CHAPTER I

1.00 THE TIWA: SOCIETY AND CULTURE

1.1 Assam is the epitom of the Linguist's and
Anthropologist. According to the census of India, 1961, a total
number of 192 languages and dialects including 31, non Indian
languages/spoken in Assam. There are languages belonging to the
four great language families in Assam, Sino Tibetan, Austric,
Indo European, Dravidian. The Tiwa, Dodo-Kachari, Garbi, Dinasa,
Rabha etc. belong to the Tibeto Burman branch of the Sino-Tibetan
family. Indo European represented by Assamese and Bengali. Khasi
language and its dialect in khasi hills, is an islet of the
Austrict family.

Besides these, a big population in tea garden area
speak dialects belonging to Dravidian languages of south India.

1.2 This is an attempt to describe the Tiwa community
and their spoken form of language which belong to the Tibeto
Burman branch of the Sino-Tibetan family. The Tiwas (popularly
known as Laluns) are colourful monoloid tribes of Assam and
Meghalaya.
The word 'Tiwa' derived from the words "Tiwāsa", "Tiwa libing". Tiwāsa (ti = water, wa = bamboo, sa = son) means 'sons of the bamboo and waterland'. The word 'Tiwa-libing' (Tī.ā = short form of Tiwāsā; libing = man) means 'Tiwa people'. They identify themselves by two terms - 'Tiwa libing' and 'Lālun'.

According to Sebastain Karotenorel - "The name Tiwa actually means sweet. In a certain sense the name is indicative of the characteristics of a people".

In fact it is found that the Tiwās are the people with sweet temperament. They are friendly, cheerful and folksy. They are fond of singing and dancing. They are always very pleasant and helpful to others. According to Jarma-Thakur the term 'Tiwa' originates from term 'Tibbetia' which means 'people hailing from Tibet'. In course of time this 'Tibbetia' have change into 'Tiwa'. The Tiwās now a days claim, Tibet as their original homeland. According to late Bishnu Prasad Rabha, the great artist of Assam, the Tiwās are originally - ।śārnamayān clan

1 Karotenorel, J.: 1931: A brief history of the Catholic church among the Tiwās (Lālun) p. 2

of Deurichutia. He said that the word 'Chutia', became ‘tiyā’ ‘tiwā’ by omitting first part ‘Chu’? But R. Labha did not explain regarding the loss of 'chu' from the word 'chutia'.

The Patargayan clan of Deuri chutia is not found among them now a days. The word 'ti-u-ra' was used to mean the chutia tribes in Thom language.

1.2.3 The word 'Lālung' is an Ahom word. The word is a combination of two words : la - "rotation towards west", and lung - 'great clan' and hence lālung stands for "rotation of a great clan towards west." Again in the Karbi languages the word 'Lālung' is formed with two different Karbi words : lang - water and lung - sink and thus it means sinking from the water.

From this it is presumed that the Tiwā people met first, Harbi tribe when they proceeded towards west in Longong.

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1.2.4 Dalton has also remarked that the tribe, called 'Bihiyā' are the same family and as a tribe, lālung in the upper Assam claim to be of Chutiya descent.

1.3 Tiwās are inhabiting chiefly in Assam and Meghalaya. In Assam they are mainly concentrated on the southern part of Nowgong and Kamrup districts by the side of the great Brahmaputra river. They are also found in Karbi Anglong district. Further they are scattered in Dhemaji of North Lakhimpur, Saharkatiya of Dibrugarh and Titabor of present Jorhat district. They are also found in Meghalaya towards the border area of Nowgong Karbi Anglong and Kamrup district.

1.3.1 According to the census report 1971, the total number of Tiwā people in Assam is 97,898. As per 1961 census report the total number of Tiwā population was 61,315. The decennial growth rate among the Tiwās during 1961-1971 is 40.72%. The total tribal population of Nowgong district as per

7 Census of India : 1971 : Assam Part I.
1961 census was 87,533 and out of that Tiwas alone constituted 63 p.c. Similarly in the census of 1971 out of a total tribal population of 12,5,115 in the Nowgong district, 97,898 i.e. 76'4 p.c. have been shown as Tiwas.

1.3.2 The percentage of literacy among the tribals of Assam as per 1971 census is 26'03 p.c (male 34'62%, female 17'16%) against the all India figure of 17'63 p.c for male and 4'44 p.c. for female tribals. The p.c. of literacy among the Tiwas as per 1971 census report is 21'5 p.c. Among them male literacy is 31'5 p.c. and 11'26 p.c. for female.

1.4 Origin of the Tiwa : The Tiwas are belong to the Mongoloid group who have migrated into India. Genealogically the Tiwa language falls within the Bodo group of language which is a sub branch of the Tibeto Burman branch of the Jino-Tibetan language family. It has close relation with Bodo (Kachari), Koch, Rabha, Dimasa, Garo, Tipra, Moran, Hajong, Douri Chutia and a number of allied tribes and sub tribes of North Eastern India. Scholars are general opinion the original homeland of
the Mongoloid people was Saiberia and Mongoliya. They migrated into China and formed their cultural life in the valley Xung Xu. With rich cultural life they have migrated to Burma and Tibet. They crossed the Himalaya and its branches through North and East passes and settled in North East India. From the pre-historic time till the 19th century the Mongoloid people used to enter in the North East India in batch wise. The Ahoms who is also a branch of Mongoloid race entered Assam for the first time in the 13th century and a few other tribes like Khântli, Phâke, Taiturung, Aitonia etc. the same Tai group followed the Ahoms. Those who have migrated before Ahom they came for trade in silk. Then they settled in North Eastern India and built some small states. About the time of migration and their settlements, Dr. S.K. Chatterjee remarks as follows.

"When the Mahâbharata and the Râmâyana were taking shape, between 500 B.C. to 400 A.D. particularly pre-christian centuries they (Mongoloid) had occupied the Southern tracts of the Himalayas and the whole of North Eastern India, North Bihar, contiguous of Nepal and to the North

7 Chatterjee, Dr. S.K. 1974: Kirâta Janakrti, p. 36.
of the Ganges, the greater part of Bengal and Assam including the areas through which the Ganges (the Padma or Padda of present day) passed into the sea.

1.4.1 The ancient Indian literature identified Mongoloids as kirāta. In sanskrit kirāta means "The wild non Aryan tribes", who live in mountain. In sanskrit lexicon gives the meaning of kirāta as 'a degraded mountain tribe inhabiting in woods and mountain and are living by hunting'.\(^3\) The name of kirāta is found for the first time the Yajur veda. Here the work kirāta is connected with a man offering sacrifice, where a list of all kinds of human beings and animals offered to the gods as sacrifice is given. In the Atharva veda, we have a reference to a kirāta girl, who digs for herbal remedy on the ridges of the mountain. Scholars like Keith, Macdonell said that the kirāta used to live in the caves of the mountain, and later on they were located in Eastern Nepal.

1.4.2 In the Mahābhārata the kirāta located in the eastern Himalayas regions. We found that in Sabha Parva of Mahābhārata,

\(^3\) 
the pândhava defeated the seven kirāta rulers in videha. In the kirata parva, the author said that the kirāta were looked like, gold or yellow in colour. In the same Epic it is stated that Bhagadutta, a king of Pragjyotisha was an Asura king and he took part in the battle of Kurukshetra, with troops of kirāta and Chinese soldiers.

1.4.3 The Rāja māla chronicle of Tripura kings give evidences that the local dynasty had the affinities with the kiratas. Another book Yoginitantra gives a very good account of kirāta, their place of settlement and religion:

"Jīddhesī yoģini pithe, dharma kairāta j mātāha."
‘C, queen of all siddhas (uma) in holy shrine of the yogini (kāmrupa) the dharma (religion) is considered to be of kirāta origine.’

From the above discussion it would appear that during the centuries immediately before Christ and early Christian centuries and medieval times the kirāta were a group of people whose original homeland was in the Himalayas and in Assam. Particularly, who were yellow in colour. They had a distinct type of culture.

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9 quoted from, Kakati, B.K. 1948: Another goddess Kâmrupho, p.3.
According to the various beliefs and traditional stories the Tiwás have a long past history and very good tradition. All such stories and beliefs are very interesting as many things are revealed from those stories. There is a very good story which connects the Tiwás with Hindu traditions. According to such a belief, the original language of Tiwás was sanskrit and they were kshatriyas, the Hindu caste of warriors. When Arasurama set out to destroy all the kshatriyas to avenge the death of his father at the hands of a king named Sahasrabahu Arjuna, the Tiwás decided to hide in deep forest and escaped to the Lāilung hills. According to the story the Lāilung hills was, somewhere in the north bank of the river Brahmaputra. They lived there for many centuries in disguise and ultimately forget their original tradition and language. From this they came to known as Lāilung, identifying as 'the dwellers of Lailunghills'.

Another such story relates them to the god Mahadova. One day Mahadova fell in to deep sleep, after taking a huge quantity

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of 'JU' (rice beer). At that time saliva rolled down from
his mouth and the saliva transformed into a young couple.
They believe that this young couple was the first Tiwa i.e.
Lālung couple. From this they came to know as Lālung:

There is a popular belief among the Tiwas that the
oldest place of them was Hilāli, situated in the eastern
part of the undivided Darrang district. After living there for
several centuries some disputes arose between them and their
neighbours, for which the Boros and the Tiwas left that place.
The memories of their original homeland Hilāli is expressed
their popular song like 'lāli-lāi-hilāli.'

1.5.2 The popular lore among the Tiwas that their
forefathers were the soldiers of the king Jongal Balahu, son
of Arimatta king. He was a brave and mighty king. His power was
so great that the Kachari king, who was ruling in entire
central part of the then Assam, afraid of him and planned to
kill him. The Kachari king made a show of friendship to hide

his design. The king proposed to give one of his daughters to Jongal Balahu, who agreed to marry and became the king's son-in-law.

When the daughter of Kachari king visited her father's house after marriage, the king told her to steal that particular sword, which was cause of power of her husband and to send it to him by putting in a stomach of a big fish. Accordingly the sword was sent to the father-in-law of Jongal Balahu. After getting it he fought with Jongal Balahu, who was defeated in the fight. There is an old fort with high embankment at Raha of Nowgong district after the name of Jongal Balahu.¹³

1.6 There are sufficient evidences, of quite a large number of inhabitants of Boros in the Brahmaputra valley.¹⁴ The Dimasas, the Eastern branch of Boros were dominated in central Assam. It is likely that the Tiwas (Lalungs) who are linguistically close related to the Boros and Dimasas were also distributed on the both sides of the Brahmaputra along

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with them and they considered the king Jongal Balahu as their hero. The father of Jongal Balahu i.e., Arimatta had been identified with Vaidyadeva. His conquests extended upper Assam before Ahom rule. Vaidyadeva or Arimatta ruled in Assam for about six decades from 1138 A.D.\textsuperscript{15}

In the Assamese chronicles give a clear picture of the Kachari kingdom, in the south west of the rivers Subansiri and Disang and they were called Dimasa. The chronicles are silent regarding the Tiwa population and settlement area i.e. home in the early days. But some chronicles written in later period have made some references of Tiwas. They had linguistic and cultural affinities with Dimasas.\textsuperscript{16}

1.6.1 Dimarua was an ancient Tiwa state towards the south west part of Nowgong. It was sometimes conquered by the Ahoms, but after the 15th century this kingdom was merged with Ahom kingdom i.e. Assam. The Royal house of Dimarua wanted to prove their identity from the Asura king Naraka.

\textsuperscript{15} Choudhury, Dr. P.C. : 1959 : The History of Civilization of the people of Assam, p. 270.

in later times Dimarua and other Tiwa chiefdoms, namely, Khaïa, Gobha, Barapujoyä and Nelli came under the rule of Ahom or the Jayantia kings. Several Tiwa states flourished under the rule of Ahom and Jayantia king from time to time.17

Only the Deodhai Asam Buranji gives a good description regarding the Tiwas of Nowgong.

1.6.2 It is a brief account of the neighbourly relation of Ahom and Tiwa. It has also give a good description of the relationship of Ahom with Kachari, Jaintia and tributary chiefs of Gobha, Nelli, Sora, Khaigara, Topakuchi, Barapujiyä, Janjua and Mikir. Among Tiwas there are different twelve tributaries Rājā whom they grouped in satorajā, i.e. 'seven kingdom', pasurajā 'five kingdom'. This satorajā i.e. 'seven chieftains' are Gobha, Nelli, Dandua, Tetelia, Khola, Baghara and Ghagua, while the pasuraja other five chieftains are Sora, Khaigara, Topakuchi, Barapujiyä and Mikir. Many other principalities are found in Nowgong area, now a days. They are Sahari, Phulaguri, Kumni, Tarani etc.

1.6.3 It was Jagiwal Gohain who establish seven chieftains while Rahial Baruah established other five. The Ahom king

had collected taxes from them. He also collected from them bamboo shoot, kanua, kite, breed of Sal fish etc. at Phulaguri in Raha and Jagichowki. These two outposts, viz. Raha and Jagichowki had some stratigical and these were the places to contact Ahom and Tiwas for various political purposes. These two outposts were considered as govt. place by the Tiwas and Jayantias for trade and transaction. Initially Jagichowki was extensively used by the Jaintias for such trade. But Jayantia population is totally absent in this area now. Moreover Jagichowki has been popularised as Jagi road during the British period.

1.6.4 The Ahom king Jayadhwaja Singha had been interested to know about the population of this area and accordingly he had given the responsibility to his father-in-law Teleka Handiqui, to make a complete survey of the population in Raha area. During that time the local people were very much impressed upon the Ahom Govt. officials and soldiers and they had developed a friendly relation with the Ahoms. Later on with the advice of the Ahom officers some twelve Tiwa (Lalung) and twelve Hikir families were settled down on the south bank of the Kalang river, which river actually demarcated the Ahom and Jayantia kingdoms of that area.

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The friendly attitude and neighbourly relation between the Tiwas and Ahoms were continued till the British came.

1.6.5 One Mohan Patar, a patriotic hero of Gobhās is still remembered by the various tribes and sub-tribes of Tiwas, as because he had defeated the Jayantia king. Defeated Jayantia king made a conspiracy and killed Mohan Patar by arranging a festive gathering and a feast. After then a large number of hill Tiwas migrated to the plains, towards the south bank of Kalang river. But Mohan Patar's figure had been curved in a big rock, which has been still preserved at their original place Marjong village in Karbi Anglong district.

1.6.6 After the annexation of this Gobha and Jayantia kingdom to the British rule, the Tiwas revolt against the Britishers mainly at Phulaguri where a British officer lieutenant Sings was killed by the Tiwas.2D

Later on Tiwas were controlled by the British Govt. and they had permanently settled in that area. The Phulaguri revolt is still popularly known as 'Phulaguri Dheu' i.e. 'Phulaguri battle',

and there are many folksongs regarding this.21

1.7 The tribe shows two major groups, such as hills and plains. The differences of the two groups are settlement pattern, dresses and language.

1.7.1 In the hills a Tiwa village is usually situated in a place not far away from a stream and waterfall. Where there is no such regular water stream, there they make some arrangement to carry the water through water pipes. For this settlement they give much attention to the flowing waters. Two or three such pipes with some flat stones nearly make the village bathing place. In some villages there are some kaccha well i.e. well without any concrete or brick rings. They use to take bath such watery place. In the evening the people bath here. Women came here with their ground pitchers to carry water for cooking and drinking. They carry two or three such pitchers in conical basket carried with head trap. In some places bamboo tube also seen. Now a days they like to use earthen and aluminium pitchers, which are soon to be used very frequently, among Tiwa.

village is approached by a small footpath coming up and down the hills crossing streams with a ford of some two or three bamboo or a big tree placed across. Nowadays some roads are also constructed in those areas but most of them are in a bad condition. Most of the interior villages are not having such modern communication. The plains Tiwa villages look like any other common village of Assam.

1.7.2 The house of Tiwas are made of bamboo and thatch. These are built without any definite village plan. They built these houses on the convenience of the family only. The house have an open space in front of which is bare and kept clean of vegetation. The woman folk husk their paddy here with mortar and pestle. Every house have a small patch of kitchen, vegetable garden and small courtyard. The compound is well protected on all sides with bamboo stakes. The living house have a rectangular ground, plan with thatched gabled roof on the top. Each house has only two doors - one in the front side and the other in the back side, no windows are available in their houses. It has only two rooms. Inside the second room there is a fireplace, where Tiwa people cooked their food. Over the fireplace they kept one bamboo rack for putting dried fish, salt and other sundries of the kitchen. There is another fireplace in front room also. Both the rooms are used as bedrooms.
1.7.3 The furniture consists of some pieces of wood and sack, bamboo mate for sitting, and few ground pitches, of which some are used for keeping rice and some are used for keeping water. In some places there is a granary but generally they store paddy in their residing house. They keep pigs, fowls, etc. There are the common domestic animals kept within house boundary.

1.7.4 The villages of plain Tiwas are just like those of their neighbours, i.e. any other Assamese village. They make the plinth with beaten earth and plaster. In the hill area the betelnut trees are very rare but in plains they take care of betelnut trees and their presence in the villages of the plain Tiwas village give the appearance of a common Assamese village.

1.8 Agriculture is the main occupation of the Tiwa; They cultivate 'jhum', which is popularly called 'ara' by them. They cultivate 'ara' at a small distance from their houses. After harvesting the jhum they allow the field to be dry and when the mousoom starts then they started with the process of jhum cultivation. They never plough but dug up the land with hoe and when the land is
fully prepared then seeds are planted over it. They generally change the jhum cultivation plots every two or three years. Because jhuming cannot be practised in the same plot of land for more than three years, as soil loses its fertility. Of course after few years the same plot is again considered as suitable plot for such cultivation. The chief crops of the jhums are hill paddy, millets, maize and cotton. They plant vegetables, such as bringals, chillies, ginger, pumpkins and arum. All these crops are sown in the same plot and they harvest the crops one after another. In the hills there are also some low lands where they plant paddy without ploughing. They prepared the paddy field with hoe and trampled with buffaloes.

In some Tiwa villages, the villagers cultivate lae. Normally in the month of November seeds of lae are planted in fig tree and collect it in the next March, April i.e. after 3 or 3½ months.

The plains Tiwa share a common pattern of agriculture with other communities of the plains population.

1.8.1 Harvesting is very interesting among the Tiwa people. The household seek the help of the entire village community a
system known as 'hadari'. The young boys and girls cut the stalk of paddy and they use to sing some songs called 'mairawa'. In 'mai misawa', the young boys and girls separate the grain from the stalks by the help of bullocks which is common among plains people. In 'mai pathala', generally a group of young boys separate the grain by some stick. They use to sing and dance in such works during harvesting. They store the paddy generally in the household store rooms. The household supply rice-beer and fowls to these boys and girls who help them in harvesting.

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rice is main food of the Tiwa. They are non-vegetarian. Meat and fish are considered as important food item. Generally they take two meals in a day. One in the morning and the other in the evening. The first thing a housewife does in getting up in the morning is to make fire and put the pot over it to boil rice. The usual diet is rice and curry. The curry usually is cooked with vegetables from their jhums or vegetables collected from the jungles. They consume sufficient quantities of dried fish. Besides this they relish pork and fowls cooked fresh or smoked.

The plains Tiwa now-a days keep cows and these educated Tiwas of plains use to take milk as food. But in the interior area the Tiwas never take cows or buffalo milk as food. Besides the main meals they occasionally boil tapioca or sweet potatoes and
Take it in odd hours. Tea and sugar have not yet gained popularity except in the plains. The only beverage in the interior areas is their national drink 'Ju' i.e. homemade rice beer, which is prepared from millets, rice, and maize. They take every opportunity to take rice-beer in social gatherings, birth, death, marriage, and worship. Areca nut and pan 'betel leaves' with lime and tobacco are also largely chewed. 'Khar' 'alkali' is very popular among the Tiwas, which is prepared by burning dry pieces of banana steam. It is taken as a medicine for mild dysentry. In interior places of hills, mustard oil is not a medium of cooking. Nowadays smoking tobacco, biddis and cigarettes is common among them.

1.10 The Tiwas are a colourful tribes and they have their own traditional dresses. A Tiwa man wears a tagla and 'lana' i.e. 'longoti', in interior hills area. The tagla is generally deep black colour. The old aged people use 'paro' i.e. 'turban' which is beautifully rolled. The 'paro' cloth of 'Sacra michawa' i.e. 'spring festival' is about twenty feet long. It is like a Rudradhara's turban of 'Ankiya' drama, the one act play of the Assamese vaisnava Sankaradeva. Tiwa woman generally wear 'phās kāi', 'khejang', and 'phāli-re' in hills. The 'phāskāi' covered the lower part of the body and 'khejang' is used to cover breasts and 'phāli-re' wear
in the shoulder. In some interior places, the Tiwa women do not cover their breasts. Sometimes these people are found to use garment like other plains people. In the plains, the Tiwa people dress like other people of plains. The male uses dhoti pant and shirt while the woman use makhela to cover lower part including the breasts or some women use a makhela with a blouse and chadar, as used by other Assamese woman. Now days the native Tiwa women's dress has been improved by making broader and longer so that it covers the legs also.

1.10.1 Tiwa women are very fond of ornaments. They used 'kharu', 'bracelet', 'khaidang', 'silver or gold ear ornament', 'la', 'chapla', 'flute and long necklace', 'singli', 'small necklace' and 'yustam' 'ring' etc. The all gold and silver ornaments they use in festivals and occasionally.

1.11 Weaving is considered as obligatory duty of Tiwa women. Every Tiwa girls properly trained in the art of spinning and weaving. Now days all Tiwa women are very expert in weaving in hills and plains. The weave cloths simple and as well as very artistic designs. Another interesting feature of the Tiwa women is that they collect wild herbs for colours. They use such herbs for dying the yarns. Most of them collect black colour from a
herb named 'nilli' a wild plant and red colour Trcm 'laha' i.o. 'lac'. The designs of tagla, 'khejang', 'phaskai' and shilire are very beautiful. They designed both floral and geometrical method. The Tiwa women rear the endi silk cocoon, from this they woven 'endi Chādar', which is very comfortable in all seasons. Now a days the educated young Tiwa girls learn knitting and embroidery etc.

1.1? The Tiwas are lovers of music and dance. They observe religious ceremonies and festivals through-out the years and some musical instruments are always essential in this ceremonies. All musical instruments are kept in the 'gāmādi' i.e. 'dormitory'. Among Tiwas there are three kinds 'khrams' i.e. 'drum', viz. 'khram', 'long drum', 'kurām khujura', 'short drum', and 'kurām panthāi', 'young drum'. There are some restrictions among drums. The 'kurām' used in spring festivals like 'sagra nīsa' and 'kurām khujura' at harvest time. 'kurām panthāi' is also used while they begin with the cultivation. Besides these the 'kurām' is also used in village safety and village gathering. Flutes are made of bamboo in two types; long flute, which is made with two tube of bamboo called 'thurān' and the short flute called 'pañā si'
'thagari', 'string instrument', 'gamana' i.e. 'gagana' in Assamese and 'kali' i.e. pipe are also popular among them. 'Tokh'le' is another musical instrument which control the music. It is made with three hornbill birds on a bamboo stick.

1.13 The most interesting thing in the Tiwa social structure is that, like the Khuli or Garo, they follow the mothers line in tracing relationship in hills area. In plains they follow the fathers line, but there are some exception i.e. 'mixed type' of line, it appears that the patterns of Tiwa's social structure is mixed one. In the hills system is known as matrilineal system tracing relationship in this way they have certain kin groups known as 'kul' i.e. 'clan'. These are twelves main clans. Marriage within same 'kul' is strictly prohibited, among the Tiwas. A man belonging to the same 'kul' is regarded as close relation though he may be living hundreds of miles away. Marriage within same 'kul' is regarded as great offence and the village council punished such couple severely. In ancient time the village council had driven out such couple to the bank of the river Digaru. There are some such type of villages on the bank of the that river. In Tiwa language 'digaru' means river of dirty water, i.e. 'di' means 'water' and 'gārāu' means dirty.
1.13.1 The main twelve clans and its sub clans of Tiwās are as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main clan</th>
<th>Sub clan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>masren</td>
<td>masren , magor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ladur, puru</td>
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<tr>
<td>madar</td>
<td>sagārā or sagra</td>
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<tr>
<td>malai</td>
<td>phangso, pumā, or humā</td>
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<tr>
<td>daphar</td>
<td>mithi, lamphai</td>
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<tr>
<td>hukai</td>
<td>kharāi</td>
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<td>amsi</td>
<td>agārā, chāncchārā</td>
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<tr>
<td>lasā</td>
<td>mithi</td>
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<tr>
<td>salan</td>
<td>muni, melan</td>
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<tr>
<td>āmsan</td>
<td>amsi</td>
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<td>kakhar</td>
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<td>darnon</td>
<td>danlon, kholar</td>
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<td>lorom</td>
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1.13.2 There are some stories about the ancestors of the clan. The 'Hukai' and 'Mithi' clans believe that they are the descendent of a tiger. Because of such strong belief the Hukai and Mithi clans do not kill tiger. If they learn of the death of any tiger, bring it to their village and carried to the cremation ground. On that day the Tiwās observe complete non workday.
The women do not wave, besides not touch the granary on that day as if; it were a dead man of the family. In plains clans are very rarely distinguished by suffixing 'āli' to their names.

1.14 The birth of a Tiwa is very interesting, when the expectant mother expresses her labour pain, the husband of the woman invites two or three female helper from the village. After the birth took place the helper woman cuts the umbilical cord with a very thin bamboo slice. Generally such slice is taken from the bamboo post in which the mother of the new baby takes refuge.

1.14.1 There are some taboos in respect of child birth. Till the falling of naval cord the mother must not sleep putting her back to the child. The helper woman can forecast the future health of the child by looking to the cord of the child. The mother gives the water oozing out of her hair after bath just to fall the cord. The cord of the child is preserved in the shell of an Endi cocoon. On the other hand, the birth of a child, father cuts a fowl.

1.14.2 The Tiwas have observed the next day just after the fall of the naval cord and the ceremony is called nam Caorā.
the naming of the new baby. In this day they sacrifices three cocks. If it is a boy, a small bow and arrow of toy especially made for the occasion are placed in its hand. Holding the boy close to his breast, the 'Borjela' makes a show of wielding the tiny weapon and discharge the arrow four times once in each direction, east, west, north and south. This is to make the child a good warrior and a strong man. There is an important difference in case of a girl. The 'bor hari' i.e. 'senior most female descendant of the clan' and mother's eldest sister, immediate to the baby, the girl is given a miniature bow made to represent the apparatus used for spinning.

1.15 The dormitory system is another important factor of Indo-Mongoloid people of North-East region of India. The Tiwa has also own dormitory. Its bears a general similarity to them. But there are some exceptions, also. Major Gurdon observed that almost all the tribes of Assam have a well organised system of bachelors' dormitory. At present each of the interior villages have a dormitory, but such dormitory not available in the plains. Now a days the dormitory organisation of the plain tribes has died out, but there are well organisations of youngmen in all tribal villages to defend the village.

1.15.1 The Tiwas called their dormitory 'camádi' means 'enjoyment place of bachelors', 'cé = bachelor', 'cádi = enjoyment'. Like Tivá 'camádi' there are 'nokpante' among Garos, 'Hurung' of Ao, 'maro' or 'terang' of Karbi, musup of Ladam, 'zaulbuk' of Mizo and 'orong' of Wishing tribe. All of these dormitories are different from Tivá 'camádi' to some extent.

1.15.2 The Tivá 'camádi' is a social organisation. The unmarried youth are allowed to sleep together in it at night. It is the largest house in the middle of the village. It is open at both side ends. The floor is built on stilts about five to six feet high from the ground. The roof of the house is supported on small saplings over which its slopes down to the level of the floor. It is divided into four parts, each with a specific purpose. The front part of the main post is known as 'numáj', and it is used in ceremonies. The behind part is used for sitting. On its left, there is a fire place made of earth piled planks of wood and bamboo. The sleeping place is on the left side as one enters by the front.

The preparation for the construction of the 'camádi' is interesting one. The people collect big trees for post, bamboo, thatch for roof with a traditional ceremony.
1.15.3 The 'cāmādi' youths are divided into two groups: the senior and the junior. The senior group is called 'kra panthāi' and the junior group is called 'karakia pānthāi'. At the age of ten a boy joins in the 'karakia pānthāi' group and he remains in that group for about six years and 'kra panthāi' group another six years. During the first six years time they work under the supervision of senior group. They hoe and level the fields of the villagers, sow and reap of paddy and fetch bamboo from jungle. They learn how to make bamboo mats, fishing instrument and other essential things of their own daily life in 'cāmādi'.

The boy must sleep in the dormitory, and only during the days of one's illness is allowed to spend his night with his parents. The 'chañ māji' i.e. 'leader of cāmādi', conduct all the activities of cāmādi. He is also assisted by 'hurumā', 'tāngariā', 'ti lua kheda' and 'rebhāre' in the festive occasion.

Curving and paintings are also worked into the front post and beam of the 'cāmādi'. Female breast is curved on the front beam.

1.15.4 Entrance of a lady into the cāmādi is not allowed. They watch ceremonies from the outside. Like 'Namghar' of plains the Tiwā meet at cāmādi to discuss and decide important affairs of
The marriage of the Tiwa is strictly exogamous. The childrens are known by their mother step in hills.

There are many marriage customs among the Tiwas. Proposal marriage usually performed. The parent of a grown up girl search a boy for marriage. A marriageable girl when mixed with a boy the parents and relatives watch them carefully. Then they asked the about the relation with the girl and his willingness to stay at his beloved house. Once the concent is given, a date is fixed and the boy brought to the girl's house and invite his parents and relatives. A ceremonial function is performed on said day and the boy remains with girl is called 'gharjiya' or 'gobhia rakha'.

Now a days the 'gharjiya' is not found among the plain Tiwas. They share the common system of marriage with other community. There are no child marriage divorce and remarriage is not a bar for a widow.

The Tiwa worship many god and goddesses like pha Mahadeo, baghraja, charibhai, thala raja, sani, kalikha, basundhari, bauli, bhagawati etc. Among them the pha mahadeo
or hojaideo is supreme one. They believe in ghosts and spirits also. They offer rice beer, fowl, goat, pig to their gods and goddesses. The village priest 'loro' plays an important role in this sacrifice. The sacrifices are performed in deosal or Mahadeo sal or than sal. Some hill Tivás are Christian convert and the plain Tivás are vaisnava convert.

1.17.1 The Tivás have their own festivals. The festivals are closely related with worship of different deities, agriculture. They use khram, khrambar, pansi, thuran, in the festivals. Songs and dances are also take an important part in these festivals. The festivals are jan khan, chagra misawa, lankhun, wanjawa, bisu, barat, melã, bhitar sewa, singal etc.

Jankhan : The agriculturist Tivá observe jankhan before the beginning of cultivation. They offer four fowl and 'ju' to bagh raja, thala raja, charibhai and chari kara in jankhan.

Chagramisawa : Chagramisawa is mainly a spring festival of Tivã. Chagra misawa means (chagra = all, misawa = song and dance) songs and dance for all. They observe it first half of the march. Some traditional customs are observed in this festival.

Bisu, Mela and Ratisewa are observed among plain Tivã.
The Tiwas have their own language and it is known as 'Tiwa mat' which means 'Tiwa speech'. The Tiwa language has not yet been seriously studied by the linguists. There are quite a few published works on the language. Some of the Tiwa writers have prepared some such books but these are yet not published. There are some works published by the Tiwa and non-Tiwa writers. The non Tiwa writers published some works in English. Number of such books are not much.

Gerierson claims that the Tiwa (Lalung) has close affinities with Dimasa, Koja and Bodo and it is an off shoot of the great Sino-Tibetan language family of the world. He shows that the Tiwa language is more closely related to Tibeto Burman language family in his famous book 'Linguistic Survey of India'.

Balwan's 'Lalung Dictionary' is the first lexicon of this language and it is a trilingual dictionary, where the main entry is Tiwa and meaning are given in Tiwa and English with Khasi equivalents.

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The same author has prepared the following books in the Tiwa language.

(i) Lalung English Translation
(ii) Tiwa mat
(iii) Jonane phondra
(iv) Phini Phini Khorang

All these books have been published by the Catholic missionaries from Shillong and Amasu. Besides that the same organisation has published the Bible in Tiwa and the Bible in story form.

Mohiram Bordoloi, a school teacher of Kathiatali, devoted his life for the cause of the Tiwa language. He writes the following books -

'Thumun lāi' two different books, under the same title as Part I and Part II which are the text book for class I & II.

The book 'Tiwa mat pahewane nem', by the same author is the only book prepared on the grammatical aspects of the language; it is also considered as Tiwa grammar. He has also attempted to edit 'Thalas' a magazine in Tiwa but its publication was discontinued long back.
The 'Sadau Asam Tiwa Sanmilan' edited a magazine named 'Uncan' i.e. 'echo', of which only four issues were published, and then discontinued. Thus, it appears that there is no sufficient books on other references in the language.

1.18.2 The Tiwas living in the hills and hilly region speak their own tongue to their community people while in a few villages a small number of Tiwa population can speak their tongue to their own people. Such villages are: Nambar Lalung gaon, Manipur, Nakhalia, Rachim Nagaon, Nelli, Jilcang, Amazi and Namguri of Nagaon district etc. and another wide area of Karatuchi in the eastern border of Kamrup district. On the other hand the plains Tiwas normally speak Assamese to their own community or other people in the plains.

1.18.3 The Tiwa language is an offshoot of the great Sino-Tibetan language family. The table noted below give a clear idea of it. Grierson's view:

Sino-Tibetan or Tibeto Chinese speech family

Sino-Tibetan proper

Tibeto Burman

Siamesc Chinese

Tibetan

Himalayan

North Assam

Assam Burmese

Bodo Kaga

Bodo (Boro) Kaga

Boro (Kachari) Dimasa Garo Tiā (Lalung, Tipā) Moran

In this classification we found that the Tiwa language is a sub branch of Tibeto-Burman language family and it is also closely related to the Joro, Naga and Jimasa etc.

1.18.4 The Tiwa speaking areas i.e., the home of this speech of Assam are scattered in Karbi-Anlong and eastern Kamrup. The most of the plains Tiwas of Nagaon district have lost their own tongue and they speak in Assamese language to their neighbours and to their own community. Thus it is observed that the plains and hills Tiwa of Kamrup and Karbi-Anlong and its adjoining area of Nagaon speak their own language.

The Tiwa speech shows two prominent dialects of Tiwa language. These two dialects however cannot be tagged to with a particular areas or localities. These two dialects are found to exist side by side in the same localities.
The dialect spoken in the hill area of the two districts Karbi Anglong and eastern Kamrup is called 'Hajowali' i.e. the hills Tiwa dialect; while the other dialect spoken in foot hills of these two districts and the villages is called 'Thaluwa' or 'datiyeli' i.e. the plains Tiwa dialect.

The phonological, morphological and glossarial differences of these two dialects are noted below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hill Tiwa</th>
<th>c &gt; j in plain Tiwa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td>cin : jin 'we'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cu : ju 'riceboer'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>calam : jalam 'birth'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hill Tiwa</th>
<th>k &gt; g in plain Tiwa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td>kai : gai 'betelnut'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kräi : gäräi 'village'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kaihäti : gaihäti 'Guwahati'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hill Tiwa</th>
<th>t &gt; d in plain Tiwa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td>tärä : Jarga 'door'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>takhrä : Jakhrä 'low stool'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>têri : dâri 'bamboo mat'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tes : des 'country'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hill Tiwa p>b in plain Tiwa:
e.g. pāi : bāi 'elder sister'
punchi : buncti 'brother in law'
pe : be 'he'
khāpāl : khābel 'forhead'

Hill Tiwa o>u in plain Tiwa:
e.g. rāo : rāu 'plural suffix'
libin rāo : libin rāu 'men'
dāo : dāu 'red'

1.18.5.2 Glossarial:

Hills Tiwa Plains Tiwa

camādi : jāmādi 'dormitory'
pārali : pāri 'widow'
āi : mā 'mother'
kanānā : ganānā 'once'
pāuji : bāuji 'elder brother's wife'
mārgi : māgrā 'female'

1.18.6 The Hill Tiwa incorporate quite a good number of words, used in daily life from Karbi and Khāsi language. Such words are -

ārlon 'rock' < kārbi, orlon
kānhurā 'village headman' < kārbi kānhurā
lanpi 'big river' <Karbi, lanpi
lahā 'lac' <Karbi lāhā etc.

Khasi: gāi 'betelnut' <Khasi kwai
mahādi 'king's wife' <Khasi, mahādel
miāw 'cat' <Khasi, miāw
saiwul 'wool' <Khasi, saiwul
māsu 'cow' <Khasi, māsi
lama 'banner' <Khasi, lana etc.

1.18.7 The plains Tiwa has incorporated large number of vocables used in day to day life from Assamese or other languages through Assamese. Such words are -
nāo 'boat' <As. nāo
pāli 'sand' <As. bāli
phāl 'half' <As. phāl
phatek 'jail' <As. phatek
bemār 'fever' <As. bemār
sā 'tea' <As. cāh
sun 'lime' <As. cun
sipāi 'soldier' <As. sipāhi
pulis 'police' <As. pulic

1.18.7.1 Tiwa is a spoken tongue of the community and it survives on the lips of the community. It has not received the status of
a written language. So this speech has no written literature, but it is rich in folk literature, i.e., oral literature, which gives us folk songs, folk tales, riddles, adages, proverbs, idioms and mantras etc. All these represent the life and society of the Tiwas.

Since the language was a spoken tongue, it has no script. Now after the patronisations of the state govt. of Assam a few books have been published in modified Assamese script. But the Christians have a different attitude and they have also published some books in Roman script. But the Tiwa community has a strong sentiment for using the present modification Assamese script as they consider it the most popular and very widely used eastern variety of modern Indian script.

1.18.8 In plains almost all the Tiwas converse in Assamese. They have totally lost their own speech due to very close contact with the neighbouring Assamese speaking population. Moreover all the educated Tiwa people learn the Assamese language as the first language in schools, where the medium of instruction is also Assamese. They had to depend for various purpose on the neighbourhood. For this, they had to accept Assamese as an working

27 see sample text.
language for their own development and survival. This way the plain Tiwas, in course of time identified as Assamese speaking population linguistically, but ethnically they are still Tiwa community, an offshoot of Tibeto Burman group of people.

The Hill Tiwas along with the villages located in the plains appear as bilingual as they converse in own tongue to their community people and in Assamese to other Tiwas and neighbouring Assamese population. Thus Assamese spoken by both the Tiwa groups appear as broken form of the spoken Assamese. Linguistically, thus Tiwas show two varieties—Tiwas who are bilingual and Tiwas, who are monolingual.

1.18.3.1 Important feature of the Assamese spoken by the Tiwas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(i)</th>
<th>Col. As.</th>
<th>e &gt;</th>
<th>i</th>
<th>in T. As.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>beci</td>
<td>bici</td>
<td>more'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beji</td>
<td>biji</td>
<td>niddle'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cenì</td>
<td>cini</td>
<td>sugar'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ekuri</td>
<td>ikuri,ikhuri</td>
<td>twenty'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eghara</td>
<td>igaro</td>
<td>eleven'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>belag</td>
<td>bilag</td>
<td>others'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

see chapter 1.3.2 of the thesis.
(ii) col. As. ੑ ਕ in T. As.

ਗਤ : ਕਤ 'hole'

ਗੱਟ : ਕੱਟ 'hole'

ਗੁਟ : ਕੁਟ 'song'

ਦੱਖਿਰ : ਦਖਿਰ 'milk'

ਗਰਾਖਿਆ : ਗਰਾਖਿਆ 'cowherd'

ਪਾਕੁਣ : ਪਾਕੁਣ 'eleventh month of As. year'

(iii) col. As. ਪੰਡਰ in T. As.

ਪੁੱਜਾ : ਪਹੁੱਜਾ 'worship'

ਪੋਰਾ : ਪਹੋਰਾ 'box'

ਪਾਰਾ : ਪਹੋਰਾ 'from'

ਪੰਚ : ਪੰਛ 'five'

ਪਹੀਸਾ : ਪੰਛ 'five'

ਪਥਾਰ : ਪੰਠਾਰ 'paddy field'

ਪੰਚ : ਪੰਛ 'paddy field'

ਪੰਪ : ਪੰਪ 'sin'

ਪੰਤ : ਪੰਤ 'life'

ਪੁਹ : ਪੁਹ 'ninth month of As. year'

(iv) col. As. ਬਰਕ in T. As.

ਬਾਰਕਰ : ਪਾਰਕਰ 'year'

ਬਾਲ : ਪਾਲ 'strength'

ਬਰਕਹਾ : ਪਾਰਕਹਾ 'rainy season'
1.18.8.2 The gender in T. As. is not grammatical. The distinction of gender i.e. 'sex', implies by three ways:

(i) by prefixing words indicating male and female.
(ii) using different terms for male and female
(iii) by adding suffixes -i, -ani, -ni, following are the examples -
### (i) 
- *mātā mānuh*  
  'male man'
- *māiki mānuh*  
  'woman'
- *mātā carāi*  
  'cock'
- *māiki carāi*  
  'hen'
- *sācali-to*  
  'he goat'
- *sācali jani*  
  'she goat'

**but some times:**

- *mātā (garu) to*  
  'bull'
- *māiki (garu) jani*  
  'cow'
- *māiki (garu) to*  
  'cow'

### (ii) 
- *doka*  
  'youth'
- *gābbaru*  
  'girl'
- *jahēi*  
  'son-in-law'
- *ji*  
  'daughtert'

### (iii) 
- *pāmun/bāmun*  
  'male brahmin'
- *pāmuni/bāmuni*  
  'female brahmin'
- *mikhir*  
  'male mikir or kārbi'
- *mikhirāni*  
  'female mikir'
- *burā*  
  'old male man'
- *buri*  
  'old woman'

#### 3.18.9

The Tiwā language has close affinities with Dimāsā, Koro and Tābhā language. Some glossarial similarities are given.
**below -**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(i)</th>
<th>Tiwā</th>
<th>Dimāsā</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>āi</td>
<td>āi</td>
<td>'mother'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ān</td>
<td>ān</td>
<td>'i'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gāndu</td>
<td>gāndu</td>
<td>'pillow'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gai</td>
<td>gawai</td>
<td>'betelnut'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hā</td>
<td>hā</td>
<td>'fish'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thi</td>
<td>thi</td>
<td>'blood'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thāu</td>
<td>thao</td>
<td>'oil'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>'house'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bāthar</td>
<td>bāthar</td>
<td>'weather'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>re</td>
<td>ri</td>
<td>'cloth'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>har</td>
<td>har</td>
<td>'night'</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>lārā</td>
<td>lāmā</td>
<td>'path'</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>leotī</td>
<td>dilāu</td>
<td>'luit', 'Brahmaputra'</td>
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<tr>
<td>hā</td>
<td>hā</td>
<td>'soil'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hājiā</td>
<td>hājiā</td>
<td>'ginger'</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(ii)</th>
<th>Tiwā</th>
<th>Boro</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>phā</td>
<td>āphā</td>
<td>'father'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ābu</td>
<td>āabai</td>
<td>'grand mother'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khi</td>
<td>khi</td>
<td>'stool'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:ā</td>
<td>:ūnā</td>
<td>'bamboo'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiwa</td>
<td>Boro</td>
<td>English</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kanthāl</td>
<td>kanthāl</td>
<td>'jackfruit'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kham</td>
<td>kham</td>
<td>'drum'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khāphāl</td>
<td>khāphāl</td>
<td>'torpedo'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>çai</td>
<td>fay</td>
<td>'betelnut'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ju</td>
<td>jumāi</td>
<td>'ricebeer'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hājāi</td>
<td>hājau</td>
<td>'hill'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi</td>
<td>bi</td>
<td>'he', 'she'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mininā</td>
<td>minināy</td>
<td>'lough'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muṅ</td>
<td>muṅā</td>
<td>'name'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sāl</td>
<td>sān</td>
<td>'sun'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(III) | Tiwa   | Tābhā | English       |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-ān</td>
<td>-ān</td>
<td>'i'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>isi</td>
<td>isi</td>
<td>'here'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cin'</td>
<td>cin'</td>
<td>'we'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>māi</td>
<td>māi</td>
<td>'rice'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tu</td>
<td>tu</td>
<td>'bird'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>nak</td>
<td>'house'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ña</td>
<td>nānā</td>
<td>'fish'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mini</td>
<td>mini</td>
<td>'lough'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>misi</td>
<td>mis</td>
<td>'buffalo'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muṅ</td>
<td>muṅ</td>
<td>'name'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wēn</td>
<td>wēn</td>
<td>'cake'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiwa</td>
<td>Rābhā</td>
<td>English</td>
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