CHAPTER II
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Class Structure

The early societies in mainland India was divided on the basis of Caste viz. Brahma, Kshtriya, Vaishya and Sudras which is determined by birth. The practice of such type of Caste system among the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh is completely absent. However, there is an existence of social stratification based on division of labour and has been introduced among many tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. There exists some class structure among some tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. For example, Wanchos had three class systems, where intermarriage is prohibited between them; the Akas had three divisions –the aristocracy, the middle class and the slaves. The Sherdukpen who came under Bodic group has two class systems called Thongs and Chhao. At first glimpses these system looks quite similar to caste system. However, Verrier Elwin argues against the existence of caste system in Arunachal Pradesh:

There has never been anything like real caste or untouchability in NEFA, and it is a point sometimes made by missionary and N.N.C. Propaganda that we may bring this and other inequitable ideas into the hills.

The Memba society were divided into two classes, the master and slave. The slaves are those, who are not from any of the Memba clan and have been captured or purchased from other neighbouring tribes. The slaves were generally treated as asset. The Memba society were classified into three groups of Lama, bureaucrat and

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commoners. *Lamas* are those group whose duty was to study, teach and perform religious rituals, the bureaucrat on the other hand was those group who perform administrative duty and the commoners were those whose duty were to till the agricultural land, to breed cattle and to engage in trade activity. It was according to the talent and capacity of the individual that suit themselves into any of the discussed activities. The clan from any Memba community was eligible for any of the profession and they nullifies the idea of control of particular clan in a particular profession.

**Family**

The Memba *khemjang* (family) is patriarchal and patrilineal where the head ship descendent is followed through male line like the one most of the family in North-East India, except in Meghalaya state where the head ship descendent is followed through matrilineal.⁵

A Memba family comprises of husband, wife, son, daughter, father, mother, brother, sister, daughter-in-laws, uncles, cousins, nephew and their descendants most of whom often live under one roof or in a group of roof. They regards father as the head of the house and administrator of the joint property. If the male head of the family dies, the eldest member of the family or widow if the sons are minor or the brother of the deceased male head became the head of the family subsequently. On the other hand if the son of the deceased male head is an adult and matures enough then he is eligible to become the head of the family. However, during the time of

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important decision making then they usually takes the advice of the mother, brothers and uncle.

Off late, where most of the families are nuclear but the system of patriarchal and patrilineal is still in vogue. The Memba family usually is a joint one and a close link maintained between all the family members, directly or indirectly provides a measure of social security to them. Where, a man could rely on any of the family member during distress period and while leaving for distant place at least the other member of the family looks after the house and children in his absence. The joint family system also provides defensive shield for the family against the raid and attack from the neighboring tribes. The family stayed jointly till the division of joint family property after the death of their parents or when their sons gets married. The system continued vise versa or otherwise is left itself, a joint family in coming future would tend to increase in size until became so large as to be unmanageable and leads to break-up. The right to inherit property by the female member is absent in most of the cases, but the female inheritance of property is possible only when the family has no male child and wife having no son till the death of the husband. The joint family property does not include individual property such as ornaments and gift which female member receives especially during the time of marriage. The personal earnings of the individual during the time of trade are also regarded as individual property.\(^6\)

The most of the Memba families practice monogamy where husband is married to one wife only. However, the instance of practice of polygamy also can be seen where a male member of a family could take more than one wife. According to

\(^6\) Lama Pema Chonga Kigar, *op.cit.*
Gebu Sona, “Thimpu Dorsam had five wives, unfortunately he died without producing any children. He had also served as Goan bura (G.B), under the Government of India administrative system. Phurpa Phillay had four wives and Lama Sang Khandu Sona of 74 years of age, resident of Sing-ber village has two wives.”

Those who had enormous property and can support more than one wife in their family mostly practiced polygamy. The system also helps indirectly by providing more labour force in the household and agriculture activity. Another reason for polygamy must have been the desire to get offspring. For example, Thimpu Dorsam, having five wives, had no children and it may be possible that in order to get children he continuously married for five times. Therefore, in order to get children the male member is usually made to marry another girl. The male member of the family is considered as the head of the house and inheritance of property right goes to male member of the family that also leads to polygamy. If sometimes the wife continuously gave birth to girl child then the husband usually takes another wife in lieu of getting male child.

In Memba polygamy system, the relationship between son and the mother is not difficult to establish and normally practice is that all the mothers are recognise as the mother of every children. In matter of sexual right, there is unspoken understanding among the wives which keeps the matter going without any problem. The eldest wife of the family generally has control and command over other co-wives. The eldest wife distributes the work to the co-wives. They perform and respond to the assigned works on mutual understanding and cooperation.

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7 Gebu Sona, age 37 years, businessperson, Menchuka HQ, Menchuka Circle, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, interviewed on 16-8-2014.
Kinship and Genealogy

Kinship is a family relation through which member of the family is identified by the other member of the family. The Memba kinship terminology can be classified into descriptive and classification system. In descriptive system, the kinship terminology is used for particular individual relation such as for father and mother. However, in classification system the same kinship terminology is used for a several group of person in the family. The classification system shows that, same respect is given to the person who comes under this category. The classification system of kinship terminology is also used for addressing person belonging from the same clan.

Table No. 2.1: Kinship Terminology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Memba</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>References to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Abo</td>
<td>father</td>
<td>Father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Ama</td>
<td>mother</td>
<td>Mother.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Im</td>
<td>Grandfather/maternal grandfather</td>
<td>Grandfather, Grandfather brothers, Maternal grandfather, Maternal grandfather brothers, elderly old man from the same clan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Ayi</td>
<td>Grandmother/maternal grandmother</td>
<td>Grandmother, grandfather brothers wives, Maternal grandmother, Maternal grandfather brothers wives, wives of elderly old man from the same clan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Au</td>
<td>son</td>
<td>Son.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Ajo</td>
<td>Elder brother</td>
<td>Elder brother from family and clan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Pingya-chung</td>
<td>Younger brother</td>
<td>Younger brother from family and clan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Ugu</td>
<td>uncle</td>
<td>Father brothers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>ashang</td>
<td>Maternal uncle</td>
<td>Maternal father brothers and wife brothers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Aama</td>
<td>Aunt</td>
<td>Wife of father brothers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Aug-au</td>
<td>Grand son</td>
<td>Sons’ son.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Ojong-au</td>
<td>cousin</td>
<td>Brothers’ son.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>kyogo</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>Husband.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>nam</td>
<td>Daughter-in-law</td>
<td>Sons’ wife.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>ann</td>
<td>Sister-in-law</td>
<td>Wife sisters.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Field study\(^8\)

Genealogy is a study through which the origin or descendant of family and clan is explained. The term *nitin* may consider as appropriate word to refer to

\(^8\) Field Study done in Menchuka circle between 2013-2015.
genealogy in Memba language. The Memba counts their genealogical line through the male descendant of the family from ancestor to great grandfather, grandfather, father and sons. The genealogy also helps to know the idea, as to how many generations a particular family inhabited an area. The genealogy information is forwarded orally from one generation to another for many centuries. Following are some of the genealogy chart of Memba family.

Table No. 2.2: Genealogy chart of Sarjo clan of Nima Chanden Sarjo family.

![Genealogy chart of Sarjo clan of Nima Chanden Sarjo family](chart.png)

Sources: Field study

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9 Interview with Pema Khandu Gyana, retired senior teacher, Menchuka HQ, Menchuka Circle, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, interviewed on 06-6-2013.

10 Nima Chanden Sarjo, 72 years, Menchuka Village, Menchuka Circle, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, interviewed on 22-7-2014.
Table No. 2.3: Genealogy chart of Norsang Onge family.

Sources: Field study

11 Norsang Onge, 92 years, Diching-Tang east, Menchuka Circle, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, interviewed on 5-4-2015.
Table No. 2.4: Genealogy chart of Dorsom clan of Dorjee Dorsom family.

Dorsam
  ↓
Sangdor
  ↓
Dorsang
  ↓
Onge
  ↓
Norbu Onju
  ↓
Tenzin
  ↓
Dawa Tsering
  ↓
Dawa
  ↓
Topke
  ↓
Timpu
  ↓
Pema Dorjee
  ↓
Samden
  ↓
Khandu
  ↓
Sangbu
  ↓
Dindup
  ↓
Nima Tsering
  ↓
Dorado Purbha
  ↓
Patang
  ↓
Dorjee Purba
  ↓
Dawa Dorjee
  ↓
Jambey
  ↓
Dindu
  ↓
Purba Tsering
  ↓
Tsering Penden
  ↓
Lakpa Dorjee
  ↓
Pemba Tsering

Sources: Field study\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{12} Dorjee Dorsom, 40 years, Thargelling Village, Menchuka Circle, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, interviewed on 3-4-2015.
Table No. 2.5: Genealogy chart of Kigar clan of Pema Chonga Kigar family.

Samdin Kigar
   ↓
Adaa
   ↓
Lhawang
   ↓
Rikgin
   ↓
Chugui Dorjee
   ↓
Dangsam Penjor
   ↓
Tsangye
   ↓
Tenzin Lera
   ↓
Onge
   ↓
Gambu Wangdi
   ↓
Leh Tsering
   ↓
Dapak
   ↓
Ojong
   ↓
Karma Wangd
   ↓
Rinjin Tsewang
   ↓
Karma Wangda
   ↓

Karma
   ↓
Dawa Tsering
   ↓
Pema Chonga
   ↓
Rinjin Lera
   ↓
Pema Kandu
   ↓
Gebu
   ↓
Passang Wanchuk
   ↓
Karma Samduk
   ↓
Dembo
   ↓
Pema Chong Kandu
   ↓
Pema Kandu
   ↓
Gebu
   ↓
Passang Wanchuk
   ↓
Karma Samduk
   ↓
Dembo
   ↓
Nima
   ↓

Sources: Field study\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{13} Lama Pema Chonga Kigar, \textit{op.cit.}
Table no. 2.6: Genealogy chart of Sona clan of Pemba Sona family.

Sources: Field study

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Pemba Sona, 47 years, Junior Teacher (J.T), Galling Village, Menchuka Circle, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, interviewed on 4-4-2015.
Table No. 2.7: Genealogy chart of Naksang clan of Tashi Naksang family.

Pemba Naksang
   ↓
   Onge

Doge
   ↓
Samden
   ↓
Buch
   ↓
San Tshering

Lakchung
   ↓
Tashi
   ↓
Dorship
   ↓
Nima
   ↓
Purpa

Pemba
   ↓
Dawa

Pema
   ↓
Dorjee

Sources: Field study\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{15} Tashi Naksang, \textit{op.cit.}
Table No. 2.8: Genealogy chart of Philley clan of Tashi Philley family.

Sources: Field study\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{16} Tashi Philley, \textit{op.cit.}
Table No. 2.9: Genealogy chart of Gyana clan of Pema Khandu Gyana family.

Sources: Field study\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{17} Pema Khandu Gyana, \textit{op.cit.}
Table No. 2.10: Genealogy chart of Goiba clan of Kessang Goiba (G.B) family.

Sources: Field study\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{18} Kessang Goiba, 52 years, G.B, Barangang Village, Menchuka Circle, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, interviewed on 24-6-2014.
Table No. 2.11: Genealogy of Goiba Clan of Tashi Goiba (G.B) Family.

Sources: Field study\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{19}Tashi Goiba, 67 years, G.B, Menchuka Village, Menchuka Circle, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, interviewed on 21-7-2013.
Table No. 2.12: Genealogy chart of Goiba clan of Tseden Dorjee Goiba.

Sources: Field study

Kessang Goiba, (G.B), *op.cit.*
Table No. 2.13: Genealogy chart of Chukla clan of Tsering Chukla family.

Dundo Ao Nombey Chukla

Lindhu

Yesar  Pegey  Karma Cheden  Dawa  Teki Dolok

Norbu Onge  Phinjo

Lam (see Table No. 2.14)  Dayor

Dorjee Phinjo (settled in Tibet)

Peching  Nima  Rinchin

Tsering

Phinjo  Singtung  Nima Dorjee

Norbu  Phurba

Pema Lera  Dorjee Phinjo

Sange  Lobsang

Pema  Pema Khandu  Dorsub

Nima  Tenzin

Cheng  Chengjor  Nima

Dhorjee Khandu  Thinley

Dindu  Nima Dorjee

Sange  Nima  Tenzing

Dharampal  Passang Dorjee  Sange Phinjo  Nima  Dorjee Khandu

Sources: Field study\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{21} Tsering Chukla, \textit{op.cit}. 
Table No. 2.14: Genealogy of Chukla clan of Lam Chukla Family.

Sources: Field study\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{22} Ib\textit{id}. 
Marriage (Nam-Lengen)

Marriage is the basis of formation of family in human society, which affects the network of kinship and occupies an important place in its social set up. According to D.D. Sharma:

*Marriage, though, is not a predetermined unavoidable event, as some may believe, yet it is certainly an important event in the life cycle of a human being. Out of three important events, viz. birth, marriage and death, of the human cycle, having a mate, i.e. marriage, is an event which every human being with a sound mind and health would invariably like to welcome, may be driven by animal instinct or by religious compulsion.*

The continuation of line of the family and kinship, the nam-lengen (marriage) is a necessary institution, which regulate proper relation between man and woman in a Membas society. It is through marriage that one could beget child for continuation of kinship line, provide more labour force to work in the field and contributing prosperity in economic condition of the family. The marriage is looked upon as a sacred bond, which requires a very complicated religious ceremony and preparation. They strictly prohibits marriage among the same clan and is forbidden among the person with a common paternal ancestor. The provision of parallel and cross cousin marriage is permissible where marriage with son of mothers’ brother or with daughter of father's sister often takes place. The marriage outside their migii (tribe) was not practiced earlier. Because the Membas people being Buddhist thought themselves to be superior then their neighbouring tribes like Ramos, Pailobos, Buri

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24 Pema Chukla, *op.cit.*
and Bokers. On the other hand the latter (tribes) who followed animist also consider it a taboo to marry the people from Memba tribe who follow different religion. However, marriage relation with their Tibetan counterparts was acceptable in the society because of the same religious belief. Unlike mainland Indian where dowry is paid to the bridegroom family, in Memba society the dowry is given to the bride family as bride price. They practiced child marriage, where the age of marriage is not fixed by hard and fast rules. Generally, boy are made to marry after the attainment of puberty and girl immediately after her first menstruation, before the age of sixteen.

The child marriage system was a continued and practiced even many years after the attainment of statehood by Arunachal Pradesh. A rich Memba person who can afford bride price easily use to have more than one wife. The age variation between the husband and wife is of three to five years but in case of polygamy practice, the age variation between the husband and wife can often be up to thirty years.

The *Lo-Kham or Kegar* (astrological calculation) is an important component and plays an important role in marriage system of Memba society. The astrological match is required for the selection of best couple. Marriage in Memba society can be classified into seven forms which are marriage by arranged, marriage by love, marriage by escape, marriage by capture, marriage by service, marriage by exchange and widow remarriage. Of these seven forms, the marriage by capture is no longer practiced in modern times and mostly follows arranged marriage.

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25 M.M. Dhasmana, op.cit, p. 93.
26 The 22nd Deb Tashi Philley married one Tibetan girl and organised grand feast in Dechang-Tang village. The girl after staying for few years with him returned to Tibet and never returned. Later he married a girl from his own community.
Marriage by Arrangement

The Memba used to follow two types of chang-Sey (arranged marriage) earlier. The first, the family already in advance fixes the marriage of their children. They fix it even before the birth of their children and when the fixed girl child attain the age of eight, the family of the boy visits the girl house. In which they perform the process called *Kham-gha*, where they give girl family an amount of ghee, lamp and other gifts. During the *Kham-gha*, the boy family declares *Mon-tak-Drila-Yuwa-Kur*, which means that from now onwards the girl is the property of their son and their relation as of now is like a sword attached with its handle. After *Kham-gha* for any reason whatsoever if the girl family decides not to send her in the boy family then they had to pay very heavy compensation in the form of money, domestic animal and in some cases property also. The second form is chang-Sey (arranged marriage), the marriage between the boy and girl is also fixed by their family, but often the consent of boy or girl are taken into consideration by the parents. The process generally starts from boy family side, who without giving any information first select the girl and collects her horoscope. Then they give the horoscope of the girl along with the boy to astrologer for astrological calculation without informing the girl family. The astrologer then verify the marriage compatibility and tell the boy family whether the girl is recommendable, whether there are any sign of astrological conflict or any other hurdles. If astrologer finds out that the marriage will bring bad luck to the couple, then the boy family will immediately cancel the idea and starts looking for another girl. In case if they find the marriage compatible and both will have good relation, then boy family appoints *Nyamber* or *Yamber* (middle man) to take their proposal to the girl family. The *Nyamber* selected is most probably belongs to a respectable, reputed, experienced and an elderly person from the society who also
has good relations with the girl family. The horoscope of boy is also sent with the Nyamber to girl family for astrological calculation. The Nyamber on behalf of boy family gives the proposal to the girl family, who if accepted, Nyamber will return to the boy family house and will give them the news of acceptance. After the acceptance message the boy family on a fixed date after one year as per the convenience. On the fixed date, they carry one kilogram of butter, chang, rice, barley, meat and three khada (ceremonial scarf) along with them and visit the girl house with Nyamber for Lang-che. Beside these, they also present clothing and cloth material to the girl family. The quality of present is mostly dependent on economic condition of the boy or girl family. The girl family welcomes the boy family and introduces each other. During Lang-che they also invites relatives and villagers of girl side. The boy family provides the invitees with one or two Kilogram meat with one Khada as token. The boy family officially proposes the girl hand as nam (bride) for their boy and khada is exchanged between the head of the family. The boy family stays for two to three days in the girl family, where they finalize the date for marriage ceremony and Dikh-chang or nam-rin (bride price) are made with lots of discussion and negotiation. They fixed the date for marriage with the help of Lama. The longer the period the more convenient for the preparation, but in order to prevent any change of decision by either family, they fix the marriage ceremony date within one to three month after the discussion. After the finalization, the boy family leaves for their home and starts preparing according to the requirement. During the whole process, sometimes the girl is not informed of her engagement and was sent to a relative’s house located in another village. They informed is given only after her return and if she opposes then her parents and relatives force her to accept the destiny. Thereby, the girl many a time accepts after lots of request and persuasion by
her parents and relatives. On the other side, the boy family asks their relatives to make good quality *chang* and butter as contribution for the ceremony. They also asked them to contribute rice, wheat, maize and millet for marriage feast on the auspicious occasion. There after on the fixed auspicious day the boy family along with their relatives, friends, guest and *Lama* visit the girl house where they follows and celebrates either a *Bha-sang* (grand expensive marriage) or *Keh-drun* (Small and less expensive marriage) according to the economic condition of the family where they sacrifice a pig and *Balang* or *Mithun* (Bosfrontalis). The boy family generally bore the expenses of the marriage. The boy and the girl wears the best wedding dress and ornaments during the ceremony. *Lama* performs *Jha-gan-Lha-Sang* and *Darshe-Lho-dung*, a religious rituals and prayer required for the marriage ceremony of the bride and bridegroom. During prayer one bachelor male member from the boy family whose horoscope is of good one is made to put *Dad-har* (an arrow decorated with four different colour of ribbon) into the head of girl. The boy and girl are made to take oath before the family, relatives, *Lama* and God to live harmoniously. The bride price is also paid during this day in the presence of witness. The *Lama*, *Nyamber*, guest and relatives present in the ceremony also plays the role of a witness of the boy and girl marriage. The guest and relatives present in the marriage gives money with *Khada* as gift to bride and bridegroom. After the compilation of all the rite and celebration, the boy family begins to prepare for their departure early in the next morning. During departure the girl family provide the newly wed couple with gift such as *Khada*, cloth, blanket, household utensils, tea bricks, *chang* and *butter*. They give bride with lots of ornaments as a token of love from her family. Some of well to do Memba family also give away slave to the bride and bridegroom to do their service as a gift. The system of giving a slave as a gift in marriage is called *Mizap*. 
Next day early in the morning, the groom family with bride starts departing. The departure starts with prayer recited by lamas for the journey. Along with them some of the bride family member, one Lama called Nga-Chang, one girl dressed similar as bride called Bara-Gema whose horoscope is similar to bride, another girl dressed similar as bride called Bara-Chunga whose horoscope is opposite to bride, one bride-maid called Bumo-lau, two Nyamber from girl side as witness, six male and female member from bride village and two to three number of slaves to carry load also goes with them to see the house of bridegroom where they will be staying for three days. The girl family provides departure team with light refreshment to eat on their way to home. Upon reaching their home some of the family member, already waiting outside the house with Lama welcomes them by performing Jha-Gan-Lhasang ritual. Before entering, the bridegroom's house, Nga-Chang and bride party perform Tsang-Sargim, Conge-Tochok, Bak-lhue to keep away bad spirit, Tsango-Thue by throwing holy water and prays for the well being of bride, bridegroom and family. After the ritual, they enter the house and gathers in the common room where the boy family serve them Chesok Temdi (mixture of fruit) and chulpi. After entry of the bride party the bridegroom's family again performs a rite called Yamg-ko where they put another dad-har into the prayer room of the house. In the same evening, they organises a grand feast for the relatives and guest. They entertain the bride party by performing song and dances. The bride party on the other hand gives one khada as token to each participant. In the late night before sleeping the bridegroom family performs Tsang-Sargim (offering to god). On the second day, they again perform Tsang-Sargim rite for the family and in 12:00 clock noon they performs another marriage rite called Tandal-Bare-drik, where one boy sits with bride and bridegroom in a dice. The bride party who came in the house gives khada and gift to the bride
and bridegroom. After the ceremony, they again celebrate the night with dance and singing. Before going for sleeping the bridegroom family again perform *Tsang-Sargim* rite.

On the third day, the morning again starts with the performing of *Tsang-Sargrim* rite. This day also followed by vote of thanks giving ceremony called *Tashi-ma-Lhum*. For the execution of ceremony, they select three persons from the bridegroom's party. Here all the bride’s party give one *khada* to bridegroom's father, three selected person and ties *khada* in a central post of the kitchen and prayer hall. The *khada* tied in the kitchen is for the bridegroom's family and the *khada* tied in the prayer hall is for the bridegroom's *Lama*. The bridegroom's father also takes the *khada* given to the three selected person. The *Lama* gives the *khada* taken from the prayer hall to the persons who helped the bridegroom's family during the marriage ceremony with some amount of money. On the next day the brides party who came with bride return by praying and giving blessings for happy life to bride and bridegroom in the coming future.  

**Marriage by Love**

Love marriage happens when both girl and boy love each other. The family of both the boy and the girl is unknown about the relation. But when they tell their parents about their likes and decision for marriage. Then family of both party meet each other and fix the date for marriage. The process for the marriage celebration is same as in arranged marriage and only differences is that here in love marriage the boy and girl marry according to their choice.  

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27 Lama Pema Chonga Kigar, *op.cit.*  
28 Kessang Goiba, *ASM*, *op.cit.*
Marriage by Escape

The escape marriage happens when the boy and the girl like each other but either family has not provided consent for the marriage. The other situation generally occurs when their astrological calculations do not match or bride price is too high for the boy family. Then left with no other alternative the boy and girl escape from their respective house and take shelter in their relatives or friends house until both families agrees for their marriage. If a family denies accepting the marriage then the couple marries without permission of the parents and lives independently. In most of the case, family member generally accept them after they have a child and provides them with their share of property.29

Marriage by Capture

The situation of marriage by capture or abduction emerges when the boy likes the girl whom he had seen somewhere in relatives or friends’ house and desperately falls in love with her, but the girl refuses his proposals. In order to get the girl the boy family member sends a proposal for the girl hand and they on the other hand rejects the proposal. The situation makes the boy so angry that in order to get the girl anyhow he adopts the policy of capturing the girl. The capture of girl usually takes place when her family is not at home or if the she is alone in agriculture field. The boy performs the entire operation with the help of friends and family members. The captured girl is taken to the boy house and is forced to accept the boy as husband. The situation sometimes becomes more complicated when boy forcefully

29 Pema Chukla, *op. cit.*
seduces the girl to have physical relation against her wishes during the captivity, so that after which the girl is compelled to become his wife and stay with him.\(^\text{30}\)

**Marriage by Service**

In marriage by service, the boy proposes to serve the girl family by staying at their house for a fixed period as fixed by the girl family. The motive behind the proposed service is to fulfill the alternative of bride price demanded by the girl family. This situation arises when the boy family is poor and is not in a position to pay the high bride price demanded by the girl family. In most cases girl family do not object the proposal and allow the boy to serve. During this period, the boy does everything to appease girl family and the girl families carefully judge his character and capabilities. At the end of fixed period of serving, they allows boy to marry the girl without taking any bride price. Another form of marriage by service occurs when girl parents demand service from the boy with a condition that he should stay permanently in their home. These cases occur when parents have an only girl child and the boy is poor, orphan or semi-orphan. The property of the girl parents becomes property of the boy after their death.\(^\text{31}\)

**Marriage by Exchange**

The marriage by exchange can be classified into two forms. In the first form, the exchange takes place when the boy family proposes for the girl hand whose brother has already proposed the boy sister. In this case, both the parents decide not to take bride price and jointly share the marriage ceremony expenditure. In these form they only followed the exchange of girls between the two families. The second form is a sort of girl sale where a bride is exchanged for some sort of property. A

\(^{30}\) Kessang Goiba, (G.B), *op.cit.*

\(^{31}\) Thinley Sona, *op.cit.*
person who already has a wife and wants to acquire more wives usually adopts this system. The bought girl usually belongs from a poor family and there by marriage takes place without any ceremony.\footnote{Tashi Naksang, \textit{op.cit.}}

**Widow Remarriage**

When the husband dies, they allow widow to remarry. Generally, the \textit{yuk-chu-am} (widow) automatically gets married to deceased husband's brother. In this system, the widow sometimes gets the status of second or third wife if the brother of deceased husband is already married. This system helps the widow and her children to stay in the same house of the family. The children of the widow are treated equally because of the same family relation. In such case no elaborate ceremony is done. However, if the widow does not get married in the same family and is married to another person of same clan of husband or any person in the society, then the deceased husband's family claim bride price from the person. In case if widow refuses not to remarry and decides to stay as it is then she gets high respect and is entitled every right as a caretaker of her deceased husband's property until the son became adults.\footnote{Tashi Philley, \textit{op.cit.}}

**Divorce**

In early days, there was no room for divorce in Memba society, where they consider marriage as permanent and sacred bond. If the wife was errant than she lose most of her right in the family and sometimes in order to punish her, the husband also remarries another girl to look after the house. Here the errant wife was not
entitled to remarry even if she demands it. However, there is acceptance in cases where if there comes no message from husband who went for trading or hunting purpose and did not return for many years then women somehow with the consent of husband family enter into remarriage on the ground that the person might have died. Another cases, where the wife runaway with another person and settled in another place for many years. Then the person with whom the she escaped pays the fine double the amount of bride price. In both the above mentioned cases the definition of divorce cannot be given. Now days divorce has become quite common in Memba society, which shows the reflection of society changes. Where divorce rate of the young generation are much higher than that of the older generation.\textsuperscript{34}

**Child**

Memba regard the *tuk-tho-thongon* (pregnancy) of a married woman and birth of a *tuk-toh* (child) in their society as a very auspicious and happy occasion. They consider it most important turning point in their life. The stages had to be followed by various domestic rites that is to be performed by the family. It starts with, when a woman became pregnant they call the *Lama* to their house and ask him to pray for the good health of the baby in the womb and the mother which will ensure the birth of good and healthy child. They also visit *gomp* (monastery) for prayer at regular interval during the period of nine month when the mother carries the child in her womb. The elderly and experienced member of the family advice the mother about what is needed to do and what to eat during the time of pregnancy. They do not allow pregnant women to do laborious work and advised to take rest for most of the time. At the end of nine months when the women suffers labor pain then they informed and call an elderly women from family or from the village experience in

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid.
delivering of birth for help. During labor pain, they give woman a good and strong quality of *chang* to drink which works as painkiller so that she will get some relief from pain. Some hours after the labor pain the mother delivers the child and is separated from mother by cutting of umbilical cord by the elderly women with the help of knife sterilize in hot water. They then washed the newborn baby with warm water and handles the newborn child to the mother for breastfeeding. The whole process of delivery takes place in a separate room in the house where they do not allow children and male member of the family to enter. After the successful delivery, they then inform the husband and the family member with the gender of the child viz. *au* (boy) or *bumu* (girl). The birth of new baby brings joy and happiness in the family. The family member records the time, day and date of birth of the child. On next day, they inform the relatives and girl family about the newborn baby. After hearing the news of the newborn, they visit their son-in-law with presents like cloth, butter, meat and *chang*. The family organise small feast after five to seven days from the birth of child. It is during this day that they call on *Lama* to perform rites and to gives name for the newborn baby. The recorded date and time of the baby's birth was given to Lama with *chang*, butter, millet, rice and one *khada* as offering for preparation of horoscope of the baby, which will give information of the future of the child up to his/her death. It almost takes more than a month for Lama to deliver and finish the horoscope of the child. The mother breastfeed the new born baby only upto six or seven months and starts giving first solid food of rice, millet or paddy mixed with curd or butter to the child. Even after starting of solid food, the mother breastfeed her child at regular interval for one year or more. In every year on the child birthday, the parents with their child visit *gomp* for praying and offer
Thanksgiving to God. These trends are still continued to be practiced in Memba society which shows the importance of child in the life of parents.\textsuperscript{35}

The childhood life was generally a happy and pampered one but as soon as child begins to walk properly, they are engaged in household activity. Some of the wealthy family does not allow their children to do work and always attached them with one slave. The slaves’ duty was to look after the child of their master and to do all the work as commanded by their children. Though boy and girl child are taken care of and treated equally by their parents. In Memba society sons are looked upon as great blessing bestowed upon them by God. Because in their society sons are almost essential, to perform funeral rites for his family and ensuring their safe transit to the other world. They believe that it will also lead to their rebirth in good and prosperous family in future. Son is also necessary, without whom the family line would disappear. The girl on the other hand is considered as one who will become the member of her husband’s family.

If a Memba couple has more than one son then there prevails a system, whereby each son will have to take up different profession. Suppose if a couple had three sons, then eldest son had to become \textit{Lama} as to spread God’s teaching, second son had to become a soldier where whenever he is called for duty he had to go and youngest son had to serve his father and mother. In case of two sons then first son becomes either \textit{Lama} or soldier and second son serves parents.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{35} Tashi Goiba, \textit{op.cit.}
\textsuperscript{36} Thinley Sona, \textit{op.cit.}
Education

Every Memba male children and even adult person who are interested in learning and becoming a *Lama* are allowed to study. The children could join for education after the attainment of seven years. In early days, for education, the Memba followed two types of system. In the first system, the educational training of the student takes place at the *gomp* which act as a school under *Lama* as teacher. For the admission, the student along with his parents should seek permission from the *head lama* of the *gomp* or the *Lama* with whom he wants to study, during which they offered the *Lama* with butter, wheat, millet or rice, tea and one *khada*. If *Lama* finds the boy eligible as required then they gives admission to him as student. After joining, the student had to shave off their hair and had to wear yellow and red robe. The students were expected to treat their master with utmost reverence obeying all his orders.

During the initial period the students, stays at home for some years from where they regularly attain the *gomp* or house of the *Lama* to study. Every day, they had to wake-up early in the morning and should go to *gomp*, where they had to start the day by cleaning the premises, prepare water and other necessary work required for prayer before starting of the class. The teacher for promotion of the student conducts examination every year orally. After the attainment of education for a particular year from home, their parents sends them to *gomp* for further study where they had to stay and learn for many years. The system was highly followed during the time of *Lama cheoje Lingpo*. But after his death the system of teaching student in the *Gomp* came to an end and only the system of educating children in the house of *Lama* is in practice now days. In this system, the student had to stay in the house of t
Lama till the completion of his study. During which the student had to do all the household activity of his master where they had to fetch water, cook food, collect firewood from the forest, take domestic animals for rearing and also had to do cultivate his master's agriculture land. The student had to follow and participate with his teacher during the time of ritual practice. Through which they learns the technique of making various kind of amulets and statue required during the ritual. The students were also provided with flute to play, which is necessary as initial practice for blowing piper in the Gomp, and while performing ritual when he becomes a Lama. It almost takes nine to twelve years to complete the education.\textsuperscript{37}

The main subject of the study was the Kanjur and Tanjur, a religious text of Tibetan Buddhism. For mastery in kanjur and Tanjur long hours and years of devotion and readyness were required. The teacher will instruct the student sitting in the floor of gomp by rote, and the students were made to repeat verses after verses of Kanjur and Tanjur daily for many hours, until they mastered it. This mnemonic system of teaching helps teachers and students to preserve the Kanjur and Tanjur for posterity. The Memba gave more emphasis towards Tanjur. The student did not confine their study wholly to Kanjur and Tanjur text. They also study Tibetan script called Ujhe, holy text commonly called Gter-ma and other text of religious importance.\textsuperscript{38}

In Gomp or in the house of Lama besides teaching religious preaching and practice, another educational activity like astrology, astronomy, medicine, painting, music, architecture, law and sculpture art mostly in context of religious value were also taught to the student who shows interest towards it.

\textsuperscript{37} Lama Pema Chonga Kigar, \textit{op.cit.}

\textsuperscript{38} Interview with Lama Sange Khandu Sona, 74 years, Singbir Village, Menchuka Circle, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, interviewed on 26-3-2015.
Many of the Gomp in Tibet might have given training to postulants, but some of these Gomp such as De-pung, Tashi-Ihunpo, seera and Gah-Idan acquired a special reputation as universities for centre of learning during those days.\textsuperscript{39} In Arunachal Pradesh, the Tawang Gompa constructed by Lorde Gyatso popularly known as Mira Lama in the middle of 17\textsuperscript{th} century is a reputed centre of Tibetan Buddhist learning.\textsuperscript{40} The Memba student used to learn in Samden-Yangchu Gomp located in Menchuka and for higher study they used to go to the gomp located in the Gaza province of Tibet.\textsuperscript{41}

The establishment of the Gomp and Lamas are supported by the revenue, offering and donation provided by the devotees. The students were taught free of cost and no fees were asked by the teacher. The student on the other hand repaid him by reverent service.\textsuperscript{42} After the completion of the course and training, the student visits the Rempoche (head Lama) resident with one khada as offering gratitude and request, the head Lama to accept him as Lama and officially register his name in the Lama organization. Next he visit the general Secretary of the Lama institution and asks for the same.

For the induction of qualified student in the Lama organization, the Head Lama and elder Lamas conducts meeting after receiving formal request from the student for final decision. If the member present in the meeting accepts the decision to induct the qualified student in their organization, then on the very next day they summon the student along with his family members to present in the next day.

\textsuperscript{39} L. Austin Waddell, \textit{op.cit}, pp. 188-189.
\textsuperscript{41} Deb Tashi Philley, \textit{op.cit}.
\textsuperscript{42} Lama Sange Lera Philley, 71 years, Menchuka HQ, Menchuka Circle, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, interviewed on 06-10-2013.
meeting. Then they ask the person to take an oath of allegiance to follow the rule and regulation as per written in Cheik before the member present in the meeting. They also ask the student to select one senior Lama as granter who will take responsibility on his behalf in future. Next after the acceptance, the person and his family member visit Gomp on fixed day during which all the Lamas of Menchuka gathers in the Gomp. The student alongwith his family bring Tandel-Khada, Ghee, Darjo, Snacks and incense stick with them to the Gomp. The entire Lama present in the Gomp performs a ritual called Jha-Choe and Jha-Dung by blowing large musical piper for three times. After the ritual the person and his family offers Tandel-Khada (khada for happy) to the Head Lama and other Lamas. Then the student and his family member serves Lamas with tea and snacks as supper. Next, the Lamas read out the rule and regulation from the Cheik to the student, his family and granter Lama. Lastly, they ask the student to write an undertaking by promising and taking an oath to follow the rule and regulation written in Cheik or other wise if he breaks the rule, then the Lama organization is independent to take any action against him. After the undertaking, they officially register the student’s name in the Lama organization.43

Script and Literature

It has been seen that most of the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh do not have a script of their own. The process of recording the history from one generation to another generation goes through orally narrated in the form of story. However, most of the tribes who follow Buddhism as religion had a script of their own though mostly concentrated with religious work. The Memba do not have a script written in their language but use Tibetan script called Ume.44 The Ume script is used for writing

43 Lama Pema Chonga Kigar, op.cit.
44 Phurba Tsering Naksang, op.cit.
official record and letter by the Memba in Tibetan language. They read their script from left to right and constructed the letters from the Devanagari alphabet. The Tibetan alphabet started developing in 632 A.D, when Tibet king Srongtsan Gampo sent his Prime Minister, Thumi Sambhota with a task to study the Buddhist text and bring back to Tibet a complete system of alphabet as used in India. The alphabet information brought by Thumi Sambhota was later developed and modified into Tibetan Script. The script developed by the Tibet is widely used by most of the ethnic group who follow Tibetan Buddhism in Himalayan zone and Mongolians who adopted Tibetan form of Buddhism.\footnote{Emil Schlagintweit, \textit{Buddhism in Tibet}, Indological Book House, Delhi, 1988, pp. 64-65.} The Tibetan further developed th \textit{Ume} script into another script called \textit{Ujhe}, which is now widely used by the \textit{Tibetan Bodic} group.\footnote{Phurpa Naksang, \textit{op.cit}.}

\textit{Kanjur} and \textit{Tanjur} popularly known as Tibetan Buddhist canon\footnote{Alpo Ratia, “Tibetan Buddhist Cannon Holding in Indias: Preliminary Notes on Extant Kanjur and Tanjur Collection”, \textit{East and West}, Instituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente (IsIAO), Italy, Vol. 48, No. ½, 1998, p. 135.} are important literature produced in Tibet and used by the Memba as well. The Tibetans knew the art of paper making and printing, where engraved wooden blocks are used as medium for producing large copy of \textit{Kanjur} and \textit{Tanjur} for distribution in monasteries located in various part of Tibet and in Trans-Himalayan region.\footnote{Emil Schlagintweit, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 80.} One could find such series of \textit{kanjur} and \textit{Tanjur} in every \textit{Gomp} in Menchuka. It is said that in Tibet, that from the period of 7\textsuperscript{th} A.D to 14\textsuperscript{th} A.D the Tibetan literature developed itself into a large scale where all the Sanskrit translation was collected in the form of compilations into two large works, \textit{Kanjur} and \textit{Tanjur}, divided into numerous volumes.\footnote{L. Austin Waddell, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 155-157.} The \textit{kanjur} mainly contains the word of the Buddha as taught by Sakyamuni and his disciples. The \textit{kanjur} consist of one hundred eight large
volume classified into seven principle divisions composed of smaller or greater number of treatise. The **Tanjur** comparese of 225 volume divided into two great classes: **Gyut (Tantras)** and **Doh or Do (sutras or aphorism)**.\(^{50}\)

The **Gter-ma** is considered as Tibetan heterogeneous literature that appeared in Tibet around eleventh century. Primarily **Nyingmpa** sect of Tibetan Buddhism accepted the **Gter-ma** text as authentic relics.\(^{51}\) The Memba people also speak about existence of treasure tradition, which can be heard in their narration of origin and migration. **Tibetan book of Dead (Self-Liberation wisdom of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities)** as known in the west, which is a **Gter-ma** is believed to be composed by **Padma Sambhava** in the eight century.\(^{52}\) The **Gter-ma** is said to be revealed by **Karma Lingpa** in the 14\(^{th}\) century A.D from **Gampodar** Mountain in **Daklha-Gampo** in Tibet.\(^ {53}\) Memba people for the liberation of the dead use the literature.

**Cheik** or **Deb-ter**\(^ {54}\) is an important literally works of Memba, which comprises of history, origin, legend, rule and regulation for the **Lamas** and Memba society. It is considered as a record of history, sacred law and religious manuscript of **Baechakshiri** preserved in **Samden-Yangchu Gomp** by the **Lamas**. The **Lamas** also use it for oath taking while inducting new person in the Lama organization. They

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\(^{51}\) L. Austin Waddell, *op.cit*, pp. 165.


\(^{54}\) L. Austin Waddell, *op.cit*, p. 166.
considered *Cheik* manuscripts so sacred they keep it out of sight inside *Gomp* permise. They strictly prohibit outsiders from reading and seeing it.\(^{55}\)

*Neik* is another important literally works of the Memba, which is said to be a record of the sayings of *Guru Padma Sambhav* to his wife about the *BaechakShiri*. The *Neik* manuscript is a record of a story of sacred site or pilgrimage place where *Ter-ma* hidden by *Guru Padma Sambhav* within Menchuka area.\(^{56}\)

It is said that the original copy of *Cheik and Neik* were written in gold and silver ink and sealed with stamp by *Lama Choejee Lingpo* himself. During the Indo-China war of 1962,\(^{57}\) Chinese army reached Menchuka and heard about the existence of *Cheik and Neik*, which was under the possession of caretaker *Lama Chiso Chombey Goiba*. The Chinese officials convince the *Lama* to have glimpses of the *Cheik and Neik*. However, when *Lama Chiso Chombey Goiba* show them *Cheik and Neik*, the Chinese official took it and never returned. Now the *Cheik and Neik* available in the *Gomp* is a duplicate copy written by *Lamas* through memories of the original one.\(^{58}\)

**Death**

The elderly Memba people are more orthodox towards their religion and try to spend the remaining time of their life for coming closer with god. It is during this time that one can see old Memba men and women always carrying small handy prayer wheel and rosary in their hand chanting prayer “*Om Mane Pema Hm*” every

\(^{55}\) Lama Lakpa Sona, 86 years, Lha-Lhung Village, Menchuka Circle, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, interviewed on 21-6-2014.

\(^{56}\) L. Austin Waddell, *op.cit.*, p. 166.


\(^{58}\) Lama Pema Chonga Kigar, *op.cit.*
day with hopes for conditioned bliss in heaven and another happy rebirth on earth. The sons are expected to take care of and serve their aged parents with outmost dedication, for they will no longer live with them in coming future. They pass their time by telling stories of their experience and other stories to their grandchildren and sons, which they have heard from their grandparents. They also voluntarily do light household work of their capacity.\textsuperscript{59}

It is the law of nature that one who is born must die. Western science holds that death represents a cessation of heartbeat and brain activity. The modern scientific education explains that death is most often supposed to be a terminal state, a void that destroy life and swallows it forever.\textsuperscript{60} However, Memba look at death as a part of theory of \textit{karma}\textsuperscript{61}, means action that causes development and change. It is a natural process of cause and effect where karma at a given moment of life or death or the between is the overall pattern of casual impulse resulting from former deeds and action connected with our life-continuum.

The Buddhist recognised the existence of eight elements viz., earth, water, fire, air, flint, iron, mountain and heaven. From which the first five elements can only become the resident of the dead body and as for the five modes of burial are practiced.\textsuperscript{62} The Memba practice one of three type of burial practice for the dead one: earth burial, cremation and water burial. The Memba claims that, earlier before migration to Menchuka they also practiced vulture disposal practice like their Tibetan counterpart. Where they slashed the body part of the dead person and cut it into several parts with the help of corpse-cutter and after which they allow scavenger

\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{61} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 33-34.
birds that have gather around in the sky to consume the body. The vulture represents a means of restoring a link between heaven and earth, but because of the absence of these scavenger birds in Menchuka they no longer follow the practice of vulture disposal. It is believe that the earth burial is the earliest burial prevalent custom before the arrival of Buddhism among the Memba and Tibetan people.\(^6\) They mainly reserved the earth burial practice for the burial of deceased *Lama* and for the infant upto the age of two years. It is also done for those who have died of epidemic diseases such as typhoid, smallpox or tuberculosis. They seldom practice water burial where they cut the corpse into 108 pieces with the help of corpse-cutter and throws it into water. They mainly perform water burial for the corpse of pregnant women and those who meet violent death. The practice by fire cremation is most popular among the Memba because of available of wood in Menchuka for burning corpse. But overall it is upon the *Lama* to advice and select the type of burial required for the deceased.

They follow funeral ceremonies immediately after the death of a person, which they considered as the last of the many sacraments that mark the various stages of life of Memba people. According to the Memba tradition after the confirmation of the death of person, they immediately sends message to the family and friends. Some of the family members start collecting and gathering material and item, required for the burial. They keep their dead body in isolation without being touch in a place where it last rested and call *Lamas* for conduction of funeral ceremonies. The *Lama* performs the favorable rites required for dead person as favorable. One of the *Lama* who is expert in astrology is provided with the deceased persons horoscope with year of birth and the time of death. Through which *Lama*

finds the cause of death and organises rest of the funeral ceremony. The Lama through astrological calculation fixes the best day for burial of the corpse and rituals required for protection of deceased family from the demonic attack that will threaten their living. They also select the site for burial through astrological calculation. It also helps in prediction of future possible life of the deceased person and selection of best favorable rebirth. During the entire process of astrological calculation of selection of date for cremation, the deceased body is kept inside the house and washed with water mixed with camphor, sandal wood and fragrance herbs to avoid the bed smell of the decaying corpse. They then tie the corpse with a rope into a squat position then they kept the body in a bending position completely close to knees and coveres with cloth.

When the time and day selected by the Lama for burial comes, the corpse is carried on the shoulders of several people to the burial place. The Lama through astrological reading selects the person qualified for carrying corpse. It is interesting to note that they take out the corpse from the house as per auspicious direction selected by the Lamas. If the direction selected by the Lamas goes through the wall of the house then the wall is dismantled to carry out the corpse and repaired immediately after the corpse is carried out. The head Lama chanting ritual hymn followed in second row by subordinate Lamas playing conch shell, drums and others instruments available lead the corpse carrying procession to the burial ground. In third row, one Lama follows behind carrying a long white khada. This may be as per Tibetan practice and belief that they use scarf as instrument to show the deceased the path of burial place. The family members on the other hand follow behind the corpse. During the burial time, the relatives and friends visit the deceased person for the last
time to show their solidity for the deceased family. Every visiting member brings one *khada*, butter, oil, rice and millet as offering for the deceased person.

When the corpse reached the burial place then the *Lamas* sits at a distance of seven to ten meter away from the burial place and regularly chanting hymn for ritual. If the deceased person’s funeral is to be earth burial then person is buried with some of his/her personal item, food, water, *chang* and butter. The *khada* brought by the friends and relatives is also offered to the deceased person. The deceased person’s body is buried in a sitting position. In some cases if the deceased person’s family is rich then deceased person is buried by making corpse sitting in *Thurbo* (big metallic pot) offered by family.

If the burial practice to be followed is cremation by fire then a large mound of woods of six to seven feet high is made in the burial location. Next, they put the corpse into the top of the wooden mound and covered with wood. The wood used for burning corpse is of *Chandan* (sandal wood) collected from nearby forest. Before burning, the relatives and friends offered the *khada* they brought with them near the corpse. The *Lamas* continue to chants hymn and play instruments. Between the hymns *Lama* order a male family member to offer one small bowl of water, some food, oil, dried herbs and lots of butter to the corpse at regular intervals. When the appropriate time selected for final cremation comes then one of the sons or brother in the absence of children or father of the deceased person who is bachelor is asked to put fire to the wooden alter. During the process of burning of the corpse, they continuously pour oils and butter that is required for proper burning of the corpse. One person selected by *Lama* who is not from the family member is made to shake the burning corpse at regular interval so that it will burn quickly. In order to avoid the bad smell through smoke, they put fragrances herbs to the burning corpse. In the
meantime, *Lama* continues to chants hymn required for the rite till the final burning of the corpse. At the end of the burning, they collect the ashes of the deceased and put it in a sealed jar.

After the completion of cremation, the members present in the funeral purify themselves with sprinkling of sacred water and burning of herbal leave and branches. They do same process to perify the house and around its campus. Even after the burial, the funeral mourning is continued for forty-nine days during which the *Lamas* perform final rites and family members have to follow certain taboos. The family member has to keep their hair loose and should not comb till the end of forty-nine days. The concept behind this practice is that they believed that the impurity of the dead and threatening of evil spirit, which took the life of the family members, might still present in the house and may infect the family members if proper rite is not performed to cast them away. During this period of forty-nine days of mourning, they pay special attention for the deceased one. The *Lamas* performs a rite called *Lama-Rigzin-Sito-Kangsak-Choiga* in which they offers prayer to *Guru Padamsambhava*, 58 number of *Drakpo* deity of hell and 42 number of *Sito* deity of heaven. The ritual is performed to help deceased soul to escape the perilous path and to take rebirth in a higher destine. It is believe that the deceased soul require help while travelling perilous path in a life after death. The dead ones soul also require the help of the living family members who from the death till the end of forty-nine days offer cloth, food, water and *chang* for the soul of deceased one in a spot in the house where person had died. They also put burning lamp and printed image of person in a praying position stamped in a paper using carved wooden seal to symbolize the deceased person. The printed images representing dead person kept in the house plays central role in the funeral mourning rite.
The funeral mourning rite called Shendey starts three day after the burial, where family member along with Lama hoist long white flag in which sacred pictures and hymns are depicted in a long wooden pole around the burial place. Seven days later they perform another rite called Dungi. The Dungi is performed after every seven days of forty-nine days of mourning. The main concept behind the Dungi rite is the Tibetan idea of reaching back to the Abhidharmakosa. The intermediate state is divided into seven stages, each lasting a week of total forty-nine days of mourning rite. Three days before the arrival of 49 days a rite called Jangwang is performed where the presence of head Lama of Menchuka Gomp is required.

At the end of the forty-nine days, a merry making ceremony is organised where all the family members and relative are invited. During this day Lama also perform last rite called Geyo, where the printed images in paper of the dead person is burned to symbolize the end of the funeral mourning ceremony. Next, they mix the ashes of the paper with ashes of the deceased and mound it tight in a shape of small chorten. Wealthy family members use the remains of their deceased one to construct large chorten in a place where they cremated the deceased or near the house in remembrance of deceased one. The family members are allowed to comb their hair and are freed of other taboos followed during forty-nine days.

One year after the end of forty-nine days the family member perform another rite in relation to deceased person called Lomgee. The Lomgee is performed mainly to confirm about the deceased ones future and thanks giving prayer to god for allowing the deceased one to take rebirth in a higher destine.
Status of Women

Theoretically, the low status of women has been accepted in a majority of tribal society in Noth-East India. Similarly, in Memba society women are considered inferior in status to their male counterpart because of patriarchal nature. However, they hold respectable place in the society in term of freedom in various social setup and activity. They welcome the birth of a girl child in the house and considered as luck for the family who will bring them wealth in the form of bride price, when the daughter gets married. Life of woman in general can be explained, where as a girl she is under the tutelage of her parents where she had to do all the house hold works with her mother. If the girl has a baby brother then she has to look after him. Unlike the boy, the girl is allowed to play and move freely when there is no work. The girl is expected to marry according to her parents’ wishes except in a few exceptional cases where a girl marries according to her wishes.\(^64\)

As an adult and married woman, she comes under the tutelage of her husband where she has to take all the household responsibility. The women had to engage themselves early in the morning with fetching and boiling of water, cleaning, cooking before their husband leaves. During daytime she had to do cultivation in the field and in the evening when she returns from the field, without resting further engage herself in cooking, beverage making and serving. The male member seldom does the household activity. The outdoor activity is divided among the man and woman, where the male member does all the heavy works such as clearing forest and hunting. Whereas sowing and harvesting in agriculture field and gathering of forest product is mostly done by the woman folk in Memba society. The *purdah*\(^65\) system

\(^{64}\) Attam Goiba, *op.cit.*

was not in practice among the Memba and they allowed their woman to mingle with anyone in the society. The women and girl are expected not to have any extra-marital relationship.

The women had no inheritance right like *khasis* and *Jaintias* of Meghalaya where one of the daughters inherits the ancestral right in the immovable property of the family.\(^66\) However, there are few exceptional cases where a couple has only a single girl child, but in this case also it becomes the property of husband when she gets married. In case of widow, if the son is minor then she has the right to enjoy in the immovable property as caretaker till the boy become adult and mature enough. Like other tribes of Arunachal Pradesh the Memba women has property right in case of movable property like ornaments and other item, which she brings with her during marriage, their daughters inherit the same in future.\(^67\) The ornament bought by man for his wife also becomes the property of the wife. Though the women have every right in the immovable she possesses but the man folk can demand his wife to share some of the property in case of trade purpose and in dire need. The wife on the other hand has every right in the cash expenditure and production gathered by her husband through trade and other activity.

Unlike mainland India where the practice of burning of women alive during the cremation of her husband called *Sati pratha* was widely practiced in medieval period or were made to shave her hair completely, had to wear white *shari*, could not remarry and had to sleep in the floor of the house till her death.\(^68\) But the Memba women are free from all such evil practices. The widow had every right to remarry

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and live happily after the death of her husband. But if widow remarries then she lose every right to enjoy her deceased husband’s property.

In terms of decision making they allow their women to share her view only in matters related within the family but the final decision rests with the men folk of the family. In any decision related to dispute among two families or clan, they did not allow women folk to give any opinion and her only duty during the meeting is to prepare food and beverage for the people present in the meeting. Here in general public meeting also the husband usually use to have closed door discussion with his wife before taking part in the meeting. They allow their Memba women to take active part in the social and religious ceremony of the society. The women becoming Buddhist nun, which is in practice among the Monpas of Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh and in Tibet, is not in practiced among the Memba.69 Thus, it can be said that the system of getting women education through monasteries was not in practice in the society.

Amusements

The amusements of the Memba society are by no means creative or intellectual. Numerous games and festival, participated in, by all section of the Memba society, divided in the Tibetan year, and marked by merrymaking. The most popular festival is *Losar*, a festival of New Year. Unlike the *Monpa* tribe of Tawang who celebrates *Losar* festival in the Tibetan month of *Dawa-Dangbu* (January-February).70 The Memba on the other hand celebrate it in the Tibetan month of

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The date and time adopted by the Memba is considered to be of old style of Tibetans practice called “The cultivators new year” (Sonam Losar) and that followed by other Bodic group inhabited in the Tawang and west Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh is of new style called “Royal new year” (Rgyal-Po Losar). The old style is based on the belief that, it was in the Tibetan month of Dawa-Chung-Nyib (December-January) when all the agricultural harvesting period is finished and no agriculture is possible in the winter season due to snow-bound country and so the period is considered to be the period of popular festivity and joy. Like Memba, the Laddhak and Sikkim people also celebrate the Sonam Losar festival. The general purpose of celebrating Losar is to welcome the New Year, expulsion of old year by thanks giving to god. The feast and merrymaking is organised in every village and house hold where every member of community participates.

The Memba also observe festival called Bham-Mesh in the month of dawa-ngabu (May-June); where Bam means seed grown in nursery, that later transplanted to the field and Mesh means merry making and rest after the completion of harsh and labourious agriculture work. The meaning signifies that the festival is observed after the completion of sowing of crop sapling from nursery bed to agriculture field. Four to five families mostly celebrate the festival jointly who had work collectively by giving helping hand to each other during sowing of crop. The festival is celebrated for one week during which they organized grand feast and merry making in the house of each family. Every families visit each other’s house alternatively.

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71 Lama Sangey Khandu Sona, op.cit.
72 L. Austin Waddell, op.cit., pp. 504-505.
During the festival a mithun or pig is sacrificed and the head of sacrificed animal is hanged in the central pillar of the house. Throughout the night, singing and dancing competition is organized and the winner of the competition takes the head of the sacrificed animal as winning trophy. Now days they also keep some amount of money, Rs.1000/ to 5000/ along with the prized trophy also.

On the month of Dawa-Chuk-Chib (November-December) Memba celebrate Torgya ceremony. This grand, rambunctious celebration, takes place at popular monasteries in Menchuka for seven to twenty one days. The lamas fix the date and time for the celebration for the month of Dawa-Chuk-Chib.74 The ceremony is performed to ensure the welfare of the village community and deceased one. During the last two days of festival, the communities catch a glimpse of performance of Bardo Pantomime where dancers wear magnificent different mask according to the character. The Bardo in Tibetan literature means Postmortem transitional through which a disembodied spirit passes between reincarnations, which everyone will experience while between death and re-birth.75 And Bardo pantomime depicts the situation faced by the dead person as per his/her karma. The Bardo pantomime is performed to give community knowledge of heaven and hell during postmortem transitional where one will encounter visions of various gods and demons. It shows that how one who is relatively enlighten by leading moral behavior of pious life in this world will go to heaven; anyone who is violent and selfish by leading sinful life goes to hell after death. The Champon (dance master) selects the participants for the Bardo pantomime. The Champon is on the other hand is selected by Lamas from among the people expert in pantomime. The pantomime requires twenty five

participants for seventeen characters of Chenji (god), Choijegepu (god who keep record of human deeds), Lhakarpo (presiding deity of heaven), Denakpo (presiding deity of hell), Pemalingpa (lord of earth), Dikchung (layman who is sinful), Brakpa (father of Dikchung), Gomchen (layman who follow pious life), Drapa (disciple of Gomchen), Langdong pair where male is called Phodong and female is called Modong (accompanier of heaven god), Truidong pair (accompanier of hell god who hold weighing scale), Tadong (accompanier of hell god who holds pen), Duidong pair (accompanier of hell god who keep records of human activity), Sengdong pair (accompanier of hell god who holds axe), Domdong pair (accompanier of hell god who holds small beller), Phadong pair (lords of earth who carry swords) and Chungdong pair (accompanier of hell god who carry swords). Champon trains the participants for fifteen to thirty days before the actual day of performance of pantomime. Only the male adult member of the community is allowed to participate in it. A person in whose house a birth of child or death of person take place in his presence, that particular person is forbidden to perform in Bardo pantomime. But in order to avoid such situation the participants usually stays in the Gomp till the completion of the Pantomime.76

The Bardo pantomime is staged at open courtyard in the premise of Gomp where spectators gather to witness the pantomime. It is performed in two parts. In the first part of the pantomime, the story of Dikchung is performed in the second last days of the festival. But before the start of the story a special ritual is performed to cleanse the courtyard by dancing of Pemalingpa and Phodong the lords of earth. During dance Pemalingpa performs several erotic movements to cast away evil

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spirit. The Dikchang was a layman whose soul after his death is visited by gods from heaven and hell with their accompanier performing dances to decide his destine. In the process god Choijegepu (record keeper) found that Dikchung committed sin by hunting animals and fishing to maintain his family. On the request of Dikchung, the Truidong measures his good deeds and bad deeds with the help of weighing scale. During the process it is found that the Dikcung soul is sinful and is taken into hell by Denakpo (presiding deity of hell) and his accompanier. Next day the second part is performed where the story of Gomchen is played. In this story the soul of Gomchen playing prayer wheel and reciting prayer is claimed sinner by Denakpo, but Choijegepu found that during his life time he was pious one who never harmed other living being. In order to prove Denakpo, Truidong measures the weight of good deeds and bad deeds of Gomchen, where it is found that soul of Gomchen is free of sins and is taken into heaven by Lhakarpo (presiding deity of heaven). During the Pantomime Lamas chants hymn at regular interval from script to clarify story and plays music by playing conch shell, trumpets and drums. At the end of the pantomime all the gods with their accompanier perform dance and goes back inside monasteries.77

The Memba are fond of singing and dancing. The folk dance of Memba is known as Broh dance. It is mostly performed in the festivals, house warming and marriage ceremonies. During the performance of the dance no music instrument is played and is only accompanied by folk songs. In this dance all the gender of community adult or minor takes participation. The dance steps are learned by newcomer through the process of imitation of dance movement of the elder. The dancers stand in a circle side by side holding each other by finger interlocking. The

77 Ibid., pp. 105-108.
dance movement is based on movement of hands and legs by clapping, moving backward and forward in the circle.\textsuperscript{78} During performing *Broh* dance they sing a song to accompany it. The other half of the participants constantly repeatedly sings the song after completion of singing of each stanza by other half in the circle. The following are the two example of such song.\textsuperscript{79}

\begin{enumerate}
\item *Changthang mukpeh hrilla*,
\begin{enumerate}
\item *Segi nimasa*,
\item *Segi nima mare*,
\item *Lhame uja imba*.
\end{enumerate}
\end{enumerate}

\begin{enumerate}
\item *Changthang mukpeh hrilla*,
\begin{enumerate}
\item *Dungi dawa sari*,
\item *Dungi dawa mare*,
\item *Rongchong lame sethi imba*,
\end{enumerate}
\end{enumerate}

\begin{enumerate}
\item *Changthang mukpeh hrilla*,
\begin{enumerate}
\item *Darcho nenga sarieh*,
\item *Sergi khranga mare*,
\item *rongchong lame chera himba*.
\end{enumerate}
\end{enumerate}

Meaning:– There is a large hill at the other side of this valley, the sun that is golden in colour has risen over the hill. But it is not the Sun; it is the Monks’ cap. There is a large hill at the other side of the valley, where a white conch shell is visible at the top of the hill. But it is not a conch shell, it is the Monks’ face. There is a large hill at the

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., pp. 95-100.
\textsuperscript{79} In 1974, *Niranjan Sarkar* recorded two song sung by Memba during *Broh* dance, Ibid., pp. 101-103.
other side of the valley, where a gong golden in colour is visible at the top of the hill. But it is not a golden gong; it is a courtyard in front of a monastery.\footnote{Ibid.}

\[\begin{align*}
\text{II.} & \quad \text{Dangpo droie drojung,} \\
& \quad \text{Gane chung thaieh nejung,} \\
& \quad \text{Ladhe sangpa jajin drolega,} \\
& \quad \text{Drole gaching drole cham.}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
& \quad \text{Nipa droie drojung,} \\
& \quad \text{Chenge nejung,} \\
& \quad \text{Chen duchen drakpoh drolega,} \\
& \quad \text{Drole gaching drole cham,}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
& \quad \text{Sumpa droie drojung,} \\
& \quad \text{Luieh nejung,} \\
& \quad \text{Lune gaoa chokpoh drolega,} \\
& \quad \text{Drole gaching drole cham.}
\end{align*}\]

\textbf{Meaning}: O, Lhade, you have originated a song, you have originated a song, so we sing happily. O! Chen you gave us song, we sing it happily, because when we sing it, we do not fell hungry, even if we have no food to eat. O! Lune, you gave us song, we sang it happily, because when we sing it we do not feel cold, even if we have no cloth to put on.\footnote{Ibid.}
The Memba songs can be classified into three groups called \textit{Sha-ye}, \textit{Chang-Lhu} and \textit{Dong-sh}.\textsuperscript{82} The song of Memba can be placed in category of folk song. The \textit{Sha-ye} song is sang by the experienced member of the community. They sung it during very special occasion like marriage, construction of house, festival and pilgrimage time by the Memba. It requires three to five singers to whom the \textit{khada} is presented by some of the person present in the celebration. \textit{Sha-ye} is started by the eldest person among the participants and each participant had to sing different \textit{Sha-ye} turn by turn. The female member of the community is not allowed to sing \textit{Sha-ye}, but in case if there is shortage of male participants then female folk if knows the wording of \textit{Sha-ye} is allowed to participate.

Before the starting of every \textit{Sha-ye} they chant three line as dialogue as warm-up for the starting and after it they starts the \textit{Sha-ye} turn by turn. The dialogue is as follows:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Gobeh Ya-la Tsane}……..\textit{Jala Kesa}
\textit{Kang-Jahung Geya Eabey}……..\textit{Jala Naorang}
\textit{Kang-Jahung Geya Eamey}……..\textit{Jala Manjha}.
\end{quote}

Meaning:- this earth is a place to celebrate happiness, so we all took birth in the earth. In this life journey when we lifted our right leg and started walking, we found valuable treasure in our life, again when we lifted our left leg and started walking, we found peacock dancing in our life.\textsuperscript{83}

After finishing the three lines, the participants throws their legs three times on the ground and in the air, they next start singing \textit{Sha-ey}:

\textsuperscript{82} Interview with Karma Mindu Naksang, 66 years, Bunjipang village, Menchuka Circle, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, interviewed on 08-3-2015.
\textsuperscript{83} Tashi Chukla, \textit{op.cit.}
Ya-leh…Pang Shong Dehpui Nang-la, So-wo-yash
Ya-leh…Bu Chung-la Punsum Zom-leh, So-wo-yash (2 times)
Ya-leh…Pang-shong Dehpui Nang-la Zom-leh, So-wo-yash
Yah-leh…Lha kang-la karpo Zang-leh, So-wo-yash (2 times)
Yah-leh…Lha kang-la Karpoi nang-leh, So-wo-yash
Ya-leh…Bu Chung-la Punsum Zom-leh, So-wo-yash. (2 times)

Ya-leh…Bu Chung-la Gyanba Nam-la, So-wo-yesh
Ya-leh…Lha Mai-la Shaypan Bul-loh, So-wo-yash (2 times)
Ya-leh…Bu Chung-la Chungwa nam-la, So-wo-yash
Ya-leh…Pen Poh-la Zhyapche Shu-lo, So-wo-yash (2 times)
Ya-leh…Bu Chung-la Chungwa Nam-la, So-wo-yash
Ya-leh…Pha Mai-La Dinlham Zeal-lo, So-wo-yash. (2 times)

Ya-leh…Di-chi Kipu Dahlu-leh Ga-leh, So-wo-yash
Ya-leh…Di-leh Yamoh Sangpo ga-leh, So-wo-yash (2 times)
Ya-leh…Zhe Pun-la Yang-Yang Zhom-leh, So-wo-yash
Ya-leh…Tha-la Zhepaimonlam Sho-leh, So-wo-yash. (2 times)\textsuperscript{84}

Meaning:- the first stanza means that, there is a beautiful and comfortable valley where three young brothers gather. A beautiful white monastery had been constructed in the valley, where three young brothers had gathered.

The second stanza means that, among all the three brothers the elder brother should go and serve as \textit{Lama}. Among all the three brothers, the second brother should serve as an administrator. Among all the three brothers, the youngest one should serve their parents.

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid.
The third stanza means that, such happy and joyful life like this should come more in coming future. In a place like this, brothers should always meet and we wish again that such good and happy occasion would also come in future.

At the end of *Sha-ey* the person chant dialogue in which he thanks god and wishes that such happy environment always remains in our life and ends the song. The next participant starts to sing another song as rule. The dialogue chanted in the end of song follows:

- *Yeh-su Domo Tang-neh Zha-yeh*
- *Yeh-su Domo Kun-neh Zha-yeh*
- *Domo Tang-Neh Zha-moh Zha-yeh*
- *Tsering Yeh-su Dekyi-la Gya-lo*

The *Chang-lhu* is a folk song, which can be sung by anybody from children to elder in the society. It does not require any special occasion for *Chang-lhu*. Memba community according to their mood and emotion sings it. The song can be composed by anyone with different meaning. During the time of celebration, they sung it for joy and they sing it one by one at the time of merrymaking. During the time of mourning, they sung it to show ones sentiments through song. The *Chang-lhu* song sung during the time of agriculture follows:

- *Loyah Sal Chu-deh*
- *Tem Lehgey Korh*
- *Aama Yang-Sean loham*
- *Loyah chal Suroh*
- *Chaiseh Mailh Chaineh*

*85 Ibid.*
Loyah Pungdang Sei-Sei

Namgey Yeng-la Chaine

Tenzur Pungdang Sei-Sei.\textsuperscript{86}

Meaning:- the song is about hardworking which is sung when peoples work together works in agriculture field. The song tells that when the sapling of millet is shown in the field, then the field looks very beautiful. It is our humble prayer to Goddesses Yang-Sean (goddesses of cultivation) to give blessing to our plant from root to top and protect it from famine. So that after few days the millet will float like a thick cloud floating in the blue sky and we will get good harvested crop.

The \textit{Dong-sh} is another type of song, which they sing during special occasion like \textit{Sha-ey} song. Whenever there is a special occasion the participants always sings \textit{Sha-ye} first and when it ends, the women folk sing \textit{Chang-lhu} song by serving alcohol beverage to the member present in the occasion. When the party became energized by drinking and hearing \textit{Chang-lhu} they began to sing \textit{Dong-sh}. While singing \textit{Dong-sh}, every member present will stand up holding each other’s hands and the participants perform dance. Here one of the participants has to starts singing and the other participants follow him. The \textit{Broh} dance mention by Niranjan Sarkar is a type of dance step performed by Memba by singing \textit{Dong-sh}. Most of the song sang during \textit{Dong-sh} is of epic type of folk song called \textit{Namdarh} as follows:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Namdarh Mang Mata Chik Soum Yu}
  \item \textit{Namdarh Nyaung Mata Chik Soum Yu}
  \item \textit{Namdarh Lul Fan-bey Chik Soum Yu}
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{86} Jujey Naksang, \textit{Memba Janjati ke lok Geeto ka sanskratik sahita adyan}, Unpublished M.Phil dissertation, Rajiv Gandhi University, Doimukh, pp. 56-57.
Dha Chen Sul Nyemage Namdarh Yu
Lama Goamzen Rede Nang-la Su
Saho Aam Chuzik Mautaung nah
Chen-Sukh-Nyem taungdina meh
Yamzenh zeakh chaumau Boulau-la
Kyu DahngBaumbau Kun Saih-zey Zaung
Gebey Kal Macho Baumau Nga
Zaong-la Dogo Zaung
Deme Hazang Sael Taong-neh
Zeaktah Sebh Nau
Baumao Nga-la Chaiz Zeak Sam-bey
Gebey Kal Macho
Zaung-la Leh Zaung
Dil Korbey
Bau Dang Baumau Cha Zeak Yu
Buneay Lahas Gab Yin
Baumau Deneh Lah-ze Kaunsang Yin
Gebey Zong-la Don Zeh-la
Gebey Zong-la Medei Lha Ze
Aoung-gaur Mambau Sau-nyaung
Zayaore Aoung-garh Sau Myaoung
Din Nga Deh-la Chimbe Nyen
De Bau Dang Baumau Nyed
Nangla chi saung…………..

87 Ibid, pp. 58-60.
Meaning:- The first three lines is a dialogue chanted before the starting of any Namdarh Dong-sh. After that, the following Namdarh tells about the life story of women named Chen-Sukh-Nyem. She was born out of the womb of a deer. When she became an adult, she got married with a king as his second wife. The king’s first wife was a demon who always tortured her when the king was out from the palace for business purposes. The king’s first wife even conspired to kill Chen-Sukh-Nyem many times. But somehow, she escaped from her conspiracy all the times. After some times with the passage of time she gives birth to one son and a daughter. The birth of baby by Chen-Sukh-Nyem made the first wife angrier and she begun to treat her with more cruelty. The first wife of the king now tried to kill her and his children all together. Ultimately, one day Chen-Sukh-Nyem dies living her two children without mother. However, after her death Chen-Sukh-Nyem soul worries about her children and in order to protect them from demonist wife of the king, her soul took form of different living being like birds, fish and sometime of deer to protect her children from clutches of king demonist wife. Lastly, when all the children died, their soul together gets eternal bliss at the end.

The Memba are also fond of various types of games for their amusement. The arrow shooting game called Pissh is widely loved amusement of the Memba. In this game, the arrow head is not sharp but is in inverted conical shape with three holes in it. When they shoot with this arrow in the bull eyes, air passes through the conical hole and produce sound like pissh through which the name of the game occurs. The person who hits the bulls’ eyes is declared winner. The male member of the community mostly plays the game. The bow and arrow is also a common toy among the children who regularly play arrow shooting game among them whenever they get free time. This play of arrow helps children to get trained in the art of archery in
coming future. Beside arrow shooting Memba also plays *Tag-Thendi* (tug of war), *Of-Tang* (wrestling), *Chonje* (high jump) and *Gyuje* (running race).

They play the *Tag-Thendi* (*Tug of war*) game where the participants are equally divided into two teams facing in opposite direction to each other holding a long rope made of cane. The team had to do their utmost attempt to pull the other team to their side to win the game. The women folk of the community can also play the *Tag-Thendi* game. In *Of-Tang* (wrestling) game the two players wrestle with each other to put down opposition in the ground and the standing person in the ground is declared winner by the judge. The *Chonje* (high jump) is played with the help of bamboo used as standing pole in two sides and a rope or thin bamboo pole across the two corner pole. The participants are made to jump across the pole. The process continues with the increasing the height of the pole until one player is left. The last stranding player became the winner of the *Chonje*. In the *Gyuje* (running race) the participants has to run certain distance as marked by the judge. Persons who complete the fixed distance first is declared winner. The game can be participated by both gender of the community. *Sho* (dice), a gambling game was popular at all times among the Memba people. In this game four players are needed and their moves are controlled by the throw of two numbers of dice containing dots like ludo. While throwing dice the person loudly shout the number, which he wants to come out. Sometimes they use slang word with the number, so that the bad luck will go away from him and good luck will bring out the number he wants. The numbers which they shout are *Par-so* (two), *Sukh* (three), *Seikh* (four), *Dukh* (five), *Reah* (six), *Sha* (eight), *Goh* (nine), *Chu* (ten), *Toh* (eleven) and *Jha* (twelve). For currency, they use token of small white sea shell for the game. In this game, people get six number of
token in their hand and the person who finishes his token first is considered as winner.\textsuperscript{88}

Beside above mentioned game there is certain games exclusively played by the children, of which the hide and seek game called \textit{Ghab-ri-Shara} is most popular one. In these game one player or team as a seeker is made to seek the other players who hide in various locations within the fixed surrounding. In one player seeker system the player who is sought out first from the hidden group by the seeker becomes seekers in the next round. In team system if the opposition team seeks out the entire hidden player then the hidden team becomes seeker in next round. Another game popularly played by children is some sort of drama or acting called \textit{Aap-Aam} where children plays the role of family member viz. father, mother, brother, sister, daughter and sons. Here they perform acts of the day today activity of the character in imaginary way as they learn and notice in the family and surrounding.\textsuperscript{89}

Astronomy

Astronomy plays a very pivotal role in the life of Memba society. The astronomical calculation is required for settling the dates and times at which periodical prayer or festivals were to be performed. It is also required to forecast the fortune and ill-fortune of individual life. The Memba astronomy is based on Tibetan tradition, which was originated in India and China. But the astrology is based more on Chinese calendar than Indian in nature, which is said to have been introduced by the Chinese wife of Tibetan king \textit{Sron Tsan’s}, where the basic unit for recording

\textsuperscript{88} Lama Sange Khandu Sona, \textit{op.cit.}
\textsuperscript{89} Attam Goiba, \textit{op.cit.}
dates was the lunar calendar having three hundred and sixty days a year. The year normally containes twelve lunar months:


According to the usual system of reckoning, the year began with *Dawa-Nyibu*. The month is further divide into weeks consisting seven days in a week.

The year cycle is divided into twelve years and sixty years of Jupiter cycles (see Appendix III). Where the twelve year cycles bear the name of one or the other of the twelve *Lo* (sign in the form of animals) of mouse, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, serpent, horse, sheep, monkey, bird, dog and hog. Again, in sixty years of cycle these animals are combined with the five *Kham* (sign in the form of elements) namely wood, fire, earth, iron and water, where each element is given a pair of animals considering male and female.

The Monpas, Kambas, Sherdukpons and other Bodic group inhabitant of Arunachal Pradesh and other Bodic community in trans-Himalayan region, also follow this system of astronomy. They further classified astronomy into two groups, astrology and horoscope. Astrology is a system through which one can predict whether the certain days, month or year is an auspicious or inauspicious for community and to individual through their stars. It is through astrology that *Lamas* fix the date for conduction of religious ceremony and festival in the community. The

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90 L. Austin Waddell, *op.cit.*, P. 451.
91 Tapoli Badu, *op.cit.*, p. 45.
method of obtaining result is done through finding the movement of stars, moon, sun, planets and earth, and applying system of calculation by addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of numbers.

The horoscope on the other hand is a system through which they predict the fate and fortune of an individual life. The horoscope provides possible future information about the life history of an individual regarding the length of the year, marriage, number of children to be born, obstacle coming at certain age, economic position, education, health, death and precaution needed to take at certain period through offering and prayer to get rid of obstacles as suggested by Lamas. It is believed that every person has Lo-Kham (Horoscope sign) from one animal sign within the twelve animal sign of the month and one element sign from the five elements of the year. The process of preparing horoscope of an individual is done through calculation of time, date and year of birth and of death if deceased. The horoscope is written on a long sheet of paper and is attested by the stamp of the astrologer who had prepared it. The astrologer is given fee or present for the preparation of Horoscope. The horoscope is further divided into four sections namely Horoscope for whole life, horoscope for one year, horoscope for marriage and horoscope for death.

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