CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION
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The Liangmais are one of the most colorful tribe of North East, in terms of the way they have managed to retain a lot of their old ways, customs and social life. It is widely believed that the Tibeto-Burman came to the Northeast India via the Northeastern route from the Yangtze Kiang and the Hwang-Ho river valleys. The North East has often been described as a paradise for linguistic research. The numerous languages spread across the North East regions are extraordinarily diverse and unexplored. Nevertheless, the fact is that different groups of this language family came from different routes. Liangmais are mongoloid stock who for a considerable period lived in South-west China and migrated to Northern South East Asia and East India around one thousand years before the Christ. Ethnically and linguistically Liangmai people belong to the mongoloid group of race and speak Liangmai, a Tibeto-Burman language under the Naga-kuki section family. Originally Liangmai are known as kyliangmai khatmai. Kyliang means ‘sector in a village’ khat mean ‘one’ and mai mean ‘people’ and from this they are later called as Liangmai. Liangmai is the name of the people as well as community that speaks the language. It is considered as sub-tribes of Zeliangrong which consists of Zeme, Liangmai and Rongmei that was coined on 15th February 1947 at the Keishamthong, Imphal conference. This is the combination of the first syllable of the three tribes’ i.e: Ze from Zeme, Liang from Liangmai and Rong from
Rongmei (Ze + Liang + Rong= ZELIANGRONG). Zeliangrong people strongly urged the government to take up immediate action for the recognition of Zeliangrong as a single tribe. But authority responded that there is not tribe called Zeliangrong but only Zeme, Liangmai and Rongmei. They say Zeliangrong is an organization, an artificial body which was formed only in 1947 so it cannot be a called a tribe. So Zeme, Liangmai and Rongmei have to recognize their tribe as separate tribe for their own identity. They are the God given name so it must be honored by identifying separately. Now we need separate tribe recognition for their own identity even government of India has willing to take up the issues.

Liangmai is one of the 33 recognized tribes by the government of Manipur which includes Aimol, Anal, Hmar, Maram, Mao, Paite, Simte, Thangal, Thangkhul, Thadou, Zeme etc. In Nagaland Liangmai are recognized as Zeliang which comprises of Zeme and Liangmai. The language spoken by the people of Liangmai is known as Liangmai language. It is mainly spoken in Manipur and Nagaland. In Manipur, Liangmai speakers are found in Tamenglong headquarter Tamei sub division and in Senapati district. They are also found in Tening Sub-division, Jalukie of Peren district, Dimapur and Kohima of Nagaland. According to 2001 census report, the total population of Liangmai in Manipur was above 34,232 with 17,477 males and 16,755 females. According to 2001 census report, the total population of Zeliang in Nagaland was 36012 out of which 2315 are Liangmai speakers. This language is linguistically closer to Maram, Poumai, Thangal, Ruangmei and Zeme which are spoken in the same region.
1.1.1 The People of Manipur:

Geographically the state of Manipur can be divided into two divisions— the Hills and the valley. The people of Manipur are grouped into four main ethnic communities – the Meiteis, the Pangals, the Naga and the Kuki. The Meitei and the Pangals inhabit the valley while other 33 tribes settle in the hills divided into two main ethno-denominations i.e. the Nagas and the Kuki-Chins. It should be noted here that all the different ethnic groups belong to the Mongoloid race and having very close similarities in their culture and traditional habits and speak the Tibeto-Burman languages. The Nagas are the larger of the tribal groups in Manipur. The Naga villages are scattered over both the Hills and the valley whereas, the Kuki-Chins are concentrated mostly in the southern Hills of Manipur. The Kuki-Chins are the comparatively late migrants to Manipur in the late 18th-19th century. Next to Meitei, the Naga constitute the second largest ethnic group in Manipur and they are mainly found in four districts of Manipur i.e. Chandel, Ukhrul, Senapati and Tamenglong. By faith Nagas and Kuki-Chins were Christian; however, there are a few Non-Christians among the Kabui Rongmei settled in the valley.

By law, Meitei's are not allowed to have their own land in the hills while the people of the hill can live anywhere in Manipur. At present several people from the hill have also migrated and settled in the valley. The Meitei’s are also primarily agriculturalists. Rice is the staple food. Fish is a favorite meat for Hindu Meitei. But, the younger generation eats all kinds of meat available in the market. The legend of all tribes includes Meiteis claim that they originated somewhere in the north from a cave. All performed head hunting at one time of their history. The history of Manipur reveals that the Zeliangrong had a close relationship with the
Meiteis. During the seven years of the Burmese invasion in Manipur (1819-1925 AD), the Meiteis of Imphal valley left their homes and took shelter in Zeliangrong areas. The difference came only in later parts of the history after Meiteis were converted to Vaishnavism. At present, the Meiteis perform rituals and ceremonies according to the Hindu customs while the hill tribes perform according to Christian faith. After the conversion of Meiteis to Hinduism, they treated the hill people as an untouchables and called them "Hao" a derogatory meaning "uncivilized". This led to a creation of a gigantic barrier between the hill and valley. Among the Meiteis themselves, there was Lois or Yaithibis, who were driven out of the Meitei community to far off villages as untouchables by the Kings as they did not accept Hinduism. Also, the Imphal Meiteis call other Meiteis of villages and towns as "Lawai" or "uncivilized".

The Naga constitute the second largest ethnic group in Manipur as we have mentioned above. It consists of Anal, Chiru, Liangmai, Maram, Maring, Monsang, Moyon, Rongmei, Tarao, Thangal, Tangkhul, Mao, Poumai, Zeme etc. The Chin-Kuki group consists of Gangte, Hmar, Paite, Thadou, Vaiphei, Koireng, Kom, Chothe etc. Other groups like Paite, Zou, Simte, Vaiphei etc. identify themselves as Zomi. Thadou remains the major Kuki population in this Chin-Kuki group while Hmar identity was closer to the Mizo or Lushei group. Some smaller tribes like Aimol, Koireng, Kom, Chothe etc recently declared themselves as a Komrem which mean neither Naga nor Kuki.
1.1.2 The Origination of Liangmai:

The Naga has its own distinct language which is not mutually intelligible to one another but all traces their origin or place of departure to Makhel. The Liangmai has no historical documents to show the migration and origination. But the folksongs, folktales and legends of different Naga tribes are sorts of Naga history through which we can trace the origin. Many writers considered Makhel (as the Liangmai called Makhiang) where all Naga tribes lived together before a major dispersal took place.

Many ethnologists had studied the Nagas and traced the origin connected with the head-hunters of Malay and traces of Southern Seas, while other traces them back even to China. Some of the tribes in Malaysia (Iban, Kayans), Indonesia (Dayaks) and Philippines (Igorots) are very similar to Naga tribes in their cultural and social life. Shakespeare, who wrote the history of Assam, also wrote that Nagas resembled to those tribes of Dayaks and they loved the marine-shells. Thus he wrote, “they recognize a slightly resemblance in matters of counting names domestic implements, in a way village architecture and head-hunting propensities to those of the Dayaks”. It is also supported by historical facts- folklore, folktale, legend that there is a dim similarity with Borneo in that the two have common traditional ways of head-hunting with Indonesians as both use the loin loom for weaving clothes. Naga tribes must have wandering before they found their permanent abode and ultimately reached Makhel following the big river.
Like many Naga tribes, Liangmai has its own version of migration and origin. They have their history as well as rich cultural heritage. To trace the origin, migration and settlement pattern of the tribe, is not a very simple task to investigate. To trace the origin, one has to depend heavily on the oral tradition in the form of folklore, folktale, legends, proverbs etc as well as other materials that are available. Following the oral traditions, one forms a rough idea that the Naga tribes traced their origin from Makhel. All Liangmai elders agreed to this version that dispersal took place from Makhel.

Liangmais are one of the Naga tribes belong to Mongoloid group who for a considerable period lived in South-west China and migrated to Northern South East Asia and East India around one thousand years before Christ. No written record is available as far as their arrival in Makhel or Makhiang is concerned as well as the place where all the Naga tribes lived together before a major dispersal took place. It is presumable that Makhiang is the original home of the Nagas. The people of Liangmai left the Makhel and came to a deep gorge called Ramting Kaben which is now identified in the North-west Senapati district.

The ancestors of Liangmai left their abode in Makhel and with their belongings moved to South. They crossed many mountains and survived hostile conditions. After long time they reached Ramting Kaben where they are comparatively safe. It is said that nothing could be seen from the outside and those who are living inside the gorge did not have a view of the outside world except the moon and the star at night and the sun during the day. The Ramting Kaben was located at Makuilongdi, which was commonly called Guangphungning
somewhere near the present Oklong village, Senapati Manipur.

The people of Makui longdi were seldom sick and the deaths were uncommon. Families increased in numbers over the years. There was no shortage of food. Hunters and fishermen never returned empty handed from their trips. They had dances and festivals which they celebrated with pomp and grandeur. They domesticated animals and fowls. They developed their code of ritual and worship. They began to worship god for good harvest and also for the protection of their lives and general well being. They were animists and believed in the highest god or the supreme god, calling him ‘Charawang’ which literally means ‘God King’. He is the creator of everything.

All norms and styles of cultivation were developed at Makui longdi. In course of this sojourning the inherited ancient traditions were improved which became a rich distinct custom, culture and religion compared to those of other brethren. Mention may be made that Liangmai community lived there happily without outside interference. It is generally believed that the total number of houses in Makui longdi village is seven thousand and seventy seven and if it is true, then it be the largest village not only in Manipur but in entire North-east India. Due to increase in population the administration became out of control. People in groups with dear and near ones started parting from other groups in different groups in different directions according to their own wishes- some to the North West, some to the north east, and some to the south. They proceeded without knowing their destination.
The trails of those people who left Makuilongdi and proceeded to different directions were untraceable. Because of this, people had isolated from each other, forgetting dear and near ones, father, mother, daughter, brother and sister. It was difficult to visit and be in touch with each other even in the time of troubles due to bad communication and other reasons such as big rivers, big jungles abounded with wild animals and ferocious animals were the obstacles for free movement of people. They left Makuilongdi and established many villages in Manipur and Nagaland.

The main Liangmai villages fall under Senapati and Tamenglong Districts Manipur. They are given below in alphabetical list:

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<tr>
<th>Sl No.</th>
<th>Village</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Aling San</td>
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<td>Aling Guang</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Ariang</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Ateklong</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Bena Chawang kenning</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Chakha 1 (Old)</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Chakha 2 (Khazam)</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Chaton 1 (Apunining)</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Chaton 2 (Kabangning)</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Chiang (Langmei)</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Dikiuram Upper</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Dikiuram Lower</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Dutlong</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Guangphungning (Oklong)</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Ieng</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>Kadi 1</td>
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<td>Konphung</td>
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<td>Kuilong 1</td>
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<td>Kuilong 2</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>Kabonram (Charoulong)</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>Liangchi</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>Liangtapon Guang</td>
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<td>30.</td>
<td>Liangtapon San</td>
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<td>31.</td>
<td>Liangnam, Tarung (Imphal Lemta old)</td>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>Lemta old</td>
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<td>33.</td>
<td>Lemta (Azaining)</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>Lenglong (Rianglong)</td>
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<td>35.</td>
<td>Machenglong</td>
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<td>36.</td>
<td>Maguilon</td>
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<td>37.</td>
<td>Makhan</td>
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<td>38.</td>
<td>Makuilongdi</td>
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<td>39.</td>
<td>Marongpa (L.pabram)</td>
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<td>40.</td>
<td>Nallong</td>
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<td>41.</td>
<td>Namlilong (Kanglatongbi)</td>
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<td>42.</td>
<td>Namtiram</td>
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<td>43.</td>
<td>Nemning</td>
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<td>Ndai</td>
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<td>46.</td>
<td>Nziang Guang</td>
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<td>47.</td>
<td>Nzeng (Kasilong)</td>
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<td>48.</td>
<td>Niulong</td>
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<td>49.</td>
<td>Nsak</td>
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<td>50.</td>
<td>Puilong</td>
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</table>

**NAGALAND LIANGMAI VILLAGES ARE LISTED BELOW:**
73. Ntu (Ntuma)
74. Nzau
75. New Nzau
76. Tening
77. Tapun
78. Samjiuram
1.1.3 The Term Kacha Naga:

Zeme and Liangmai tribes of mongolid race live in Manipur, Nagaland and Assam states of Northeast India. They are mainly found in Tamenglong headquarter, Tousem and Tamei sub division, Senapati district of Manipur, Tening Sub-division, Jhalukie, Peren, Dimapur and Kohima of Nagaland. They are also found in NC Hills, Assam. Liangmai and Zeme are referred to collectively as Zelang in Nagaland whereas in Manipur, they are recognized as Kacha Naga tribes.

Before the British conquered our country, the people of Zeme and Liangmai were purely identical. There was no such word called Kacha Naga amongst them. Amongst the Nagas, they do not have any Paka or Kacha-Naga. Everyone share and enjoyed the same privileges in every fields. But when the British entered the soil of India, they corrupted so many words not only Ketsa into Kacha due to lack of knowledge of language and as a result, a lot of errors of pronunciation are noticed regarding the people of India.

Kacha Naga is formed by Liangmai and Zeme tribes or in other words, both Liangmai and Zeme are addressed as the 'Kacha Naga' in the scheduled list. The Kacha Naga has etymological significance. The term Kacha Naga has been derived from an Angami word 'Ketsa' which means thick forest. Being a non native speaker, errors of pronunciation is one of the natural aspects so same thing happened here that the word ‘ketsa’ has corrupted by Britishers into ‘kacha’. This story was popular amongst the Naga tribes. It would be interesting to see how the word ‘kacha naga’ was originated. According to Manindra Konsam and
www.indianetzone.com, the word Kacha naga derived from an Angami word 'ketsa' meaning thick forest. He argued that when foreigners came to Kohima area and asked the local people, pointing towards the Liangmai and Zeme area, whether any people were living beyond the thick forest. The local people responded to that by saying that some people lived beyond the 'Ketsa'. Thereafter, the foreigners referred those people as 'Ketsa Naga and later on the word got corrupted into 'Kacha Naga'. Again, as per the information given by the “Language Education in Nagaland; Sociolinguistic Dimensions”, the ‘Kacha Naga’ derived from the Angami word ‘Ketsa’ meaning thick forest.

During those days the people of Liangmai and Zeme themselves do not know how and why they were called Kacha Naga. They did not object to it or made effort to change the name to the British rulers may be because of ignorance or lack of education or else they may not know the meaning of Kacha during those era. There was not any paka or Kacha tribe amongst Nagas; everyone enjoyed the same social and political rights and privileges. Interestingly, these peoples are also one of the largest tribe amongst Nagas having about one lakh population in the Northeast as a whole and holding respectable positions in different fields. These peoples are also most advanced people found among the Nagas even though these tribes are still enlisted as Kacha Naga in the schedule list.

On the other hand, the word “Kacha Naga”, Kacha in Nagamese, the lingua-franca used in Nagaland means "raw", it is also used as a slang or derogatory word to mean "adulterated" or "not indigenous" or "bogus". The term Kacha Naga was usually used to categorize Nagas of Manipur. Whenever the term is used in Nagaland, it refers to the Naga’s of Manipur only. So, it was an accepted norm in
Nagaland that the word Naga includes only the following tribes who live in Nagaland: "Ao, Sema, Angami, Lotha, Chakhesang, Chang, Khemungan, Konyak, Rengma, Sangtam, Yimchunger Lotha, Chakhesang, Chang, Khemungan, Konyak, Rengma, Sangtam, Yimchunger, Zeliang etc". There is no privileged and underprivileged group amongst Naga community as everyone share the equal status and equal opportunities. Naga tribes are a conglomeration of clans with no clan having any superiority over the other clan.

Today Zeme, Liangmai, Rongmei, Puimei and other tribes are demanding to recognize their tribe as separate tribe for their own identity. The Government of India assured that they have to discuss the matter in the parliament session but the issue is yet to be resolved.

1.1.4 Position of Liangmai Language:

In Manipur, majority of the tribal languages are not yet introduced in government educational institutions even at the primary level. Liangmai has very few literatures such as songs, hymns etc. but not any serious literary works. Liangmai has not got its own script; therefore they use roman script for writing purposes. Liangmai language has not been introduced as a subject in any government educational institutions except in some mission schools in Manipur. As a result of it, it is remaining more or less a spoken language.

There are some private and governmental schools in Liangmai villages but so far there is no college in Liangmai dominated areas in Manipur. The medium instruction used in school is English. But one compulsory Manipuri subject was taught at primary level in Manipur. So far, most of the Liangmai do not have a
proper place to mould up the children. It seems to be a burden of the state
government to introduce Liangmai language in primary level due to unknown
reason. However, in Nagaland this language is being taught at primary level.

1.1.5 Social Life:

The Liangmai tribe like any other community in the world has their own
traditional social systems. The foundation of Liangmai society is based on lineage
and clan system. They help one another. The people of Liangmai are known for
their simplicity and hospitality. They are very honest, courteous and cheerful. They
maintain very cordial relationship with one another by strengthening each other in
various ways. They help one another. They learned to work together, go together in
the paddy field, work and come back together, laughing together even as they
work. They have fundamental basis of society, family comprises father, mother,
and sons, daughters living together in one family; among them father is the
supreme lord of the family and he has empowered to interfere in the social
activities. The joint family system is not favored by the Liangmai society. The
general practice is that as soon as a son marries after one or two years, he becomes
the head of his family and he goes and set up a home of his own.

1.1.6 Cultural Life:

The Liangmai tribe has got very rich social and cultural heritages which are
preserved in the forms of festivals and feasts, dances, songs, music, dresses, and
ornaments, and many other entertainment programs and cultural activities like
games and sports. Their life is occupied with these different cultural activities all
the year around.
There are different kinds of festivals which are celebrated in different times for different meanings and purposes. Festivals are celebrated according to the lunar calendar and agricultural rotations of the year round. Some of the important festivals celebrated by people of Liangmai are Chaga-Ngee, Changan phungzanbo, Matui rangbo, Makukibo, Kariu dungbo, Tadjut kithiubo etc.

1.1.7 Chaga Ngee:

This is the biggest and most important festival of the Liangmai community. It is an indigenous festival of Liangmai inhabited in Manipur and Nagaland. Today this festival is celebrated in every year on 30th October in every villages, town and cities where Liangmai reside with cultural showcase and grand feast. The word 'Chaga Ngee' means 'festival'. The month of October is called 'Chagahiu'. The word 'Hiu' literally comes from the word 'Chahiu' meaning 'month'. Chagahiu means the month of festival or merriment. It is a festival of purification or sanctification and rededication. According to the ancient account, Chaga Ngee is celebrated after a war where victorious warriors are honored on the day. The occasion is also a day to sanctify the men folks for the next assignment. However, in the modern context the prime reason of observing this occasion is to keep alive the rich culture and tradition of the tribe. Colorful cultural programs are the main features of the festival. Old and young of the Liangmai community in traditional attire come out in large number to participate in the Chaga Ngee in every year. Besides, organizing numerous traditional sport items on the occasion, traditional menu is an important theme of the Liangmai Chaga Ngee.
The festival usually lasts for five days. On first day: It begins with "Chamimalapbo" (Making Fire) which head of the family comes and collect the fire to start their hearth with fresh firewood for cooking. On this very night they are to make and eat their own choice of foods. Second day is the day of "Npengphenbo" (totem shooting), early in the morning the selfless boys voluntarily go to the jungle to cut the tree for Npeng (totem). Npeng is cut by those whose parents are still alive and those who live a pure and holy life. They are to go for cutting only after being blessed by their parents. Npeng has to be made in resemblance to human being. Chicken feathers are placed on the head of Npeng and also eye, nose, mouth, ear, neck, heart and chest has to be marked with black colour. After everything is done, Npeng is tied on the top of the post. Keeping themselves pure and holy from sexual impurity and with a loud 'ho-hoing' proclaiming their forefather’s name, Npeng is shot with an arrow. Certain features are made on the spot where they could hit: if it happens to hit on the head - the enemy die of head pain; if on the neck - the one who shot will have plenty of rice; if on the heart - the enemy will die with much trouble; if on the right chest - the enemy will die in war; and if on the left chest - the one who shot will win many girls. If anyone can’t hit Npeng then the singkupao (priest) will take the Npeng stick (arrow) by hand and put it in the feet of Npeng as a sign of surrender. Those whose relatives died in the year were not to shot Npeng. Day Three: The following day was a day of sharing of meals - foods and drinks. Sharing of eating and drinking was followed by singing and dancing. Day Four: On this day, all the leftover food and drinks are distributed to the elderly people. The festival is so fascinating that young boys and girls reluctant to end-up the festival would sing:
“Chaga bam ni ye” (Don’t want to end up Chaga festival; we want to continue Chaga.) Day Five: This day was particularly for the elderly people who continue to drink and eat the leftover food and drinks which were called ganjung or kalumtiubo (eating leftover). Till leftover food was finished up, it was a taboo to do any domestic works. The grand celebration of Chaga will bring more rice, less war and less death in the village. So, the Liangmai considered Chaga as the best and biggest festival.

Earlier, as a preparation of Chaga Ngee, the people of Liangmai go for hunting, fishing, trapping and so on in search of delicious food for this festival and people usually eats only delicious food. During this festival married men and women are used to drink and eat from banana leaves whereas, the youth are to eat and drink from bamboo cups and plates. As part of Chaga Ngee, men and women have to use their own hearth in making dishes in order to purify themselves, because it is a taboo to have sex or even touch and eat food prepared by women till the festival ends. During this festival couples are not allow to sleep together and men are not allowed to touch women to maintain discipline and customary law of Liangmai. If men fail, bad luck follows them in the war. So men folk have to maintain discipline and not to defile themselves from such impurity things.

The main purpose of Chaga is to purify them so that no harm would happen to them from war, in hunting and even in their domestic works. Today, the disappearing values of the traditional beliefs and practices calls for the Liangmai Christians to emend and imply its essence in their day to day life. Because modernization has brought a radical changes in the life of the people that does not give sufficient alternative, which is congenial to people. This led the present
generation greatly influenced by outside culture that majority of our people do not know the importance of one’s own culture. Thus, rediscovering the traditional values is highly imperative that this will reinforce relevant Christian ethical principles congenial for today. Consequently, Christianizing Chaga Ngee would keep alive the age-old culture and tradition of the Liangmai people which will make Christianity meaningful and effective without losing our rich cultural and traditional heritages.

1.1.8 Dormitory System:

The dormitory is called Khangchiuky in Liangmai society. The khangchiu, a social institution is one of the most significant life vein customs in the Liangmai society. Liangmai society has got a high moral and disciplined pattern of life. All the boys who attained the period of teenage become the members of dormitory. It is compulsory for all the boys and girls to join in the dormitory. They have to attend this school (dormitory) usually at the night to enjoy till their marriages. The welfare of this school is for the purpose of corporate living and oneness of spirit. They learn knowledge of singing, dancing, disciplines and cultural activities. One most outstanding feature for the boys is to learn “Out Cry with Ho-ho”. The voice of this Ho-ho is a process of long chorus by a group of men folk uttering one after another in successive tunes of high, higher sound loud lower and the lowest voice. This is one of the most unique characteristics of the Nagas. This out cries (Ho-ho) performed in a specific manner at the occasion during function of festival, fighting or attacking their enemy etc. The outcry of the war whoop is not a sound to be described in a word, being fearful, shrilling and long continued, yelled with variation.
Likewise girls' dormitory is also called Liuchiaky. The girls too have their own dormitory. All the girls who attend the age of puberty are compulsorily join this dormitory system. Girls after getting married should not join this dormitory. It is the place where they learn the art of weaving, household works, good conduct and disciplines, songs, the art of dances, and other cultural activities are their chief duties in this institution. From here the Liangmai girls become efficient in handloom and make adequate clothes for their family. During festival they also sleep and spend time in this dormitory. There used to be competition between the Khangchiu and Liuchiu, the cultural activities of which keep the society alert, active and entertaining.

However, modern boys and girls are not attending the dormitory system now a day and most probably; it is due to the influence of the westernization and practices of Christianity in the society.

1.1.9 Position of Women in the Liangmai Society:

Liangmai society being patrilineal more privilege is given to males but in comparison with other community, Liangmai women seem to enjoy more power and privileges in the society. Women are given the right to remarry and select spouse according to their choice. The women play a vital role in running and maintaining the household and agriculture works (may not be true in case of modern Liangmai women); most of the domestic affairs are done by the women. They are also experts in the art of spinning and weaving different designs and some of them earned their livelihood by means of weaving. Not only that, Liangmai women also participates in the field of socio-economic, political, cultural...
and religious functions of the society. In regards with some function, restrictions are imposed on women. They are not allowed to participate in some of the ritual activities of the society. As for instance, women are not allowed to touch some of the articles used by the men. In fact, Liangmai women play a vital role in building up of economy of the society. They have a high and secure position in society and family.

1.1.10 Social Changes in Liangmai Society:

The Liangmai society has also undergone a tremendous change from traditional way of life to modern social system. Some changes are also visible in the traditional family system of the Liangmai. In earlier times, the large family has been given importance in society but in modern days most of the educated couple, in view of the economic consideration, prefer to have a small family with two or three children so as to have better economic condition and improvement way of living. The most important factor for the social change is the conversion to Christianity. Liangmai believed that they have achieved the economic stability, religious freedom and quality education only because of the spread of Christianity. Christianity has been characterized by the establishment of high quality schools throughout the Liangmai inhabited areas. The missionaries have established schools even in the most inaccessible areas and that is why the literacy rate is growing by leaps and bounds in Liangmai community. Through education, the Liangmai has made great change in their economic conditions and have attained economic and social security. The spread of education also necessitated the use of English, Hindi, and of course Manipuri and Nagamese along with mother tongue.
There is a drastic change in the use of household articles such as *Tasiangkoung* (wooden plate), *Chapaipiang* (made of bamboo) gourds, earthen pots, etc. are now replaced by modern household articles such as almirah, utensils made of steel, aluminum etc. with the latest designs which are available in the market such as Chairs, sofa, table, cup, and electronic things such as radio, tap, camera, mobile, television, refrigerator, washing machine and computer etc. were not used in traditional way of life but are widely use in present days.

There is a change in traditional marriage system of the Liangmai society. Traditionally, arranged marriage was very common but in modern days there is an increase in the numbers of love marriage. Changes are also seen in the position and role of women in the Liangmai society. Traditionally, the Liangmai women are not allowed to participate in the politics. They are not allowed to hold any post in the village council. With the introduction of democratic form of government and modern education the women are no longer prohibited to participate in politics. They are actively taking part in the field of politics in present days. Moreover, modern women with their education become more aware of their rights and duties.

Today many Liangmai women are employed in government services and NGOS. Traditionally, women were imparted training only in field of weaving, household works, good conduct and disciplines but now women are also given equal opportunities to learn anything. They began to enjoy more rights and responsibilities in the society. Thus there are a lot of changes in the Liangmai society from the traditional way of life to modern way of living.
1.2.1 Village Administration:

The administration of the village was carried on in general by the village chief of the council. He was responsible for the administration after consulting the village council elders.

Traditionally, all the administrative powers were vested in him but without the consent of the members of village authorities he was not regarded as the final authority to decide any disputes, thefts, quarrel in the villagers. The post of village chief (bampi) was not hereditary in Liangmai Society. He had the right to expel any undesirable character from his village. All criminal cases were dealt by chief assisted by this executive (baodi) or elders in accordance with customary laws.

The main functions of the village Authority are to maintain law and order of the village. The Village Authority is to be the managed by the committee for the smooth running of the governmental schools in the village. The Village Authority has also to look after the overall functioning of the school including absentees among the staffs.

The administration of the village is vested to the persons holding the posts given below:

1. bampi or wəndi ‘chairman’
2. məlin čap ‘vice chairman’
3. apai ‘court’
4. raosui ‘secretary’
1.2.2 Prohibition of Marriage Relationship:

Exogamy is the general rule of marriage in Liangmai community that is marriage from a different clan. Customary laws of Liangmai do not allow boys and girls to marry within same clan. Marriage is exogamous in Liangmai society. Those who get married within the same clans are socially condemned and it is an illegal form of marriage and even driven out from the village and became out caste. For example, a boy from pəməi clan cannot marry a girl from the same clan. Marriage within the same clans is one of the main factors increase in modern days. Monogamy form of marriage is common in the Liangmai society. Polygamy is also found in some cases but polyandry is not prevalent in the Liangmai society. Child marriage is not practiced in the society.

Marriage between the same clan is strictly prohibited. It is punishable according to the custom of the Liangmai society. However, marriage is quite permitted between the two clans viz, pəməi and niuəmai. On the other hand, among those clans, one clan cannot marry any girl from the same group, say, for example, čərenəməi cannot marry any girl from its own clan – like wise moriməi cannot marry any girl from its own group, as also in dainəmai group. It is therefore quite clear that any member of sub – clans, under pəməi can marry another person
belong to *niu mai* clan. But, with modernization and the coming of Christianity, young boys and girls within the same clan started to marry. But this type of marriage is not allowed by their parents and elders of the village.

### 1.2.3 Law of Property Inheritance

Liangmai society being patrilineal, the property is inherited by the sons. A man who had several sons could not inherit his entire father's property. According to Liangmai customs, the youngest son inherits the family property and he has to look after his parents. Other sons are also given some share of the properties if the parents are rich enough. In some cases daughters are also given some movable and immovable properties. The movable properties are cows, buffaloes, pigs, dresses, ornaments, utensils and many other domestic materials while the immovable properties includes residential house plot and cultivable lands.

The father of the family before his death or during his life time used to divide the properties amongst his sons. The youngest son gets a lion share of the property and treated as their heir and he had to look after his parents but if he failed in his responsibilities he could not claim the privilege of being the caretaker in the family.

### 1.2.4 Organization of the Study

The present work is organized in six chapters, excluding appendix and bibliography. The chapters are Introduction, review of literature, Phonology, Morphology, Syntax and Conclusion.
The introduction chapter contains a migration and origination of the Liangmai, about the people of Manipur, the clarification of the term Kacha Naga, social and cultural, important festival of Liangmai, dormitory system, position of women in the Liangmai society, social changes, law of inheritance, village administration and prohibition of marriage.

The second chapter deals with the literature review; the present review is based on a few selected books on Liangmai people as no linguistic work has been done on Liangmai. This is the first work on the Descriptive Analysis of Liangmai language. So, no literatures are available which can be used for the purpose of review. The third chapter discusses on phonology and morphophonemic, there are six distinctive vocalic phonemes in Liangmai language. These six vowel phonemes are divided into three groups as front, central and back vowels. These vowels again divided into three sub-groups as high, mid and low vowels. This establishes six vowels which can occur initially, medially and finally. Nine diphthongs are also available in Liangmai. It occurs in the word medial and final position and its occurrence in initial position is very rare. There are twenty consonantal phonemes in this language. It is found out that most of the consonants cannot occur in all the three positions of a word, i.e. initially, medially and finally. The consonantal phonemes like /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /v/, /l/, /m/ and /n/ in Liangmai can occur initially, medially and finally. However, the other phonemes like /c/, /ph/, /th/, /kh/, /g/, /s/, /l/, /r/, /z/ and /y/ does not occur finally. Hence, all the consonants in Liangmai occurs all the positions with the exception of /c/, /ph/, /th/, /kh/, /g/, /s/, /l/, /r/, /z/ and /y/. Liangmai makes use of consonant cluster in the initial, medial and final position. Most of the consonants which occur in the final clusters are the
loan words from English. The consonant sequences are also available in the medial position. Liangmai has three tones- rising, falling, level. There are some cases of external and internal Sandhi found in Liangmai.

The fourth chapter deals with Morphology in detail, where grammatical categories like noun pronoun, gender, number, case, classifier etc. are discussed and it is found out that Liangmai has no grammatical gender but has a natural gender. Human and animate nouns are referred to as masculine or feminine on the basis of natural sex. Consider the following example:

/maipiui/ ‘man’
/agatiupiu/ ‘thief male’
/maipui/ ‘woman’
/agatiupui/ ‘thief female’

In the case of animals the lexical item -/ci/ male vs /pui/, -/kiul/ vs /geel/ for male and female of pig and /req/ and -/puil/ are used to indicate male and female for birds. For example,

/matomiçi/ ‘ox’
/komici/ ‘goat’
/kabokkiu/ ‘pig (male)’
/mariuiry/ ‘cock’

/matompui/ ‘cow’
/komipui/ ‘she goat’
/kabakneeq/ ‘not given birth’
(male pig)
/mariuirupui/ ‘hen’

(female pig)
Liangmai makes use of classifiers for denoting the semantic classification of the referent on the basis of the qualities of the noun, i.e. its physical shape, size and state etc. Classifier in this language has predominantly mono-syllabic structure. Classifiers usually follow the noun.

The pronoun in Liangmai does not distinguish genders but it distinguishes three persons. All of these take case suffixes, but gender and number are not marked. In Liangmai, pronouns can be classified into the following categories:

1. Personal Pronouns
2. Demonstrative pronouns
3. Interrogative Pronouns
4. Reflexive Pronouns
5. Possessive pronoun
6. Indefinite Pronouns

In Liangmai language, there are nine cases. Nominative -/iniul/, Accusative -/itu/, Instrumental-/niu/, Dative -/len/, Locative -/gol-/lom/, Genitive-/gul/, Ablative -/gulsul-/lamsul/, Sociative-/suisul/, and Benefactive-/len/. Negative markers in Liangmai follow the verb and precede the aspect marker. There are five negative markers- (i) /mæk/ (ii) /lok/ (iii) /du/ (iv) /mai/ (v) /mane/ (vi) /tukhe/. All these negative markers precede the aspect marker. The negative copula-/haye/ is used to express negation in existential constructions, locative predicates and possessive sentences. /hai/ and /umh/ are used only in informal conversation.
The fifth chapter on syntax briefly deals with the grammar of Liangmai. It is an agglutinative language having the characteristics of SOV language. Various constituents like noun phrase, verb phrase, adjective phrase, adverb phrase etc. are discussed here briefly. Different types of clauses, sentences, including various kind of Wh- question, negation and interrogative sentences are also discussed along with examples in this chapter.

The chapter sixth is conclusion; this chapter sums up and integrated the research findings in the preceding chapters to present a comprehensive idea about the linguistic structure of Liangmai.