrument called Pena (in Meitei) which is generally played by Meitei Maiba in Lai-Haraoba. Similar instrument is used among the Taraoos. They used to play this particular music for worshipping Shangkhu. It is also said that it is a compulsory
music for worshipping Shangkhu. Like that it is also compulsion in Meitei Lai-Haraoba (see photographs).

On the basis of above discussion, we have come to know the relationship between the Tarao and the Old Kuki (Shakespear, 1912; Bose, 1934b; Levi-Strauss, 1969, etc.); the Tarao and the Maring (Das, 1985 and 1988) and the Tarao and Meitei. There are many more common features in the life and culture of Tarao and Meitei that needs further investigation.

Title of the Project:

The main title of this thesis is THE TARAO OF MANIPUR and a sub-title is just attached to the main title for clarifying the area and scope of study, i.e. Social and Demographic Change.

Why I have selected this particular tribe of Manipur is because the Tarao tribe is not included in the Scheduled Tribe list of Manipur but it is one of the oldest tribes of Manipur cited in the historical records. The Tarao population, the two or three decades ago, appeared to be declining. Their population is numerically so small that there has been stray references by the scholars like Shakespear, Bose, Levi-Strauss and recently R.K. Das who
feels that the Taraos are very closely related to Maring tribe. None of the scholars have attempted to explain the changing scene of today.

'The Tarao of Manipur' will deal with the population in its social organisation on the one hand and the demography on the other. Hence it is not a title that presents an ethnography in the traditional sense of the term. The tribe under study has been a distinct group right from the earliest time. They have maintained a distinct style of life all through the ages and it is only in the beginning of the present century that they have become christians. After their conversion, many changes have taken place involving a number of bio-social issues. Hence the title covers the tradition as well as the present position. As far as possible it has been carefully taken note of various social and demographic aspects.

Nonetheless, with all alertness the investigator has always been fully conscious of analysing the data from its wholeness. For their ethnic identity I was interested to select them as a subject matter of study.

Aims and Objectives:

There should be some aims and objectives to the subject matter of study by which one could bring the
social facts into its goal, for which he has been trying.

Indeed, the aims and objects of anthropological study has a great value. The basic aim is to understand the human society. "Social research may be defined as a scientific undertaking which, by means of logical and systematized techniques, aims to: (1) discover new facts or verify and test old facts; (2) analyze their sequences, interrelationships, and casual explanations which were derived within an appropriate theoretical frame of reference; (3) develop new scientific tools, concepts, and theories which would facilitate reliable and valid study of human behavior. A researcher's primary goal -- distant or immediate -- is to explore and gain an understanding of human behavior and social life, and thereby gain a greater control over them".9 Gathering of new social facts speeds up the development and progress in science.

The main purpose of the present study is an attempt to examine the social and demographic aspects of Tarao because they are so far referred as dwindling tribe. I shall now attempt to indicate some specific points where anthropological research should be undertaken in the Taraos of Manipur. The main objective of the proposal aims at bringing into light the tradition and modernity which exist today and also which taking them at a cross-road with

reference to social and demographic change. It was possible for me to note the population figure during last ten years which has revealed some striking features. From 1979 to 1984 the population seems to be almost stagnating and it was only from 1985 that the population have started showing an increase. Historically also there were adverse situation and health hazards for them. The local belief is that in the past due to epidemics like diarrhoea and smallpox there was rapid declined in their population. The detail is discussed in Chapter II of this thesis. Demographic profile is to be revealed in the light of their marriage and kinship rules. In view of achieving success, the research proposal aims at:

1. examining the pedigree of the community with a view to understand the marriage rules and alliance system.
2. looking at the violations of norms and their readjustment (marriage and kinship).
3. understanding the socio-cultural and inter-ethnic marriages.
4. taking a cue from family and clan organisation to collate other materials.
5. studying kinship from cultural context, biological context, economic context, behavioural and termi-
nological context and from political context in order to make proper analysis of their rules of social organisation and functional values.

6. certain issues related to social and demographic change appear to be interwoven and this merits an indepth analysis from bio-social angle.

7. social relations between the inhabitants of the hills and tribes living in plains.

8. social organisation of the sacred centres and their integrative functions for the society.

**Demographic Change:**

"In a narrow sense, the field of demography may be defined as the 'statistical and mathematical study of size, composition, and spatial distribution of human populations, and changes over time in these aspects through the operation of the five processes of fertility, mortality, marriage, migration, and social mobility'. To the extent that demographic events take place within a societal framework, demography is also concerned with the study of the interplay between the narrowly defined demographic variables (fertility, mortality and migration), on the one hand,
and other societal aspects such as norms governing fertility and economic conditions, on the other. Demographic change is thus an integral part of the study of social change.\textsuperscript{10}

From the above quotation we have a brief idea that while looking the changes in a society, the demographic study and its changes are also very helpful to postulate the facts found behind the society. It is stated that the number of Tarao tribe has declined in population considerably (Kabui, 1976). As reported by others and the natives themselves, it has been ascertained that the Tarao population was often slashed by epidemics and endemic diseases that must have led them for migration, is one of the other factors. So there are evidences that the community kept on shifting from one village to the other (see Table 38). While looking for the demographic change I find that quite a few members (Tarao girl) were absorbed to other tribal groups by marriage. Similarly, others were absorbed into Tarao groups through marriage (other tribal girls). These are some of the factors which bring demographic change in the community. All about demographic scene is discussed in Chapter II.

\textsuperscript{10} Edari, Ronald S., 1976 : 50-51.
Social Organisation and Change:

Many striking features of Tarao social organisation have been brought out. Since the Tarao society is patriarchal and patrilineal the importance of male members becomes clear in family organisation. Before we discuss the changing aspects of Tarao society I would like to bring some theoretical concepts on 'social change'.

Before we define 'social change' we should begin by defining the term 'social'. As a minimum definition given by Walter Wallace (1969:5), is that the 'social' as referring to the 'inter organism behaviour relation among human beings.' At the most elementary level, such behaviour involves the interaction between two people or more. The elementary social relationships involving a few people become, in turn, the making of the more inclusive social entities such as groups, collectivities, societies and civilizations.

These entities represent abstractions from the behaviour of human beings, but their existence is not a matter of whims of the person reflecting upon them. Rather, their existence is acknowledged through awareness of group membership, which imposes what Emile Durkheim refers to as 'Constraints' on behaviour.
Now, when we talk of social change, we mean, at the very minimum, two things: (a) the change in the constitution of social entities over time, and (b) the change is the relations among entities over time. The change from an extended family to a nuclear family may involve not only the diminution of the kinsmen living in the same household and their respective roles, but also the curtailment of obligations toward them. Thus, the new situation calls for the redefinition or reconstitution of roles within the family, as well as the specification of modalities of behaviour appropriate for those roles.\textsuperscript{11}

From the above definition of social change it emphasises on the relationships between man and man; man and nature; man and supernature; and others. In the study of social change there are a number of considerations which include the following:

a) isolation of units of analysis
b) specification of determinate relationships
c) magnitude and intensity of change
d) time
e) direction and trajectory of change
f) planned and unplanned aspects of change.

\textsuperscript{11} Edari, Ronald S., 1976 : 2.
Keeping the above viewpoints, the present study has been brought out with reference to demography, family, marriage, clan organisation and kinship system. While dealing with the change in Tarao society I have discussed both traditional and modern way of life of the people.

The principle of equality among the sons may be found out, but as far as the rules of inheritance is concerned, the traditional norm is primogeniture. Only lately there seems to be structural change from gerontocracy to democracy. Moreover, earlier the Taraos had a preference for joint family but due to various reasons they are now going for small family units. Traditionally the Tarao is an endogamous group who go for inter-clan marriages. But these days there are not much restrictions to marry. One can find a number of marriages even going beyond the prescribed limit. These changes must have been introduced by the forces of westernization and conversion. The maternal and paternal kinsmen are culturally distinguished in the Tarao kinship system. They also maintained a difference between consanguineal and affinal relatives.

**Hypothesis:**

George A Lundberg (1942) defines -- "a hypothesis is a tentative generalization, the validity of which remains
to be tested. In its most elementary stage the hypothesis may be any hunch, guess, imaginative idea, which becomes the basis for action or investigations. W. J. Goode and P. F. Hatt (1952) have defined the hypothesis as "a proposition which can be put to test to determine validity". As Fauline V. Young states:

"... a researcher must choose from the complexity of observed events those significant and relevant facts which will most adequately explain the problem under study, that is, show the essential relationships which exist between the various elements within the complexity. In his search for the significant facts he may fall back on previous experience, his own or that of others, and single out those factors that are known to have explained similar situations in the past. This experience need not necessarily be related to the field of science and need not necessarily constitute measurable data. It may be observed in the realm of descriptive literature, or speculative philosophy, or in the arts and techniques as long as these fields can provide some insight into the situation under observation. On the basis of these observations, assumptions are built as to the relations of facts ....... These
assumptions were made on the basis of probabilities, shrewd guesses, and profound hunches. When the penetrating hunch points to a possible, though provisional explanation to a vital central idea which can become the basis for fruitful investigation, it becomes a working or explanatory hypothesis\(^\text{12}\).

Therefore, hypothesis is the idea or research plans to put forward as a starting-point for reasoning the realities of the study site. Aspect of culture and social structure along with demographic profile constitutes our main research focus.

It is also to be remembered that a hypothesis is not the same as theory although the two are closely related. According to William H. George, theory is 'elaborate hypothesis'. The hypothesis actually emerges from the theory. Thus theory itself in its early form is only a hypothesis and the two interdependant to each other.

"It is obvious that the usefulness of a hypothesis depends on the researcher's: (1) keen observations, (2) disciplined imagination and creative thinking, which provide at least fractional insight, and (3) some formulated theoretical framework. These processes are in reality

\(^{12}\) Young, Pauline V., 1979 : 103.
the guiding lines in exploration. Without a working hypothesis the explorer would find it very difficult, laborious and time-consuming to make adequate discriminations in the complex interplay of factors before him. The hypothesis guides him in the selection of pertinent facts needed to explain the problem at hand. It also saves him from becoming lost in a welter of irrelevancies. Thus, the road to discovery which requires hunch, wit, imagination .... 13

On the basis of a good hypothesis, the present study could bring out new findings on tribal community. Here my emphasis is the present manifestations and history of the behaviour and individual characteristics of those members of the family through whom marriage, clan organisation, kinship and the changes thereupon. How the Tarao is adjusting for the reality of social relationships in the Tarao society. Material conditions of family life both traditional and modern has also successfully been there. Lastly, I have been looking for the demographic profile and its changes. It is, therefore, not possible to explore the present explanations and discussion without any research plans/hypothesis.

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Based on secondary sources the thesis has been presented to examine the following hypothesis:

1. The reproductive performance of the community may be held partly responsible for the retarded growth of population.

2. There are valid reasons to inquire into the mortality rate among the Taraos.

3. Morbidity is one of the contributory factors for not having a normal growth pattern of the population.

4. The migration of the group in some way related to their social and psychological problems.

5. The impact of Christianity has proved to be detrimental to the life and culture of the people so far as their traditional social organisation is concerned.

6. The changes that have taken place do not all the time account for beneficial results but also cause damage in some way or other.

7. Traditional norms, values and customs are on the wave consequently the structural changes that have directly influenced the entire set up of tribal culture and society.
Method and Technique:

The field is the laboratory for the student of social and cultural anthropology. The data is derived ultimately from the direct observation of customary behaviour of Tarao society. Since it is an indepth study, various standard anthropological methods have been applied for data collection.

The goal of science is to explain particular facts under general laws. Scientific method is a system of techniques (differing in many respects in different sciences, although retaining the same general character) for attaining the end of discovering general laws. In order to make the proper explanation of social facts the primary data should be collected in a satisfactory manner. The collection of data in the social sciences must consist in the observation and description of modes of human behaviour.¹⁴

An ethnographer is an anthropologist who attempts -- at least to record and describe the culturally significant behaviours of a particular society. Ideally, this description requires a long period of intimate study and residence in a small, well-defined community, the employment of a wide range of observational techniques including prolonged

face-to-face contacts with members of the local groups, direct participation in some of the activities and greater emphasis on intensive work with informants.\textsuperscript{15}

"The field is the laboratory of the cultural anthropologist. To carry on his field work, he goes to the people he has elected to study, listening to their conversation, visiting their homes, attending their rites, observing their customary behaviour, questioning them about their traditions, as he probes their way of life to attain a rounded view of their culture or to analyze some specific aspect of it. In this, the ethnographer is the collector of data, which he will later, on his return from the field, analyze and relate to other materials."\textsuperscript{16}

A firm grasp on methodological relativism is essential to the ethnographer or the student of anthropology who is to carry on field research successfully. A basic necessity to this is the exercise of scientific detachment, which in turn calls for a rigid exclusion of value judgments. By such devious ways, let us now see how the present work on Tarao tribe has been carried out. As digested the theoretical approach, I could obtain fact after fact from this society. To collect such data I adopted the following methods and

\textsuperscript{15} International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, 1968; 5, 172-176.

\textsuperscript{16} Herskovits, Melville J., 1947 : 367.
techniques in my field. The theoretical objectives of investigators may be roughly divided into two types:

1. Comparative Study and
2. Intensive Study.

The present study is rather an intensive study on the Tarao in Manipur. The methods used here may be considered under the following headings:

**Contact:**

The first problem of anthropological study is to make contact with the village people. Thus it is necessary to make a polite contact with people from whom he or she has to collect something and to be observed that the villager/people are willingly answering or not. As far as possible I have participated in their activities in which I was an observer. Actually my politeness, frankness and sincerity with the people have proved to be of very high value. In the course of study, to start questioning should not be assumed very easy. One must take care of it. In my first attempt to investigate, I began to pick up a sort of conversation regarding the purpose of visit and just casually I passed to their day-to-day life style, as a part of my discussion. At the same time I, as far as possible, tried my best to mix up with the people like one of their members.
In the course of interview I treated those who were of my parents' age as my father/mother by addressing them -- baji and eema and those who were elder to me I addressed -- dada (male) and eeteimma (married women). In brief, the field situation was made quite informal and intimate. I started getting invitations from the villagers almost on any social or religious functions. In this I was given enough opportunity of entering into their personal life which helped to come out successfully with my mission without causing any inconvenience to them.

**Duration of Investigation:**

The method of selection the community is another important factor. One must see that how far the study can bring culturally significant. It is an integral part of the anthropologists' field technique.

"The question of the time to be spent in the native community obviously depends on a number of factors, such as:

1. the type of objective, whether a preliminary survey or an intensive survey;
2. the amount of information about the culture previously recorded, and the observer's own degree of experience in kindred communities, and
3. the size and uniformity of the groups studied,
    and the rate at which it is changing.\textsuperscript{17}

It shows the time consumption is definitely dependable on the factors found from a pilot survey. Until and unless one goes to this pilot survey he cannot say the period to be required for the study. It is also depended upon the nature of study, that is either preliminary survey or an intensive study. The present study is an intensive study.

In accumulating data, Rivers spent a month on each of two islands — \textit{Hawaii} and \textit{Fiji}. Malinowski spent two years in the \textit{Trobiand Islands}. It is also reported most of the studies of American tribes have been made on visits of from one to six months, probably owing to the nearness of the field and the nature of the investigations. However, it is probable that if a very detailed study of some particular aspect of tribal life must be required and would be necessary to prolong an expedition even beyond this. The present study on Tarao tribe of Manipur takes four years and six months. The field work has been carried on from 1984 to 1989, during which I observed demographic change, and social changes on family, marriage, clan and kinship.

\textsuperscript{17} Richards, Audrey I., 1939 : 299.
Interview Technique:

"The anthropologist usually employs the interview exclusively to obtain information about the 'objective facts' of culture and society; in other words, the person interviewed is assigned the role of an 'informant'. The personality of the informant interests the anthropologist mainly in so far it adds to his knowledge of social and cultural facts. At the same time the anthropologist cannot afford wholly to neglect the emotional and moral attitudes of his informants. They may indicate varieties of effective social and individual incentives ... ."18 The anthropologist may select informants for their retentive memory, intelligence, or powers of expression; for their tolerance of himself, or ability to speak his language; for their degree of education, or specialized knowledge due to age, rank, or profession19.

Having kept in mind, I proceed to get my information by several methods. I have selected good informants of either sexes -- old persons while questioning about their traditional way of life and youth for modernity. The formal interview at night time by a mass gathering of the elderly villagers is only the basic source of my data. Because most of the

villagers are busy during day time. The advantage of sitting together is that each of them could freely express whatever one knows about the norms and customs. The amount of social history which is traditionally standardised in the community differs to some extend among natives that I systematically analysed in order to give it a final shape.

"In anthropology the interview should, if possible, always be combined with direct observation. Observation can be used to check information obtained in interviews, and interviews to obtain information about facts which have been or are being observed. At the same time interviews yield some types of information which can not be checked by direct observation. Certain social facts which the anthropologist is studying, such as tradition, genealogies, beliefs, or ideas about morality, although invariably reflected in overt behaviour, exist only in the minds of the people. The actions and attitudes of the members of a kinship group express kinship relations as defined in the genealogical table; the reactions of people to certain human acts reflect their moral judgments and ideas. But theory and observable are not simply expressions one of another. There may be divergences theory and practice, between established ideas about behaviour and the forms of behaviour themselves. Where observation fails as a means of checking
information one interview must be checked by other interviews. 20.

To my field experience, I involved certain technical difficulty. The attention and interest of informants must be stimulated and maintained for sorting out these difficulties, as I felt whenever I was unable to get the information by means of the interview, I had to resort to observation. Again it is important to bear in mind that in all such cases culturally established standards of evaluation may play an important part. Because the native informant may tend to overstate the case, stressing similarities or differences which are not really to be found, so a careful analysis is always required. The expression of doubt and disbelief to me were again reinvestigated with another informants. Here I would like to point out that when an interview is carried out under field study, it is frequently impossible for the interviewer to follow a fixed plan of inquiry. At that time one must seek immediate alternatives. For this reason I made use of a questionnaire only with some selected informants. In other cases the native manner of thinking, often apparently circuitous, was followed.

The result of inquiry among as many persons as possible is many-sided body of materials. Such a method has
given depth to comprehension, thus enhanced the insight with which generalizations on the sanctioned forms of behaviour were drawn. Moreover, what I had an experience at the time of my stay in the village it was frequently found that informants are sometime disturbed by noting down the talks. So I was unable to keep pace with the conversation and thus they were requested for the repetition of statements that quickly exhausted the native's patience. But in some cases, some of the intelligent informants did not mind but even insisted on my taking out paper and changing pen during which they stopped talking and continued only when I was ready to note.

To sum up, interviewing has become very important in contemporary researches because some of the social phenomena are unfit for statistical analysis and the qualitative interview is the best method for gaining knowledge. Interviews enable us to know and study events that are not open to observation. It is the only methods of studying and abstract and intangible personal factors like attitude, feelings, reaction, etc. with interview.

For collecting data on demography it was really a difficult task for me. Firstly, because of the fact that the natives were unable to know their approximate age.
Secondly, by appearance one is not able to take down the nearest age of an individual. So what I have done in this regard is that the person concerned had to be coincided with certain important event or incident with their year of birth. In addition to this I had to try to see the number of children born to the couple and thereby it was possible for me to make a nearly correct estimate of age. Marriage age had to determine by calculating the menstrual cycle in case of female. Somehow I was not very much satisfied with approximation of age through these techniques. But since there was no other method I had to depend on this. At this point it must be started that I have taken adequate precautions for the determination of age which may be in certain cases with the negligible error of \( \pm 1 \).

Observational Techniques:

One can say the field work of social and cultural anthropology is an observational discipline by employing many scientific techniques. Much ethnological material has hitherto consisted in descriptive accounts of a people's environment, material culture, appearance and activities, and this is inevitable in the case of an entirely unfamiliar community. The far greater importance of the descriptive technique and the use of information obtained by direct observation is the
case of the anthropologist. His observation is of course highly selective. No doubt we all share a common commitment to intensive research based on participant observation. To such close or direct or participant observation, Prof. A.C. Bhagabati (1988) opines — We may call tribal science is FAITH - BASED through close observation of nature while modern science is THEORY - BASED. Thus the awareness and understanding of the physical environment and its myriad components that he opines as scientific in the tribal society.

Indeed, available official or non-official records on these people, Tarao, are never sufficient for understanding the social and cultural realities, particularly those realities as so conceived from the insiders points of view. Such published or unpublished records may be used as preliminary information through which I can investigate deeper and deeper into the social and cultural realities by means of close observation of the socio-cultural phenomena in the concrete field situation of this thesis. It also observes the annual cycle of the activities of the members of the society and local variation of a common theme of life and the specific contextual expression of the life of the Tarao. Another important requirement for observation employed in my field work is the set of the behaviours of the individuals and groups of

individuals representing the institutionally patterned behaviour (from family, lineage, clan, kinship and community levels), as such usually offered by the culture of the community. This observation would enable me to organisational arrangement of individual behaviours in the society. Side by side the observation of such behaviour, one should also observe those behaviour representing the cultural alternatives of behaviour.

A para can be mentioned from the studies of famous social anthropologists — M. Mead, B. Malinowski, A. Kardiner, etc. who have carried out important researches of many primitive societies. B. Malinowski (1922) first gave explicit expression and enunciated to the necessity for the principle of the participant observation in the field work of anthropology\(^{22}\). The advantages can be easily seen in participant observation method. That by participating in their various social programmes and customs, the investigator can have a minute study of their behaviour. To obtain insight in the behaviour of any group, it is necessary to participate in the group life. The success of participant observation depends on the alertness and personality of the investigator.

As is discussed in the preceding part on the method of observation I adopted direct participant observation. Again there are two types of observation -- control or non-controlled. From time to time I follow both while collecting the mass data. The main purpose of a controlled observation is to check any bias due to faulty perception, inaccurate data, etc.

Questionnaires and Schedules:

In anthropology, as early as before the time of Morgan (1860) questionnaire method had been practised by distinguished anthropologists. Anthropologists have developed many specialised questionnaires and interview schedules to explore particular domains of cultural and social behaviour. "Schedules and questionnaires are beneficial as supplementary and extending devices in observation, in interviews, and in evaluating personal behaviour and social situations". Through this I also tried to standardize and objectify observations and interviews that proved to be the useful devices for isolating one element at a time and thus intensifying observation of it.

Both the questionnaire and schedules are widely used. Goode and Hatt gave the following definitions — "questionnaire refers to a device for securing answers to questions by using a form which the respondent fills in himself; schedule is the name usually applied to a set of question which are asked and filled in by the interviewer in a face to face situation with another person." Both have been used for the collection of personal preferences, social attitudes, belief, opinions, behaviour patterns, group practices and habits, and much other data. The increasing use of them is probably due to emphasis on quantitative measurement of uniformly accumulated data. In the field-work I have applied both the methods — side by side. But I have given preference to schedules because there is a great need of close observation upon the natives, most of whom are illiterate.

Statistical Method:

A knowledge of basic statistical concept and technique is essential for every social researcher. It will be observed that practical application of statistical techniques to concrete problems has been stressed and all the illustrative examples in the present study on Tarao tribe of Manipur are based on actual data.

The first step in tabulating statistical data has been worked out in detailed system of classification. It has taken the shape of statistical tables after the tabulation of the data. The advantages of presenting statistical data in tabular form may be pointed out that:

1. "statistical tables conserve space and reduce explanatory and descriptive statements to a minimum;"
2. the visualization of relations and the process of comparison is greatly facilitated by tables;
3. tabulated data can be more easily remembered than data which are not tabulated;
4. a tabular arrangement facilitates the summation of items and the detection of errors and omissions; and
5. statistical tables provide a basic for computations.\textsuperscript{25}

Frequency distributions are extremely valuable for summarizing to averages and I have applied only the mean or arithmetic average in the present analysis.

\textsuperscript{25} Young, Pauline V., 1966: 283
In this manner, I have quantified the social facts to give it proper shape and scientific flavour.

**Genealogical Method:**

"A special technique that has been effectively employed is the *genealogical method*, associated with the name of W.H.R. Rivers, who first worked it out at the end of the last century. This method has proved useful because, it provides a broad range of information concerning the social structures and other institutions of the people being studied. In using it, only the simplest kinship terms are employed -- father, mother, child, husband and wife ... ... ."\(^26\).

For the present study, I have also applied genealogical method on clan organisation, kinship system and for tracing the marriage alliance. These are represented in each Chapter. This method made me possible to investigate abstract problems on a purely concrete basis. It is even possible to formulate laws regulating the lives of people.

\(^{26}\) Quoted from Melville J, Herskovits., 1947 : 379.
Biographies and Concreto Documentation:

Unpublished old biographies, written by the Tarao Literature society reveal many things about culture and tradition. These available biographies of historic persons (Taraos) are being used as a reference and briefly described when necessary in the study of the origin of Tarao clans. From such studies we could get some of the Tarao customs and beliefs which are now almost forgotten by the people. Intangibles such as values, goals and other motivating drives reflect in such documents, as does the play of differing personalities within a society.

Unfortunately, there is hardly any authentic old book of any tribal people of Manipur which could be utilised for reference to our understanding of the past life of the people except a few sketchy incomplete piece meal works. On the other hand, we rightly feel that consequent upon many a historic event experienced by the tribes of Manipur in the long course of their life since the time of their existence during the regime of the historical beings of the Meitei a lot of changes have crept in almost in every sphere of their socio-cultural life. Thus, I have taken keen interest in the study of those changes which are
relatively traditional counterpart of any part of the social system. The earlier traditions continued over time in disguise of new contents. I presume that this continuity of the past in the present is all the more observable in the case of the tribal cultures like those of Manipur.