CHAPTER - III

MEGALITHIC CULTURES OF MANIPUR
CHAPTER-III:1
MEGALITHIC CULTURE FOUND AMONG THE ANALS OF CHANDEL DISTRICT, MANIPUR

THE PEOPLE

The Anal tribe is found to be concentrated in all the sub-divisions of Chandel district of Manipur, viz. Tengnoupal, Chakpikarong and Chandel. Scattered pockets are also found in Churachandpur district of Manipur and in some parts of Burma (now Myanmar). The Anal inhabited area is bounded on the north by the kindred tribes of Moyon, Monsang and Lamgang; on the south by the Kuki-Mizo tribes like Thadou, Zou, Baite etc.; on the west by the Purums and Meiteis of the valley, on the east by the Thadous and Shans of Kabaw valley. Hence they occupied mainly the Yomadung range stretching from north to south between Manipur valley and Kabaw valley of Burma. Besides, the Anal villages are situated both in the eastern and western banks of Chakpi river which flows through the Anal inhabited areas. So this river plays a very important role in the Anal country. According to 1981 census report, the total population of the Anal is 9343 (Census of India: 1981: Series 13 (Manipur) Part (ix) special table for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes) and they are found scattered in forty-five villages.
MEGALITHIC SITES IN THE ANAL AREA

I. THE LAMPHOU CHARU MEGALITHIC SITE

The Lamphou Charu village is located on a spur of Yangkhenching range. It is about 109 kms. away from Imphal (via Sugnu-Chakpikarong and Anal Khullen) on the south. The village is surrounded by Phiran Machet and Phiran Leihao on the east, by Anal Khullen on the south, by Beru Khullen on the west and by Modi and Lamphou Pasna. All these surrounding villages are Anal villages.

In this village area, the present author have come across two types of megalithic structures. They are listed below with local name, classified type and functional types.

TABLE 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Local number</th>
<th>Classified type</th>
<th>Functional types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Tutang Kam</td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>Memorial stone raised after the death of the performer of seven series of feast of merit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Lungpatha</td>
<td>Menhirs(Small)</td>
<td>Memorial stone raised by a performer of a feast of merit while he/she was living.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PLATE I

Pl.I:a

_Tutangkams_ (A group of memorial stones)
Lamphou Charu

Pl.I:b

_Lungpatha_ (Memorial stones)
Lamphou Charu
A. TUTANGKAM

*Tutangkam* is a pair of small upright stones always forming a constituent part of an avenue of their respective clans. Functionally it is a memorial stone raised after the death of the performer and his wife who offers a series of feasts of merit called *Tutangkam* also known as *Akam* sacrifices. And the stone thus erected is also known by the same term *Tutangkam*. Such stones cannot be raised by the performer in his name or his wife while they are alive. Only they are permitted to select the suitable stone(s) to be erected after their death one after another.

Before an Anal wishes to select a pair of stones to be raised after their death, he had to perform a series of seven feasts of merit. These feasts should be performed within six consecutive years and the last two feasting ceremonies will be performed in the same year e.g. *Duthu* and *Sotang Petang* performed in March and April of the same year. But nobody can follow such rules so they use to perform with an interval of one or two year(s) except *Duthu* and *Sotang Petang*. So many persons could not complete the whole series during his lifetime if he started the feasting series lately (if the performer wishes to start feasting series in his old age). If the intending performer could not perform the whole series or certain number of
feasting ceremony he is not allowed to raise megalith either in his name or his wife. If the merit seeker could complete the feasting ceremony upto the third stage, Sah-pe-ā of the seven series his wife is allowed to raise a megalith in her name after her death in their clan's stone raising place to constitute a part of an avenue of the clan. And another megalith is given in the name of the performer if he could complete the sixth or even fifth feasts of the series. So, those persons, who performed upto the second series (Būphung) is not allowed to select any stone to be raised after their death. The important seven series of Akam/Tutangkam feast of merit are listed below.

1. **Inthungnaju or Inthungju**
2. **Būphung**
3. **Sah-Pe-ā**
4. **Len**
5. **Akah Pedan**
6. **Duthu** and
7. **Sontang Petang**

1. **Inthungnaju or Inthungju**

   Usually **Inthungju** feast normally starts in the month of March. So the performer makes a notice to the public/villagers through the village headman, about his wishes before
two months. Then before 20 days he and his family member should prepare rice-beer called Momyu. Besides he had to arrange the following materials required for the ceremony.

(a) One Vih (dog),
(b) One Wah (pig),
(c) One Hal (hen) and one Hakungpa (cock),
(d) Rice (at least 800 kg),
(e) Five Yuj Ashol (large pots of rice-beer each containing 50 litres),
(f) Fifteen Yutangbel (small pots of rice-beer each containing 20 litres),
(g) Vegetables and
(h) Mom for the preparation of Momyu (rice-beer).

Inthungju lasts for three days. It is usually started in the evening. On the first day dancing called Akadam is started around 11 p.m. and continued till midnight even at dawn. Dancing is usually performed by youths, unmarried boys and girls. Even old men and women may join if they wish. Singing should be done by the old men only. During Inthungju everything should be performed (feasting, dancing and singing) inside the house of the performer. And it continues for three days.
2. *Bu-phung*

After one year of *Inthungju* feasting ceremony, *Bu-phung* is normally performed in the month of March. The whole process is similar to that of *Inthungju*. That feasting and dancing should be performed inside the house of the merit seeker. There is a slight difference in the case of material requirement (particularly in the case of quantity of rice-beer). The required materials are listed below.

(a) One *Vih* (dog),
(b) One *Wah* (pig),
(c) One *Hal* (hen) and one *Hakungpa* (cock),
(d) Rice (more than 800 kg.),
(e) Five *Yu-Ashol* (large pots of rice-beer each containing 50 litres),
(f) Twentyfive *Yutangbel* or *Patisul* (smaller pots each containing 20 litres),
(g) *Mom* or *Ahsum* for the preparation of *Momyu* (rice-beer) and
(h) Vegetables.

For this second feasting, the performer should request all the villagers according to age, to help in the collection of firewood, plaintain leaves, vegetables, preparation of *Momyu* (rice-beer) and butchering/slaughtering the animals.
3. **Sah-Phē-ā**

Like other foregoing feast of merit, **Sah-Phē-ā** is usually performed in the month of March after one year of Būphung. It also lasts for three days. But dancing may be performed outside i.e. in the courtyard of the performer.

The materials required for the feast are as follows.

(a) One **Vīh** (dog),

(b) One **Wah** (pig),

(c) One **Hal** (hen) and **Hakungpe** (cock),

(d) Rice (more than 800 kg.),

(e) Five **Yu-Ashol** (large pots of rice-beer each containing 50 litres),

(f) Thirty **Yu-Tangbel/Patisul** (smaller pots of rice-beer each containing 20 litres),

(g) Three **Haldoh** (egg),

(h) One **Chahriil** (Mithun) of 4/5 years having 4/5 brothers,

(i) One **Chaling** (Forked post),

(j) Large amounts of **Mom/Ahmum** for preparation of Momyu (rice-beer) and

(k) Vegetables, plaintiff leaves and firewoods.

As in the previous two feasts, the animals (dog, pig and hen) should be killed normally by any villager(particularly
youths) and cooked on the first day to serve the participants. On the same day, one friend of the performer would kill the Chahril (Mithun) ritually. For this the merit seeker already engaged him by saying 'Oh my friend you please kill the sacrificial animal so that I will give you its different parts as your share'. The different parts of the animal include its ear, eye, legs, tail, liver, stomach, intestine etc. (small portions only) for name's sake.

On the first day, after killing all the animals normally, the village priest will erect Chaling, a forked wooden post. Then the mithun to be sacrificed will be tied on the forked post called Chaling and the priest will purify by breaking an egg called haldoh on the frontal region in between the two horns. After purifying in this way, an individual will pretend to kill the animal by spearing. Meanwhile the performer's closest friend (already engaged) will kill the animal by spearing on its forehead. After completing the process of killing ritually the animal will be cut into pieces and a share will be kept separately for the mithun killer (who is the closest friend of the performer and also already engaged person). The separate share should include pieces of eye, ear, tail, legs, liver, heart, stomach and intestine each. And the remaining meat will be cooked to serve the participants.
The main program of the feast of merit is to feed the whole villagers including guests and invitees from other villages and spend the four days with singing and dancing. After performing this feast of merit, the performer's wife is allowed to select a menhir in her name, but the erection should be done after her death. And the forked post erected on the first day of the Sah-Pé-ā to tether the mithun would remain as a decoration of the house.

4. Lan

It is usually performed after one year of Sah-Pé-ā feasting ceremony in the month of March. It also lasts for three consecutive days. Feasting and dancing is similar to that of Sah-Pé-ā that is, feasting is performed outside the house of the performer in the courtyard of the merit-seeker. The material requirement is also not so different except in the number of Yutangbel (smaller pot of rice-beer called Momyu) and the number of wooden Y-posts or forked posts.

The following materials required for the Lan feasting ceremony will clearly show the difference.

(a) One Vih (dog),
(b) One Wah (pig),
(c) One hal (hen) and one hakungpa (cock),
(d) Rice (more than 800 kg.),
(e) Five pots of Yu Ashol (each contains 50 litres of rice-beer),
(f) Thirty five pots of Yutangbel (each containing 20 litres of rice-beer),
(g) One Chahring (Mithun) of 5 to 6 years old,
(h) Nine Chaling (Y-shaped post/forked post),
(i) Large amounts of Mom/Ahumua for brewing rice-beer and
(j) Vegetables, plaintain leaves and fire woods.

Here instead of one Y-shaped post, nine forked posts were raised, not only to tether the mithun but also a symbol of the feast and would remain as decoration of the house till it is completely decamped and rotten. The number of Yutangbel (smaller pots of rice-beer) increased from 30 to 35. Moreover dancing is performed outside or in the courtyard during day time and inside the house at the night. Other processes are similar to Sah-Pē-ā.

5. Akah Pedam

Lan is followed by Akah Pedam, usually after one year's interval and in the month of March. Akah Pedam continues for four days. All the process of this ceremony is similar with that
of Lan particularly in feasting, dancing and singing. The killing of mithun ritually by closest friend Salee is also same. The differences are in the number of Yutangbel and number of smaller Chalings (Y-posts). The Yutangbel is increased from 35 in Lan to 45 in Akah Pedam ceremony. Like this, the Chalings (Y-posts) increase from 9 in Lan to 11 in Akah Pedam.

After completing this fifth series, the Akah Pedam the performer is allowed to select a stone to be raised in his name after his death.

6. Duthu

It is the sixth ceremony of the series of feast of merit. It lasts for five consecutive days. All the process of feasting and singing is the same with that of Akah Pedam, except increasing in the number of Yu-Ashol and Yutangbel (large and small rice-beer pots). Here Yu-Ashol is six in number while Yutangbel is of sixty pots.

On the first day of Duthu, all the Yu-Ashols and Yutanbel are all kept outside or before the villagers assembled there (out of the performer's house) to count the number. It is the duty of the helpers, particularly the village youths. After completing the counting of rice-beer pots Yu-Ashol and Yutangbel (large and small pots) drinking will be started around
10 a.m. in the morning while dancing is started at noon.

7. Sontang Pentang

Duthu is followed by Sontang Pentang festival, in the same year but usually performs in the month of April. It is the last occasion in the series of seven sacrifices. Here the performer would request the villagers to help him while clearing and cutting jhum fields, specially prepared for the occasion. On such cleared spots various kinds of crops will be sown by the performer (merit-seeker) saying that those crops were the share of the birds and animals, so that he could not reap the crops or plug any vegetable from that special field. Thus birds and animals can easily eat them up. Sometimes very poor villagers can gather whatever he/she like from the said field. Hence Sontang Pentang is not an elaborate festival. But the merit-seeker should have served them (the villagers/helpers) with food and drink while clearing, cutting, tilling and sowing of seeds is going on.

Thus the performer of these seven series described above is respected by all while they were alive as well as after death also in the land of death. In Lamphou Charu village there were seven persons who wished and performed Tu-tangkam. Out of these seven persons two persons only could
complete the whole series upto Sontang Petang, one could reach
upto the fifth stage called Akah Pedam, another person could
perform upto Sah-pē-a, the third stage while other three per-
sons started only upto Buphung. Their names are listed below.

1. St.Shadel
   X fully completed (Sontang Petang)
2. R.L.Behring
3. Sr.Kalnal
   - upto the fifth stage (Duthy)
4. Rng.Kamvol
   - upto the third stage (sah-pē-a)
5. L.K.Beijing
6. R.L.Chumvol
   - upto the second stage (Būphung)
7. K.T.Bethi

According to their tradition, Mr.St.Shadel, Mr.R.L.
Behring and Mr.Sr.Kalnal were allowed to select and raise a
pair of stone each, one for the performer and another for his
wife. Meanwhile Mr. Rng.Kamvol has got only one stone in the
name of his wife while Mr.L.K.Beijing, Rt.Chumvol and K.T.Bethi
none can get and raise Tutangkam.

2. LUNGPATHA

It is another pair of small upright stone raised by
the performer of a great feasting ceremony who could not per-
form Tutangkam ceremony. The upright stones are much smaller
than any Tutankham. Any intending performer may give a great feast for only one day and on the same day this structure may be raised. It is always found near the village gate or by the road side. The small upright stones are surrounded by a number smaller stones arranged in a regular interval forming a rectangular enclosure, particularly for decoration (Plate I:b).

There is no hard and fast rule regarding the material requirement and procedure of erection. It depends on the wishes of the intending merit-seeker. It is usually performed and raised by those childless couples, as their memorial stones, while they were alive.

II. THE ANAL KHULLEN MEGALITHIC SITE

The Anal Khullen megalithic site is located in the southern part of Chandel sub-division of Chandel district (formerly Tengnoupal district). It is situated on the eastern slope of Khella hills which forms a part of Yankhenching range. It is about 103 kms. away from Imphal (via Sugnu and Chakpikarong) on the south. It is under the jurisdiction of Chakpikarong sub-division, Chandel district. The village is situated on the eastern slope of Khelia hills, it is surrounded on the east by Oklu (an Anal village) and Namunglok stream, on the west by Chakpi river and on the further west by Chakpikarong town (also sub-divisional headquarter), on the north by Pulanlok stream.
Pl. II: a

**Tutangkans** (A cluster of memorial stones)
Anal Khullen

Pl. II: b

A cluster of **Tutangkams** (Another cluster of memorial stones) Anal Khullen
and Lamphou Charu, and on the south by Tuiyang River and Khobung Khullen.

The megalithic structures are located on the ridge of the Khella range just near the village main gate and in front of the present temple of the Wangbrel and Shangnu. Besides, there are stray finds of megalithic monuments inside and outside the village particularly near the inter village road. The total number of such megaliths forming avenues are 221.

Megalithic structure and types

The present existing megalithic remains of the Anal Khullen are of three types based on their structure and function. Their structural classifications are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Local Name</th>
<th>Classified types</th>
<th>Functional types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Tutangkam</td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>Memorial stone raised as a mark of honour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Lungpathe</td>
<td>Miniature menhirs with enclosures</td>
<td>Memorial stone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rituals, feasts and ceremonies connected with the erection of the above mentioned megaliths among the Anal Khullen are same as found among the Lamphou Charu described above.
THE PEOPLE

The Chakhesangs are the inhabitants of the extreme north-eastern border of Manipur. They concentrate their habitation in Jessami area. A Chakhesang village is a close knit social and economic unit with common village land. They look after the village affairs through a council of elders headed by a chief, who is assisted in performing his duties and responsibilities by clan elders. It has a population of over 7,000 individuals found scattered in five villages. The villages are Jessami Khunjao, Jessami Christian Compound, Soraphung, Chingjroi and Matrikhru. The following materials have been collected from Jessami Khunjao and Jessami Christian Compound.

THE JESSAMI MEgalithIC SITE

The Jessami area, where megaliths are abounding, is located on the top of the eastern spur of Japvo Range. This site is 202 kms away from Imphal on the north-east, adjacent to Nagaland on the west. The area is bounded on the north by
the Phek Base (A Chakhesang village) of Nagaland State, on the east by Malori Phek (also a Chakhesang village) of Nagaland State. On the south by Laiye (a Poumei/Poumai village of Senapati district, Manipur). The altitude of this area is 5611 feet above M.S.L.

Like other tribes, the Chakhesangs perform different types of stone raising ceremonies. The megalithic monuments found among the Chakhesang are listed below with local names, classified and functional types.

**TABLE - 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified types</th>
<th>Function types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Anhu</td>
<td>Menhir/Alignment</td>
<td>A memorial stone raised after performing a series of feasts of merit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Ayicho</td>
<td>Small alignment</td>
<td>Memorial stones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Arija</td>
<td>Wooden statue</td>
<td>Commemorative wooden statue.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anhu

It is an upright stone erected either singly or double or sometimes triple in the form of an alignment. The number of such upright stone indicate the number of feast given by a merit-seeker.

These types of megaliths are found in and around the village habitational area. They are always found in and around the dancing places of every Khel (group).

Anhu is a megalithic structure raised to commemorate the great feasting series of Anhu, the same term being used for the megaliths and the festival.

The upright stones called Anhu varies in height from 156 cms to 220 cms and the breadth ranges from 60 cms to 127cms. They are found frequently in the form of alignment, though they might have been raised at different occasions. The rock type used for the construction of these megaliths is sandstone, almost all of them are natural stones i.e. undressed. There is no decoration work on them.

The local traditions associated with these megaliths are as follows:
Among the Chakhesangs, the proposal for raising a megalithic monument by an intending performer is communicated to his relatives or neighbours. If there is a wealthy person and has a number of good harvest and a number of animals like cattle, pig, fowl etc. he would be asked by his relatives and neighbours to offer a series of feasts of merit.

Thus the wealthy person made an attempt to collect sufficient amount of cattle, food stuff and cloth before the time approaches for Arunge in the month of Achoakhru (November, in Chakhesang lunar calendar). During the Arunge festival, the intending performer should inform all his kinsmen that he wish to perform Anhu in the coming year. So that one of his clan members or kinsmen will announce the wishes of the wealthy person, while singing and dancing of Arunge festival is going on at the Khel. At the same time the intending performer or merit-seeker would come forward and request the village elders to agree with his proposals and to grant him the permission of holding Anhu in the proposed date. If he is granted permission, he may start cultivation for the coming feast. Before a Chakhesang Naga can erect a memorial stone in his own name, he should offer a series of feasts at least three times.
For the first feast the intending performer should arrange at least four or five buffaloes, thirty to forty jars of rice-beer, each contains twenty to thirty litres and a good number of dogs and fowls. At this stage, the performer is not entitled to receive any social status. His only duty is to feed the villagers whatever he can.

In the next year, he should cultivate rice for the second feast of Anhu. Like the previous year, the villagers will help him at every stage of cultivation like preparing the jhum and terrace fields, sowing of seeds, transplanting and harvesting.

The process of feasting is the same as in the previous year. At this time, village elders will give the permission to the performer to use perforated or decorated gable and extra-ordinarily long eave boards in the form of buffalo's horn on the roof of his house in the front. Such decorated house is often described by the British administrators as "horn-house" because it possessed "house-horn". The extra-ordinarily long eave-board is called Sede-Kechi and Jatho-Kechi among the Chakhesangs, Uchise (Plate XXII:a) among the Maos(Ememais), Jelsiki (Plate XXVII:a and b) among the Marams, Vechi/Chikai (Plate XL:b) among the Poumais and Lengchenoshim (Plate LV:b) among the Tangkhuls.
The performer may use it either in his new house if he can build a new house or if could not build a new house he may put it on his old house.

In the third year, also, as the last two years the performer will cultivate his rice-fields to get a good harvest for the feast. At this time also the villagers will help him in every stage of cultivation including harvesting. Then in the month of *Achoakhru* (November-December) before *Arunge*, the performer will feed all the villagers freely. The village elders in return allow him to decorate his house with two extra-ordinarily long eaves named *Zhatho-Kechi*, which is different in shape from *Sede-Kechi*. And unlike the first house-born, called *Sede-Kechi*, the second type called *Zhatho-Kechi* is a compulsory item of house decoration signifying the status in the third feast of merit. For erecting the *Zhatho-Kechi* the performer will again kill at least two or three pigs to feed the villagers particular the participants in decorating the house. It is a rule among the Chakhesangs that for every construction of a new house or repairing or adding something to the old ones, it is a must for the owner to feed the villagers who help him in construction and repairing works, with pork. Even the performer or merit-seeker died without performing this house decoration, his successors may erect
this (compulsory decoration if he can give a feast to the co-
villagers.

After the third feasting, the performer is also allo-
wed to wear a special type of loin cloth called Kelichiga.

In the fourth year, as the previous three years, the
performer should continue the same procedure of cultivation
along with a gala feast. At this stage the performer is allo-
wed to erect a memorial stone in his own name.

LOCAL TRADITIONS REGARDING THE SETTING UP OF
THIS STONE MONUMENT:

The first step in this case consist of searching and
selecting a suitable stone to be raised. There is no hard and
fast rule for selecting the stone by the performer. It can be
done by his nearest kinsmen with or without the consent of the
merit-seeker. If the merit-seeker is not present at the time
of selecting the stone, his kinsmen will come and inform the
performer that they have selected the stone. The kinsmen would
also advise him to see the omen of his dream. The Chakhesangs
have a deep rooted faith in the omens of dream. They consider
that the spirit of the selected stone will come to the perfor-
mer and will express its wishes. The spirit, in his dream
makes, its name known to the performer and expresses its wishes to live with the performer forever as desired by the merit-seeker. If the spirit of the stone is not favourable, it may tell the performer that it does not like to stay with him even if the performer comes to drag the stone. So that the merit-seeker would tell the villagers about the dream and the selected stone is rejected. So he had to proceed with the same procedure again until a favourable and suitable stone is selected.

If the omen is good and favourable, the performer along with a priest would go to the place where the selected stone located, taking with them an egg and a cup of rice-beer and place them near the selected stone as offering to the supreme God, Wumi. Meanwhile, the priest would utter "Do not cause any trouble while you are pulled by the draggers. Oh! Stone your place is not this forest. Your place is in the beautiful house of a nobleman. You must not be allowed to stay in this forest. You must go willingly and lightly there". At this time they will also smear some blood of a sacrificed animal either of a cattle or a pig which were brought along with them.

Meanwhile, all the young boys and girls set off for searching Bukherho a kind of hard thorny creeper used for
pulling stone and plaintain leaves and other required materials for the ceremony.

When the preparation is completed the performer guided by the clan elders and village priest will fix an auspicious day. On this day, the performer and his wife are not allowed to go out of their house because it is a prohibition for them. Then the clan elders would go along with the healthy young men and village priest to drag the stone. There the priest offers an egg and rice-beer to the stone as done before and also smear the blood of sacrificed animals. Then the expert persons would tie the stone on the sledge, brought from the house of performer, with strong creeper called Bukherho and after completing this process they are all ready for pulling the stone.

Then an expert person holding a spear would come forward in front of all the stone dragging party and give the signal to start. Once he started to move, he would not stop moving his legs till the pulling stone reaches the selected spot. While pulling the selected stone the participants sing a special song called Chosu Hui (song for stone dragging), and expert person continuously says "Oh stone come, come quickly, let us go quickly because women and children are awaiting for you". Even the stone pullers are taking rest at places and refreshed
themselves with rice-beer which were brought from the performer's house, the expert person who is leading the party is not allowed to rest that he should continued to move his legs but not changing the place. Because the stone will stop to move further if such expert person stop moving and take rest. Sometimes if the stone stop to move further the village priest offer a special cloth called Kelichiga to propitiate the spirit of the stone so that it can move lightly.

When the stone reached the selected spot, the performer and his wife should be informed by one of his kinsman and the performer's wife will come out with a sickle and three kinds of indigenous plants called Thopi, Inhi and Achabo (all are herbs) for purifying the stone and also to signify that the said stone belong to them.

Meanwhile, the stone raising place is levelled and cleared by the village boys and girls. The performer in return offer them a basketful paddy. The boys and girls also dig a hole for setting up the stone and inside this hole the performer's wife puts ginger and aroids. After this, they collectively raise the stone which becomes the property of the performer.
On the stone raising day a grand feast is offered. For the feast they slaughter animals in different ways. First stone raising day is an important festival of the Chakhesangs. For this, the performer had arranged a number of animals, like pigs and cattle. On the stone raising day the healthy youths either the village youths or relatives (kinsmen) from outside or other villages will stand in a long queue awaiting the signal to catch the pig coming out of the pig sty. So the performer open the door of the room only to slip out one pig at a time. All the healthy young boys tried to catch the pig when it passes them. This process continued one after another till the collected animals in the room are completely out. And one of the healthiest person can catch one of these pigs and kill it with his fist.

In case of the cattle, they will tie the animal to two wooden posts, already raised for the purpose, with the help of ropes, leaving some spare so that the cattle can move freely. Then all the villagers will encircle it and some will hit it with sticks in their hands. Thus the cattle will jump and move from place to place to get rid of the strokes. All the people around it, consider it as an amusement and it will continue till the animal get tired and could not move any more. Lastly they kill the animal beating hardly. Then they
cut off its legs and the youngsters dance by holding such legs. Each and every youngsters like to hold such legs so they try to snatch it from others and will jump with joy and merry. Besides, the participants will bite off a piece of flesh from such legs and deposit it in a common place. The participants may include boys, girls, youths and aged persons. And the deposited flesh is then offered to the senior-most person of the village saying "the boys, girls, youths and aged persons have kept a share for you, biting from the cattle's leg. You take and have it".

The remaining part of the cattle, along with the meat of the pigs will be cooked and offered to the villagers. Rice-beer is also served. This is the concluding part of the fourth feast of merit of Anhu feasting series.

Next year, the performer of the fourth series of feast should perform another feast. For this he has to arrange a number of cattle, pig, rice-beer etc. So he needs more help from the villagers, friends and relatives.

In the month of September or October all the village youths set off to cut fire-woods which are needed for cooking rice, meats and brewing liquor etc. for the feast. The process
of fire-wood cutting is also performed in a competitive way. That they cut the large tree trunk (out of the three selected to use as fire-wood during the feast) out of a big tree in the forest, having similar circumference. Then they divide such long trunk into many equal parts, according to the number of competitors who wants to join the contest. Next, all the competitors will come out and align along with their shares, holding their sharp axes in their hands, awaiting the signal to start. The team leader arranged all this process one after the other. Then all the competitors simultaneously started cutting when they received the signal to start. The person who could complete first in cutting the said large tree trunk, is respected by all and honoured as the bravest youth among the competitors, who has the best and sharp-edged axe. He is also regarded as the pioneer of the village of the concerned year. Because such fire-wood cutting with competition is done in every feast of Anhu.

After performing the fifth feast the merit-seeker is allowed to raise two more memorial stones in the name of the performer and his wife.

All the processes of stone searching, selecting, and raising along with the grand feast in this case are also similar to the fourth feast.
The sixth feast is the last one in the series of feast. For this feast the performer and his kinsmen along with the assistance of friends and relatives arrange the required materials. They prepare more rice-beer than the other feast. For this last feast, they use to prepare and brew five wooden jars called Ache made out of a huge log of wood, each containing three thousand to four thousand litres of rice-beer. While brewing, all the kinsmen along with the village youths guard the log-jars day and night for fear that the wooden jars may break down due to heavy load and chemical reactions in the process of brewing.

The other process is the same as the previous feasts described above.

But at this stage, the performer should raise three more stones for the boys and girls of the village.

After performing this ceremony he is regarded as Jashe, the bravest of all.

2. AYICHO

It consist of small stones set up in the form of alignments. They are always found near the river beds. The
rock types used for the construction of this structures are variable. As they consist of elongated pebbles found in the river beds of upper reaches, they form an assorted rock types, such as quartz, limestone, basalt and sometimes quartzite. The structure made of pebbles erected in a row without any decoration on them.

It is not related either with burial or memorial functions. This structure is erected to commemorate some personal events or episodes. In another word, it is a structure to show a tally of successes either in war or love. Usually it is raised by an older person. For instance, one person might have loved or win the hands of many girls or have physical relationship with one or more girls during his life time while he was very young, when their relationship is not socially sanctioned. Afterward when he got married to another girl, he should not forget whatever he had done in his life-time. So to commemorate his love affairs, he may raise such structures during his old age, representing each stone for each girl he loved. If the girls are of the same clan or lineage the stones should be raised much closer and in the case of the same family it should be erected adjacent to one another. And the stones are planted at a considerable distance for the girls who belong to different clans. So the distance between such constituent stones of the small alignment
also form an important aspect of distinction of their relationship. As my informants told me, persons who erect such stones make themselves free from sin. Because, after death, he may be asked by the king of the land of death to narrate his activities of life. If he fails to perform such commemorative function of raising such small alignment he would be punished for the sin he had committed. If he had performed such ceremony, it would be considered as the confession of his sin and this would enable him to face the god of death so that he can lead there a life free from sin. Aged person who indulged in love making in the prime of their youth, may request his family members to raise such structures. He should mention the number of stones to be raised along with its arrangements. On the request of their old father, the sons normally raise this type of megalithic structure before the death of their father. In addition to this type, another row of similar stones with engrave faces may also be added to represent the number of wild animals hunted during the life time of the person.

3. **ARIZA**

It is a wooden statue erected as a modified form of megalith. It is found at the habitational area of the village.
Pl. III: a

Ariza (Wooden statue), Jessami
The timber used for the construction of such structure consists of the oily core portion of pine tree (*Pinus longifolia*) or teak (*Tectona grandis*). It is carved in the form of either a human figure or a human head (Plate III:a).

This structure is neither connected with memorial nor commemorative. It is related with head hunting. According to my informants, it is raised by the famous head-hunters to represents either the number of persons that he had captured alive or the number of heads he had taken on raid.

Once upon a time there were frequent inter village feuds. There is also a tradition among this tribe that if a person can kill some persons and bury the flesh of the slaughtered person(s) in his rice field, it will bring a good harvest to him. On the other hand, one can keep the head of the slaughtered persons and place it in his grave. It is considered to be the best fortune. Because the persons whose heads he had hunted during his lifetime will become the servants of him in the land of death.

So they usually tried to collect as much heads as possible and tied the hunted heads to the wooden post and erect wooden posts to commemorate such events. If they capture the person(s) alive they usually represent it by the statue in life size, and reduces their sizes if they hunted the heads only.
CHAPTER-III
MEGALITHIC CULTURES FOUND AMONG
THE KABUIS (RONGMEIS) OF MANIPUR

THE PEOPLE

The Kabuis also known as Rongmeis, a community of over 80 thousand individuals, are distributed over the western parts of Manipur (Tamenglong district). Scattered pockets of Rongmeis are also found in Imphal, Thoubal, Bishenpur and Senapati districts of Manipur. The Kabuis have a similar social structure - with the Liangmeis and Zemeis but differs in language and material culture. These three communities are grouped together under an organisation called Zeleirong and claim themselves as Nagas. They have patrilineal clans and have a distinct patrilineal bias in the society. The village headman functions as both religious and secular head but in his function as religious head, he is assisted by the village priest, and in his function as secular head he is assisted by a council of elders. They have two distinct dormitories for the unmarried boys and girls. Each dormitory has four division based on the age-groups of the inmates. The Kabuis, though most of them converted to Christianity, still practise their traditional and religious functions. Among them Chakak-Gan-Ngai may be mentioned. The following areas were investigated
by me in connection with my study. These are the Kabui vi-
llages of Chingkhulong, Kakhulong, Majorkhul, Keisamthong, 
Moirangkhom, Mahabali Kabui, Pandon (Ragailung), Chingmei-
rong Kabui, Sawombung Kabui, Koirenggei Kabui, Tharon (Thang-
meiband), Tarung, Leimanei, Lainingkhul (Khundi), Sabantong, 
Hiyangthang Kabui, Keikhu, Langthabal Kabui, Sangaiiprou, 
Aramji Kabui, Khoupum (near Langthabal), Konthoujam, Heigrum-
jam Kabui in Imphal district.

Naorem (Nambol Makha), Maibam Kabui (Lokpaching), 
Keiram (near Nambol), Namthanhung, Langgempokpi, Keinou, Phoi-
ing Tongba etc. of Bishenpur district, Goichangsen (near 
Andro), Tahui, Sangaithel, Jainu, Namching, Maha Kabui etc. 
in Sadar Hills, Senapati district. The Leisangkhong Kabui, 
Wangoi Kabui, Mayang Imphal Kabui, Charoiubung etc. of Thoubal 
district.

And Charoi Pandongba, Charoi Chaotlang, None, Lu-
khambi Khullen and Khunou, Rangkhang, Awang Khun, Taobam, 
Khongsang, Kaikao, Sarungpan, Changdai, Khongjron, Tamenglong, 
Dailong, Rengpang, Nungba, Kambiron, Sigulong (Sivalong), Long-
kao, Chingkao, Kapuncai, etc. of Tamenglong district.

Among the villages of different districts, some
selected fields where megaliths and megalithic rituals are still found to occur, have thoroughly investigated. The description of the megalithic sites are given below.

A. **CHINGKHULONG MEGALITHIC SITE:**

Chingkhulong megalithic site is located in and around the Chingkhulong village, near Lamsang Bazar of Imphal district. It is about 8 Kms. away from Imphal on the west. It is situated on the northern side on Imphal-Kangchup road, a state highway. It is bounded on the east by Lainingkhul (Khundi) a Kabui village and Khundeibal, on the south by Lamsang Bazar and state highway (Kangchup Road), on the west by Zousongnam Kabui and Laingamkhul and on the north by Lamdeng and Lamdeng Khunou. The megaliths are found inside and outside the village.

A living megalithic tradition is found in this village. This is described with the classification of megaliths and the associated local traditions in the following pages. When asked about the origin and antiquity of the prevalent megalithic tradition in their society. The Kabuis emphasise that it has been there ever since their ancestors founded the village.

**MEGALITHIC STRUCTURES AND TYPES**

The existing megaliths of Chingkhulong site can be
classified under three types based on their functions and structures. Their structural classifications are as follows with structural and functional types along with their local names:

TABLE - 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified type</th>
<th>Functional type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>Bhāmbōo</td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>Long standing stone, serving as the village deity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or Soang</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>Taokhon</td>
<td>Small cairn</td>
<td>A heap of stones raised by the descendant for their forefathers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or Thel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>Samdon</td>
<td>Cairn associated</td>
<td>Megalithic structures erected by a wealthy person in his memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or Reniu Kengmei</td>
<td>dolmen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Bhāmbōo

It is a small menhir. It is always located outside the main habitational area but within the village gate. They are erected in pairs.

The rock type used for the construction of the megaliths is sandstone. It is about 121.6 cm. high, 60.8 cm. broad
and 20 cm thick. It is broad at the base and somewhat tapering towards the top. This menhir is located on the southern side of the village. And it is known as Kaipi bhāmbōo and the other on the northern gate is called Kaipa bhāmbōo. It measures 162 cm x 52.5 cm x 20 cm in height, breadth and thickness respectively. They are rough undressed stones.

This type of megaliths is connected neither with burial nor with monument. It is regarded by the Kabuis as the village deity. The duality of the deity is also indicated by the dual names by which it is generally known. The deity in charge of the northern side is called Kaipi Bāmbōo (female stone) while the other one in charge of the south is known as Kaipa Bhāmbōo (male stone). But both of them are also collectively known as Joang.

Generally no temple is built for these deities (menhirs). Simply two particular spots one on the north and the other on the south, a little away from the habitational area of the village are selected for setting up the menhirs representing the village deities, and the said places are kept reserved for these deities forever till the village is abandoned.

In fact such places are rather sanctified places
unfrequented by men, women and children. One or two stones (Bhāmboo) are usually kept erected, as stated earlier, in those places representing the deities which are regarded not only their protector but also the protectors of the birds and beasts of the village from evil spirit and epidemic diseases. Annually, they use to worship these megaliths representing village deities. Before a village festival or ceremony is performed the performer should worship the Bhāmboo or Boang by offering ginger and from such offered ginger the village priest called mooh forecasts omens for the coming festivals.

Among the Kabuis there are different grades of priests called mooh (priest). The junior grade of priest is called Rei-tumooh and the senior grade Mooh-zung. There are also some diviners of various attainments known as Dansanmei, Butumei and Mangkeimei.

The ceremony of offering of ginger to Bhāmboo is called Gulim Dansanmei. By performing this ceremony the diviners can foretell what will happen in future or what causes the sufferings etc. etc; and can prescribe necessary sacrifices for his or her recovery.

Gulimdansanmei is performed on different occasions.
For instance - for every festivals, gulimdansanmel is performed to know whether the coming festival will go smoothly or not. And in case some villagers are ready to set off to participate in any tournament for wrestling, organised by other villagers, they will offer eggs to Bhamboo for their success and performed gulimdansanmel to know whether they would gain or lost the game.

If some persons had done something wrong due to drunkeness or if someone is seriously ill due to severe diseases, it is firmly believed that they should propitiate the spirit of the Bhamboos by offering eggs for speedy recovery. Chickens are generally sacrificed in those places from time to time propitiating the said deities for protecting them from epidemic diseases, death and disaster.

As stated in the foregoing pages, it is learnt that the villagers performs Gulimdansanmei before any occasion. Thus before performing a festival (i.e. Chakak Gan Ngai), the village elders or members of Pei headed by the village priest Mooh performed Gulimdansanmei in front of the Bhamboos uttering,

"Kãipi-Bhamboo, Kãipa Bhamboo asheihei
Khunsâng Ngãidåi Congpooneethe heineihei
Agai Agimei mak phaisooi banahongmak
Soomei noomei makna kālam kälu
Nānmak Kachap karek mānmakkher asheihei
Gulimdansān keipoothe gākki gakkā lounośćtho

The English translation of which is as follows:

"Khunthak Bhamboō (Bhamboō of the North), Khunka-Bhamboō (Bhamboō of the south) today festival is started, on these days (during the festivals) be kind, to prevent any violence, quarrels or danger or suffering from illness and disorders in dance, music and discipline. For this we are performing ginger offering ceremony. You please prevail and protect us from evils."

Hence these menhirs played very important role in the socio-religious functions among the traditional Raboi society. Thus the same type of Gulimdansanmei ceremony is observed in different festivals like Ree-ngai, Ringai, Tunqai and Gen-ngai.

Gulimdansanmei is performed in this way. That the moooh will keep a plaintain leaf in front of the Bhamboō to be worship. Then he will select a piece of fleshy ginger and put off its skin by using a special knife. Then he will divide it into two halves. Next he will put one half on the plaintain
leaf and the other on the sharp edge of the knife and chant a 
hyman mentioned above and will throw over the other half on the 
plaintain leaf. If the half ginger fall accurately on the other 
half, then the diviner or mooh will foretell that the commen-
cing festival will be harmonious. Otherwise he will asked the 
village elders to take care of the coming festival as omen is 
not good.

After performing this Gulimsdansanmei, the mooh pour 
rice-beer (zou or soupan) on the Bhambo. In the same place 
and at the same time the mooh will offer the same Gulimsdansa-
mei and soupan (pouring of zou) to different Gods like Kairao 
(ancestor of the family also of the tribe), Kapakara (devil 
or demons), Karampou-Karampej (presiding deities of the place), 
and Ragang or Legong (creator of the universe) in separate 
plaintain leaves. After completing this, the mooh left the 
plaintain leaves used for pouring zou, upside down.

In this village, such Bhambo is erected, as my in-
formants particularly, Mr. Manggoljao Kamei of Chingkhulen told 
me, in the year 1926 when the village came down from the nei-
ghbouring Lamdeng hill to this plain area. He also narrated 
to me that such menhirs, are known differently according to 
their locations as Kaipi Bhambo and Kaipa Bhambo, were
brought down from their former village. When the author asked about the local traditions and rituals associated with the erection of such megaliths, he simply repeated that the stone is selected by the village elders who belong to the Peimei or Fei group.

The selected stones should be brought by the village youths and raised on an auspicious day. Before raising such stones, they pour some liquid taken out from the ground, fleshy gingers and rice-beer.

(b) Taokhon

Before a Kabui Naga can erect a memorial stone for the first time in his name or in the name of his deceased father, he must pray to the gods for blessings along with a number of feasts.

Taokhon is a memorial stone, raised by piling up a large number of boulders, in the form of a rectangular heap. It is found inside the habitational area, particularly in the dwelling complex of the owner. In some cases, it is raised outside the village gate (Plate IVia).

The boulders used for the construction of this
Pl. IV: a

Taokhon, Chingkhulen
structures are of variable sizes, the smallest being 26 cm. x 10 cm. x 7.5 cm. in length, breadth and thickness and the largest 106.4 cm. x 60.8 cm. x 5 cm. in length, breadth and thickness. The total area of the Taokhon is 182.4 cm. x 152 cm. x 60.8 cm. high above the ground.

The Taokhon is constructed by arranging some suitable boulders, either piling one above the other or erecting the stones of suitable height, to form a rectangular enclosure firmly. Such rectangular enclosure is filled up with earth. Then they rammed it firmly. After that they laid other cover-stone or capstone. Among them, one is the most important associated with various socio-religious function. On the northern side of the said rectangular structure, there stands another longer but slender stone to mark the special capstone.

The rock types used for the construction of this Taokhon is sandstone.

As stated in the foregoing pages, it is learnt that before a Kabui Naga can erect a Taokhon or a memorial stone, he must pray to gods for blessings by offering a number of feastings. And the performer himself, should be a number of the village council, not less than the member of Changloi.
The merit-seeker performs the following feast of merit.

1. Bamsou
2. Mulengdai
3. Taokhon
4. Ban ru, and
5. Kaismi

1. Bamsou

The initial feast of merit is called Bamsou. It is called Phamchak Pijabe in Manipuri. It is a feast to feed the whole village if he is promoted to the Pei.

Requirements:

  x mithun
  xx pigs
  xxx cocks or hen and
  xxxx rice-beer

Bamsou can be performed on a large scale or on a small scale. The elaborate Bamsou continues for 6 days, while in smaller one may last for one day only.

Smaller Bamsou: For his promotion he must give a feast to the village and other outsiders if he desires.
On this day, the village priest (mooh) will sacrifice a cock or a pig. In the case of cock, they will see omen through the position of the legs of the sacrificed cock. If the right leg is found on the left, the mooh will foretell that the ensuing feasting will bring prosperity to the family of the performer. If the left side is found over the right leg, it is considered that there will be some sort of ill-luck to the performer's family. Then similarly the position of the liver of the sacrificed pig is observed to foretell good or bad luck. Then the cooked meat, rice and rice-beer are served to the villagers.

If the merit-seeker wishes to perform an elaborate function of Bamzou he would arranged all kinds of requirements. Then he would inform his relatives particularly the son-in-laws and brother-in-laws. If the performer had no sister or daughter, he would asked the husbands of close relative's sisters and daughters of the same clan or lineage.

Before five days of Bamzou, all the son-in-laws and brother-in-laws will come and on this day preparation of rice-beer brewing is started. All the in-laws will be help by the village boys and girls. At the same time sacrifice of animals is also done along with foretelling of good or bad luck started.
The slaughtered animal's meat is offered along with food to the participants.

On the second, third and fourth days, villagers mainly village boys and girls of youth dormitory may come to take care of the brewed rice-beer. The main duty of taking care of the wine jars fall upon the members of the family and their relatives.

On the fifth day, Bhamzou (zou-liquor for promotion) feast is celebrated. On this day the number of animals to be slaughtered is also increased along with the quantity of food and drinks. So they arranged the sufficient cooked rice to meet the requirement of the day. Because on this day many guests may come and join the ceremony whether they are invitees or not.

All the son-in-laws and brother-in-laws will take part in slaughtering the animals, then distributing them to all the guests with food and rice-beer. This is a must for all the in-laws in every stage of feasting. They will also distribute all the agricultural products that they produce in the fields, like arum, pumkin, chillies, ginger, turmeric, cotton, white-sesame seeds, tobacco, country bean, soyabean and other leaves. Moreover, they prepare a special dish made out of rice-beer and
fried sesame seeds. Besides, they will serve the guests, invitees, villagers and any other stranger who are participating in the ceremony with different kinds of rice-beer, viz Yungou (white rice-beer), Kalei and Atingba (uncooked rice-beer).

Meanwhile, from the first day, an old male member of the performer’s clan called Mailupou will stay inside the first room, meant for the unmarried members, of the house. He will continue to stay inside this room observing many gennas till the ceremony is over. He will observe food genna and continue to pray god for the welfare of the family forever. Even he was not allowed to go out in the sun. If he goes out he must cover his head and body by cloth. Otherwise the family will suffer from illness and death. This happens to many performer’s family, says the villagers.

After feasting on the fifth day, the village elders and unmarried boys perform kollu meaning singing and dancing with chanting of Hoi, hai, hoi, a loud yell, the typical Naga yell normally heard in Naga villages. The Kabui Nagas believed that the wealth spent in the ceremony is replenished soon.

Next morning, the performer of Bamingou hoists one more feast for the co-villagers to repay their services in performing
Bamsou ceremony. This feast is called Napkaomei (Phoukouba in Manipuri). The drinking, drumming and dancing last the whole night. They sang the song called Māzālu appraising the performer for the feast.

2. Mulengdal

Mulengdal is generally performed when the merit-seeker gets the best harvest. On the other hand any person may perform, according to his wish, but the merit-seeker himself should be a performer of Bamsou.

If a person wishes to perform such ceremonial feast he should inform the Peimei (the council of village elders) and the Peimei in turn informs the villagers, before the paddy begins to ripe. In such case, the villagers participate in harvesting the performer's crops. They must keep a little portion of the paddy without harvesting, so that this portion of paddy could be harvested ceremonially.

For this, the merit-seeker waits till the villagers could finished their harvest. Then he will fix an auspicious day to do the ceremonial harvest. On this day also all the villagers will come to complete the harvesting left out by them. The intending merit-seeker will feed the participants with meat,
food and drink. For this feast, he will bring two or three pigs to the field and kill them on the spot. Meanwhile, all his daughters and sisters and other related daughters and sisters of the merit-seeker will come with testy rice-beer, fishes, pork and vegetables loaded in their baskets (sham). In return, the intended performer will repay them with basketful paddy when they return home.

The paddy thus harvested on this day will be brought to the performer's home in a special manner. They usually carry their load of rice in carrying baskets called Sham. On this last harvesting day for Mulengdalei ceremony, they carry the paddy in three special bags (made out of thick cloths) called Goon. These three Goons have different sizes. The largest bag is believed to represent the god of death called Zouqongpurel Goon. The next larger bag is believed to represent the healthy and matured unmarried youths and the smallest one Goon, represent the unmarried girls. The remaining paddy may be brought home by their traditional method of transporting in carrying baskets (shams).

These Goons are believed to have many religious virtues. That those persons, who can smoothly carry this Goon while transporting, may wash away all their sins and ill health and bring prosperity and happiness in their future life.
And those persons who accidentally fall down while carrying the bags may get weak-health afterwards. And the huge packets, as a rule, are not allowed to fall on the ground till it reaches the owner's barn. If it falls on the way, may cause many harms to the owner's family afterwards. For that, the intending performer manages some healthy and expert persons to serve as carriers of the Goon.

When the said Goons and remaining paddys reach home, the bags are emptied inside the barn. After completing this ceremony, all the participants will shout the Naga yell hoi, hai, hoi. In the meantime some village elders offer rice-beer to god. This is followed by Mazalu, a song praising the host, and the host in return feed them with food and drink and the whole night is spent in this manner.

Generally Mulengda is performed in the month of December. Hence, just after harvesting all the village boys and girls will come to the intending performer's house to render their services in arranging necessary items for the grand feast. Such boys and girls are to be fed by the host. It will be continued till the grand feast is over.

Then the intending performer informs all his kinsmen of his clan and all the in-laws of the clan e.g. brother-in-laws,
son-in-laws, grand son-in-laws etc. to assemble in the merit-seeker's house on a fixed day to give their opinion about performing the ceremony. They also declare their amount of contributions to the ceremony in case or kind whatever they can. But there is no fix rule regarding the quantity or amount of their contribution. They may contribute for the feasting whatever they can. They feel content to declare whatever they can contribute for the feast, either meat or fish or rice-beer or cash. On this day itself, the performer, along with his clan elders fix an auspicious day for performing **Mulongdai**.

Ten days before the beginning of **Mulongdai**, the **zoudai** will be performed. It is the ceremony to husk the rice and pounded into rice-flour for brewing rice-beer. On this day the village elders will beat drums and a boy with a girl for each pounding mortar according to the number of boys and girls of the village, will pound the rice (**sudai** or **zoudai**). They also sing while pounding. The pounding will continue according to the rhythm of the drumming. For pounding rice-flour, it is also necessary to perform **Gulimdansanmei** at **Bhāmbōo** to know which boy or girl is the best to start first pounding of **sudai**. After **Gulimdansanmei** they also performed **Langpaidsanmei** to know the actual in-law to take the first responsibility for slaughtering animals for the feast. Selection of such person is done with the help of a bow - which is kept inverted and an expert person
will hold on the string calling the names of the in-laws. The bow will swing freely if the name is not suited for the purpose and the swinging of the bow will stop if the name of the suited person is mentioned. The selected person, generally an in-law, is required to kill the Mithun for the coming feast (Mulengdai). Because there is a great belief among the Kabuis that the Mithun to be sacrificed has tears in his eyes it causes sufferings. If the person, selected in such way kills the animal, that tear is not seen in its eyes as it is believed that the ceremony will bring prosperity to the family. With this belief the Kabuis performed Langpaidsesanmei.

The rest of the ceremony is same as that of Bamzou (described above). Five days before the ceremony of brewing of rice-beer called zoubin takes place.

On the fifth day after zoubin, the Mulengdai is performed.

As in Bamzou, they feed all the guest, invitees and the co-villagers of the performer with meat, food and drinks. Moreover they will be served with various agricultural and horticultural products from their own fields. On this day they will feed and distributes different agricultural products to all the participants and visitors during the feast which last
for five days. The distribution of agricultural products is called Zoulumei. When Zoulumei is completed, the ceremony is over. So after completing zoulumei all the village elders will sing kollu inside the performer's house.

Next day, all the in-laws, clan elders will gather and find out the persons who did not attended the ceremony. Then they will send pieces of meat to the absentees so that they may get their shares.

At this stage the merit-seeker is allowed to raise a heap of stone in honour of his deceased father, mother, grand father or grand mother or even his brothers or relatives. Generally it is done by a son for his deceased father.

There is a rule among the Kabuis in connection with the erection of Taokhon (heap of stone) in honour of one's deceased father. It is necessary for the intending merit-seeker to find out in the history of his family, if any of his forefathers has raised such type of megaliths during their lifetimes. If it was raised by someone, the present donor would start counting the name of his forefathers from the time of the said donor to the time of the present donor's father in whose name the Taokhon is to be raised.

Procedures to be followed during the raising ceremony
of Taokhon are as follows.

Before fixing the date of raising of Taokhon, the intending performer would ask the village council known as Peimei or Thoubei, in Manipuri, by offering a pot of rice-beer to the said council for their permission.

Then the members of the council will come to the house of the intending donor. On this day, an elder person of the village offers rice-beer and ginger juice to god Raqang and by holding a hoe (Louqai) high up, he will utter the words: "This family wants to perform such ceremony for raising Taokhon in honour and memory of their deceased father or so and so. So you kindly protect him from any kind of difficulty and misshape while performing this ceremony".

Then the intending performer will fix a date on an auspicious day in consultation with some clan and village elders.

In former days the Kabuis used to select their stones after performing some ritual sacrifices. But now-a-days, as a rule or conventionally, the stone searching party goes to a quarrying place where stones are readily available. There they release a hen as an offering to the presiding deity of the
place. Before bringing the stones to the performer's home, rice-beer will be poured over them. Gulimdansanmei also performed, as they did at Bhamboo, in front of these stones, to know the future relation of the stones and the performer. In olden days such stones were carried on their sledges or by slings hanging from their shoulders with the chanting of Hoi. They also rested at regular intervals where they were refreshed with food and rice-beer. Now-a-days, transportation of such stones is done with the help of vehicles. Resting on the way back home is a must for refreshment with food and drink accompanied by chanting hoi, hai. These stones are not carried to the selected place until the fixed day of the ceremony.

When the fixed day for the ceremony is approaching the villagers start construction of the foundation of structure with smaller stones to the height of about 60.8 cm. or more. They will then make a hole at the centre of the foundation which is again covered by a number of stones. The last stone to be placed on this memorial is a larger stone slab (in comparison to the others used for constructing a Taokhon), which is considered the most important of all, and is left behind after selection in the quarry awaiting the special rituals to be performed.

On this day, seven different types of animals are
killed so as to cook seven different kinds of curry to offer to their god along with seven different kinds of fishes. If the performer cannot procure seven different kinds of animals, he may sacrifice only one pig or a cow or a bull or a mithun and cook the curry separately into seven types by dividing the body of the animal into seven parts such as liver, heart, legs, head, the dorsal part, the ventral part and the hind part. Then the performer spreads out a large plaintain leaf over the raised plateform near the hole made for placing offerings. On the plaintain leaf eight small dishes made out of the plain­tain leaf will be laid in two rows with two extra leaves on either side of the rows to offer food to the evil spirits.

This is followed by the offering of different cooked items - rice, meat, rice-beer, etc. to their ancestors starting from the name of the last performer to the name of the father of the present performer. While offering food, the performer will introduce every item saying, this is rice, this curry, this is rice-beer, this is the meat, the meat of this and that animal and this liver, this is heart and so on separately to every ancestor. The food to the ancestors is served by the right hand of the performer, while offering food to the evil spirit, the left hand is used.

This is followed by chanting of many religious hymns
by the village priest *mooh*. The prayer on this occasion is as follows. "The performer is worshipping you all ancestors to propitiate by feeding different animals' meat, food and drink. So you all bless him and give a beneficial influence in the fertility of the donor and his crops. That if the donor planted ginger please spread like the lark's wing, if he planted chillies he may collect it in good crops that it must bear its fruits like a spread out red cloth, if he rears cattle please increase its number and fill up the vacant cattle shed, if he rear pig, fill the piggyery with numerous pigs, if he rear fowls fill up its hencoops, if he cultivate rice, please fill up his barn with rice, if he planted pumpkin please protect from insects and pests so that he can offer him in plenty at *ban ru* or *Kirtan* in Manipuri and Hindi, if the performer planted maize, tobacco, aroids, turmeric, beans, cotton and other leafy spices please bless and assist him to have a good harvest, and along with this please fill up the Khuk or Tabu (money box) with plenty of money so that he can offer all these in the next or commencing grand feast *Ban ru.*" 

While chanting the prayer, the four little dishes in the first row will be pushed into the hole, made in the centre of the foundation and drinks will be poured into the hole. The same prayer will be chanted by the *mooh* and along with this the four small dishes in the second row will be pushed down
into the same hole. Then the other two larger dishes made on other plaintain leaves will be kept aside after pouring Zou (rice-beer). Because these two dishes are not allowed to put into this hole because these will be thrown out in the far away spot. Thus just after pushing down the light small dishes into the hole the performer is allowed to fill up the whole with earth and rammed it again and again.

Meanwhile Taosang will be performed. It is nothing but releasing a cock on the flat stone, which is the last stone to be laid on the Taokhon and it is also the most important stone for this ceremony. Taosang must be performed before the stone is placed on the heap of stones. They perform Taosang (sharing of the stone), so that it cannot cause any damage or hurt to women and child, if they touch or stand on it accidentally without making any offer to the cap-stone, which is also known by the same name Taokhon. It is believed by the Kabuis that if the spirit of the stone takes the form of a evil spirit it may cause damage to the performer and also to any person who touches it. Thus to propitiate the spirit of the stone monument, the donor performs Taosang.

Just after performing Taosang, the flat cap-stone is placed to cover the rammed hole. Then Zou (rice-beer) is poured
down as an offering as well as purification. This is followed by drinking the rice-beer by the mooh. When the mooh started drinking all are allowed to drink rice-beer. But the feast is already started from the early morning as and when the visitors, invitees come in. Feasting is done on the system of first come first serve basis.

After drinking, the great Naga yell of hoi, hai will be started with drumming and beating of gongs (Senbung in Kabui). Then all will come and performed Zoulumei, the ceremony for distribution of vegetables collected from the field of donor. If Zoulumei is finished, it will be considered that the ceremony for raising Taokhon is completed.

The closing part of this ceremony is the same as that of Damzou and Kulengdai but in this case all the son-in-laws and brother-in-laws, commonly known as the Muilupou are not allowed to participate.

The donor of the Taokhon expects to gain by its celebration not only prestige but also the blessings of the dead ancestors in whose name the Taokhon is raised, and there exist, among the Kabuis, the strong belief that the spirit will exert a beneficial influence in the fertility of the donor and his crops.
It is a memorial structure raised by wealthy or brave person in his memory. Structurally, it is a heap of stone associated with menhir and dolmen. It is always found outside the village habitational area i.e. particularly by the roadside leading to plain areas, so that one can use it as seat. The main purpose for raising such monuments is to provide resting places for the travellers.

The procedures for raising such structure are similar to that of Taokhon. First the willing person should notice to the villager about his wishes. Then he should bring one jar of rice-beer to Peimei or Thoubei (council of village elders) saying that he wish to make a resting place on the way leading to plain areas. The village council will permit him after some discussion.

The merit-seeker then settled an auspicious day and inform it to the villagers. On the said day all the male members of the village will gather in his courtyard. Then they set out for the selected place to construct the desire structure. The male members who share in collecting and transporting the stones as well as in construction work, should be fed by the performer. If he wants to built a large resting place he had
to offer a lot, means for many days till the construction work is completed. If he wish to construct a smaller one his expenditure will be less. Unlike the construction of the Taokhon no ritual is necessary. But for offering food and drink he may offer whatever he had. Thus, if the merit-seeker wishes to perform an elaborate function of Bamdon he would arranged all kinds of requirements.

Those persons who performed Bamzou or Jamzao, Huleng-dai and raised a Taokhon he may perform the next function of Ban ru, the great grand feast. All the procedures of Ban ru is similar to that of Hulengdai mentioned in previous pages. Above all, dancing is also performed on the last day of Ban ru i.e. on the day of Zoulumei. On this day all the village boys and girls together dance together at first, then it is followed by the girls only.

On the next day, Napchanmei will be performed. On this day dances will be performed with the chanting of Holam a Naga yell.

This is followed by the sacrifice of animals and the head of such sacrificed animal is played by holding as a game. At the same time dancing is also continued and such type of dancing i.e. all the dancers (boys and girls) joins their hands
holding one after another (Like the Thabel Chongba of Meiteis) is called Banzai. At this stage, no dancer is allowed to come out by breaking such chain of holding hands in hand. If so, it will suffer the health of the dancer. Hence, the dancers are always alert while participating Banzai. And it is also consider that Ban ru is completed if Banzai is over.

The last feast of merit found among the Kabuis is called Kaisumi or Kaisumei. It is the grand feast given by a merit-seeker for the construction of a special house Tarangkai. This type of house can be constructed by a wealthy person, who can perform a series of feast of merit mentioned in the foregoing pages, like Samzou, Mulengdai, Taokhon, Ban ru, etc.

B. THE SALANGTHEL MEgalithic Site:

The Salangthel megalithic site is located on the hill ranges of Thangjing, overlooking the Loktak lake at a short distance towards the west of Thamnapokpi village inhabited by plain dwelling Manipuri Meitei, near Moirang. It is about 50 kms. away from Imphal on the south-west, in Churachandpur district. At Salangthel and its neighbouring areas, there are a large number of megalithic monuments. The village of Salangthel is presently populated by a Haokip tribe and is bounded on the
east by the plain areas of Bishenpur district, and Loktak lake, on the south by Khoirentak and Beljang, on the west by Areirol village, and on the north by several villages.

The megaliths found in this area are not associated with the recent inhabitants of the area. It appears that these megalithic structures were erected by some ancient inhabitants of the area. But the area was once a Kabui village, ruled by the famous legendary physician, Kabui Salang Maiba. These megaliths are found distributed in different localities covering an area of about 6 sq.km. with different altitudes.

The different types of megaliths found in this area are listed below. These are distributed in 15 localities.

TABLE - 5

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Pl.V:a
A cluster of standing stones, Salangthel site

Pl.V:b
A row of menhirs, Salangthel site
PLATE VI

Pl.VI:a

Paireng Khuntek (A row of menhir), Salangthel site

Pl.VI:b

An alignment, Salangthel site
**PLATE VII**

**Pl.VII:a**

*Dungbang* (A row of stone seats)
Salangthel site

**Pl.VII:b**

Another *Dungbang*
(Another row of stone seats, partly seen)
Salangthel site
Pl. VIII:a

**Taobouh** (A bluish monolith raised for boundary)

Pl. VIII:b

Another **Taobouh** (boundary monolith)
Pl. IX: a
Engrave figure of female genital

Pl. IX: b
Another engrave stone
Pl.X:a
An alignment form by two rows of five menhirs, (one row is partly seen)
Salangthel site

Pl.X:b
Remaining part of Pl.X:a
Alignments, consisting of avenues of menhirs erected in rows or in some systematic order are found in several localities in this area. Some of the alignments are described below:

**Locality I**

We start counting the number of locality from the foothill as locality I, II, III and so on up to the top ridges where it extends up to the locality number XV. Here at locality I, we find an alignment. This alignment has two rows of standing stones set in rectangular plan. Each row consists of five menhirs. They are all roughly hewn monuments. Some of them have been broken; while some others are found intact. They are not of the same size. Their heights varied from 91.2 cm. to 154.5 cm. Some of them consists of flatten slabs, broad at the base and tapering towards the top. These two rows of megaliths are found on both sides of the path leading to the higher ridges. The locality is about 1134 mt. M.S.L. The orientation of this alignment is north to south direction. At present, the megalithic field is covered by thatch-grass (Plate VI:a).
**Locality II**

At a higher level, than the first locality, there is also an alignment, of single row, consisting of three menhirs, out of which two are fallen. The shape of these structures are roughly cylindrical. The height of the standing stone is 121.6 cm., while the two fallen megaliths measures 184.9 cm. to 199.9 cm. respectively in height. The altitude of this area is 1320 mts. above M.S.L.

**Locality III**

About 150 steps away from the Locality II, there is a flat ridge, which is a clear spot like a meadow and the area is covered by low grass only. In this area we find another group of megaliths. Here the megaliths are arranged in north-west and north-south alignments to form a rectangular shape cluster. It has four rows of standing stones and each row contains of four menhirs. Thus this standing stones are set in a rectangular plan with four rows of four stones (Plate V:a). Between these settings there is one engraved stone. Out of the 16 stones of the alignments 2 stones are found fallen. The altitude of this area is 1400 mts. above M.S.L.

**Locality IV**

Further, to the south of locality III, at a higher
altitude about 1403 mts above M.S.L., there is also an alignment. This group consists of six standing stones of varying sizes.

Localities V and X

Further on the south, there is a gradient low-lying area in between the two elevated ridges in the east and in the west, forming a conical shape depression in north-south direction. The area is relatively clear covered by grass sparingly. The soil cover in this locality is sandy. Here we find another alignment. It consists of two rows of monoliths, each row is made up of five standing stones lying on both sides of the old village tract (Plate X:1a). Thus five monoliths stand on the eastern side of the village tract, while the remaining five monoliths exist on the western side. The menhirs, located in the alignment of the western side have higher and larger structures than the eastern side. The altitude of this area is 1360 mts. above M.S.L. A foot-print is also found engraved on a horizontal flat stone. The heights and breadths of these megaliths forming the alignments vary from 162 cm. to 182.4 cm. in height and 60.8 cm. to 91.2 cm. in breadth. Localities X also possess an alignment of 6 menhirs.

2. Cairn

It consists of a barrow made of a heap of stone-
rubbles, the upper or top layer being covered by earth and some stone rubbles are found exposed. It is found in Locality XV.

Locality XV

On the western side of the Locality III but on another spur of the same range, there we find another type of megalith. It is of the shape of a barrow, capped shaped, encircled by a row of boulders of considerable sizes. The circle has a diameter of 972.8 cm. and the circumference being 20.98 cm. This heap of stone is now exposed, but once it was covered with earth. The expose feature is similar to the cairn type of Puilong site of Jnapati district.

While digging a post-hole for fencing the circle with barb-wires, a piece of charcoal and potsherds were found, which are now housed in the Mutua Museum.

No further excavation has been carried out in the site.

3. Avenues

A group of alignments approximately parallel with one another, but always more than two rows of alignments is classified
as avenue. An avenue of megaliths is found in two respective localities, that is, at Locality III and Locality VII. Locality III is already described while defining the alignments.

**Locality VII**

This area is about 1 km. towards the north of the Locality III. It is a flat ridge of the same range Thangjing, on which a cluster of megaliths are found running in north-south direction. It is again crossed by another rows of monoliths running in east-west direction. There are also some flat stones, which will be described in appropriate place, with foot-print engravings. The total number of megaliths that exist here are seventeen. Out of these seventeen monoliths, fourteen are still found erect. Two of them are lying horizontally on the ground and the other one is found broken. To the eastern side of this cluster of megaliths there runs the village. The altitude of this locality VII is 1340 mts. above M.S.L.

4. **Foot prints/engravings(line drawings)**

Foot-prints, line drawings and other forms of engravings are also found at Salangthel megalithic site and its surroundings. The total number of foot-prints found in the area consists of 13 pairs of engraved feet. Other engravings
consisting of line drawings appear to be counting symbols. There are also erotic engraved figures consisting of female genital organs and copulation (Plate IX: a and b).

**Foot-Prints**

Many foot-prints (thirteen in number) are found scattered at different localities are III, V, VII and XIII. All are found in life size form.

**Locality III**

At this locality, there are two flat horizontal stones engraved with foot-prints. They are seven in number. The altitude of this area is 1400 mts. above M.S.L. The flat stones measures 61 x 50 x 14 cms and 41 x 140 x 15 cms respectively. On the smaller flat horizontal stone there are two pairs of engraved foot-prints in line engraving; while the larger one possesses five pairs. Two pairs of foot-prints are largely defaced while other five pairs are found damaged. They are all found engraved on sandstone rock.

**Locality V**

A pair of foot-print is found engraved on a horizontal flat stone in this locality. It is located about 1 Km. away to the south from locality III. It is the largest stone slab
measuring 150 x 61 x 15 cms. It is largely defaced. The altitude of this area is 1360 mts. above M.S.L. It is found associated with ten menhirs in two rows, each row having five menhirs.

**Locality VII**

This area is also about 1 Km. on the north-east of locality III. Three foot-prints are observed in this locality. These foot-prints are found in association with a cluster of menhirs in the form of an avenue. The foot-prints are engraved on a flat slab of sandstone. The engraved slab measures 51 x 91 x 14 cms.

**Locality XIII**

On the further north-eastern side of locality III, there occurs locality XII, on the central main ridge. The altitude of this area is 1300 mts. above M.S.L. Here we find an engraved symbol of foot-print along with some counting symbol on the same slab. The size of this slab measures 48 x 42 x 12 cms. It is also in association with the megaliths found in this locality. This stone slab is now brought and housed at the Mutua Museum, Keisampat, Imphal.
**Counting symbols**

Counting symbols are found in two localities that is at Longbai and Salangthel and at locality XIII they are associated with the foot-prints.

These symbols indicate the counting system of ancient Naga societies of the pre-modern period. The symbols consist engraved small lines parallel to one another but of unequal length. Sometimes its number is increases while in some cases only a few lines were engraved.

**Female genital organs and sexual copulation symbols**

At a higher altitude, at Locality VI, there is one engraved symbol of female genital organ along with a copulation figure on two different horizontal flat stone. The stone slab measures 150 x 422 x 16 cms (Plate IX: a and b).

At the same altitude and at the same locality there is also another work of engraving, showing the figure of copulation in line engraving.

5. **Menhirs**

It is the dominant structure found in the Salangthel megalithic site and its adjoining areas. They are distributed
almost all over the localities numbering about fourteen. Among these six localities come under alignment category as they are formed by a row and more rows of menhirs. And two localities come under avenue category. The menhirs are also found at localities like VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII etc. (Plate VIII: a and b).

**Locality VIII**

Locality No. VIII is situated next the Locality VII on the eastern side of the tract. This locality is found on a ridge of the same range and have six large monoliths along with a horizontal slab. These monoliths are arranged in such a way that three menhirs are set in a line which is again blocked by another set of three menhirs, thus forming a roughly capital T-shaped structure. All the menhirs are roughly hewn blocks of bluish sandstone. The altitude of this area is 1340 mts. M.S.L. The height of these megaliths ranges from 121.6 cm. to 212.8 cm. while the breadth ranges from 60.8 cm. to 162 cm. They also vary in shape and sizes. Some menhirs are short and broad, some are narrow, slender and tall, while others are short and narrow. Out of these seven megaliths, including a fallen one near the T-shaped, standing monoliths, only two menhirs have tapering top ends.
**Locality IX**

On the same ridge but about 30.4 mts. away from Locality VIII on the northern side, we find another small group of megaliths. This group of megaliths consist of five menhirs. Out of these five monoliths, three have already been fallen down horizontally on the ground while two are found standing. These standing menhirs have different heights, one is 243.2 cm. high which is the highest megalith found in this Jalangthel site. The other one is only 75.8 cm. high. The other three horizontal stones have an unequal length and breadth i.e. 243.2 cm. x 65.8 cm. x 30.4 cm. The altitude of this area is 1339 mts. above M.S.L.

**Locality X**

From Locality No. IX, the village path is diverted towards east. Then it turns again towards the north. At this point, about 1 km away from the locality no. IX, another group of six menhirs are found. They are arranged roughly in an alignment. There are eight menhirs in this locality. But two of them are found lying horizontally on the ground. Here we find an unique feature regarding its arrangements. The menhirs are arranged in order of its increasing or decreasing heights. They are of different shapes and sizes and made of roughly dressed
sandstone blocks. Some menhirs have trimmed ends and tapering tops while others have straight or blunted ends. The highest standing stone measures 182.4 cm.; while the shortest one measures 72.6 cm. The fallen menhirs measure 212.8 cm. and 182.4 cm. height respectively. The altitude of this area measures 1320 mts. above M.S.L.

**Locality XI**

At a higher altitude, there is another small group of megaliths formed by four large and flat monoliths. One of them has parallel and straight lateral sides. The remaining three monoliths have irregular sides. The height of these menhirs ranges from 182.4 cm. to 197.4 cm. The highest menhir possess an exposed fossil leaf impression on the flat surface facing south. The altitude of this area is 1350 mts. above M.S.L.

**Locality XII**

Locality XII is separated from Locality XI by a lower plain area which is covered with thatch-grass sparsely. This locality XII lies on the north-eastern side of the ridge. The altitude of this area is same as that of locality XI. At this locality we find three large standing stones. One of them is short and rectangular in shape. It measures 134 cm. in height and 60.8 cm in breadth. The remaining two menhirs are also of
different shapes and sizes. It appears from their shape, that these two megaliths represent the figures of pregnant women each characterised by belly like bulging shape at the middle. The upper end is somewhat pointed and bending towards the bulging lateral side.

**Locality XIII**

On the far north-eastern side of the Locality XIII, there exists another area where some megalithic remains are found in association with foot-prints engravings. This locality lies 106.4 mts away from Locality XIII. It is also located on a ridge of the same hill range. The altitude of this area is 1300 mts. above M.S.L. Here we find four menhirs set up in rectangular shape. Out of these, two are still standing while the other two are lying horizontally on the ground. The height of these four megaliths ranges from 199.9 cms. to 212.8 cms.

6. **Horizontal flat stones**

On a ridge of another spur, in between locality III and IV there is a series of flat horizontal stones which are set up at regular intervals. They are lying in two rows. Each row contains 6 flat stones. The thickness vary from 17.5 cms to 25 cms. The length also vary from one another. It ranges from 91.2 cms to 162 cms in length and 60.8 cms to 86.3 cms in breadth. They are lying on the ground (Plate VII: a and b).
MEGALITHIC CULTURE FOUND AMONG
THE KOIRENGS OF MANIPUR

THE PEOPLE

The Koirengs are one of the smallest tribes of India's north-eastern region which is a meeting place of various racial and cultural elements in this part of Asia. The Koirengs were among the various tribal groups of Tibeto-Burman family who migrated to Manipur in the prehistoric times, their migration being necessitated by economic reasons of search for new lands and for security which was greatly threatened by the constant warfare between these migrating groups and their militant rivals (Gangmumei, 1987:1).

This tribe was referred to, by earlier British writers like T.C. Hudson (1911) and John Shakespeare (1913) as 'woirengs' and Kolhen. G.A. Grierson wrote about the derivation of the name 'Koireng' thus: "Kolrengs or Koirengs are a small tribe in the state of Manipur. According to Mr. Lamant they dwell in eight small villages on the hills north of the valley (Imphal) itself, Kolren is the name which the tribe gives to itself and Koireng is probably a Manipuri corruption of this name" (Grierson, Vol. III part II). Now it is clear that the name Koireng was derived
from Koren or Kolren which literally means the men or people of the east (Kol-East, Ren-men or people). However, it may be noted that in common usage 'ren' does no longer mean 'men' in Koireng dialect. To the Koirengs 'Kol' people may perhaps be taken to mean Mongolian people of South East Asia as they use frequently the term like 'Kolmi' = man of the east. Nisomi, men from the land of rising sun, probably the Far-East. It is contended by some Koireng leaders that they are to identify with the Karens of Upper Burma. As no comparative study of the Koirengs of Manipur and Karens of Burma on ethnic, linguistic and cultural identity has been made, it is not possible to arrive at such conclusion at this stage of our investigation. This contention has a correlation with the attempts made by Koireng people to rename themselves Koren which is nearer to Karen, given to them by their close allied tribe, the Kom, who have claimed that Koirengs are a part of a bigger Kom community.

Like most of the tribes in the Himalayas and south east Asia, the Koirengs in spite of the absence of written records have preserved a large number of traditions, mythology, legends and folktales which are mostly not historical but could be regarded as the non-literate people's style of bequeathing the history of prosperity.

Their physical features and language clearly indicate
that the Koirengs are Tibeto-Burman. Along with other Tibeto-Burman groups, the Koirengs during their migration had moved through different regions of Burma across the Chindwin and Chin-Hills. They moved into the Lushai (Mizo) hills, then to Manipur. The available evidences mostly local traditions to not clearly indicate their original homeland. However, the hymns and legends refer to a number of countries, hill and villages where the Koirengs had lived before they settled in Manipur. Except a few villages, those villages mention in the legends can not be identified.

The original homelands of the Koirengs was known as Kolram, the eastern land which is believed by some Koirengs to be the Karen state of Eastern Burma. From Kolram they moved to Semrojoul, Kholmilai, Khotatlu and Lungsut; these villages can not be identified but it is likely that they were in the Chin Hills also called Mizo Hills. Then the Koirengs settled down at Langrel in Manipur (now in Churachandpur district). They further moved to Kailam which is now occupied by the Paites. Most of their adventures remembered by the Koirengs were confined to South Manipur Hills, and finally they arrived at Thangching or Thangjing near Loktak Lake.

The Koireng social structure is based on the patriarchal system. This tribe had eight clans but now only two clans
are existing. They are Shong clan and Yei clan. The sense of morality among the Koirengs is very strong. They have a social institution of the male (dormitory for the boys), known as Seer. Thus every Koireng Village has a boys' dormitory. The village chief is originally called Khuoreng. He is both religious and temporal head of the village.

The following materials were collected from among the Koirengs of Longa Koireng, Kamu Koireng, Utonglok, Sadu Koireng, Ngairong, Lamphel and Litan Koireng villages.

A. THE LONGA KOIRENG SITE

Since there have been very few Koireng villages in Manipur, there are not very much variation in their social and cultural systems. The oldest Koireng village is Longa Koireng village in Western Sadar hills which has been following traditional system of administration and culture.

Location of the site

The Longa Koireng is located in the western outskirt of Sangaithel market area (once a capital of Manipur in the middle of the 18th century A.D.). It is about 17 kms. away from Imphal on the west. It is under the jurisdiction of
Kangpokpi sub-division, of Sadar hills, Senapatl district. As the village is located or situated at the foot hill region of Loiching range, the site is surrounded by Kharam Pallel on the west, by Sack Chiru on the South, a Kabui village (Sangaithel Kabui) and a tributary of Maklang river known as Heibirok river stands for northern boundary. The eastern boundary is demarcated by the paddy fields and the Sangaithel market place and its suburbs. It lies in between 24°52' N. latitude and 93°40' E longitude.

The Megalithic structures are located in the heart of the present village and also in the old deserted village sites located on the Loiching range. The present village is, now located at the foothill region, adjacent to the Longa Koirreng High School. The altitude of the area is 840 mts.M.S.L. There is a number of hills in and around the village.

Megalithic structure and types

The present existing megalithic remains of the Longa Koirreng site, are of three types based on their function and structure. Their structural classifications are as follows:
1. **Sheifun**

It is a complex structure of a menhir along with a small dolmen. These megaliths are always found inside the village. Though some of them are now existing on the high slope of the hill, once it was within the habitational area of the old deserted village. Thus **Sheifun** are always found inside or near the village in a series and by counting the number of **Sheifun** one can easily find out the number of **Khullakpa** (headman) of the village in the past (Plate X:a and b).

### Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified type</th>
<th>Functional type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Sheifun</td>
<td>Small dolmen with a standing menhir</td>
<td>Stone chair raised by Khullakpa (to represent himself)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Lungthak</td>
<td>Cairn</td>
<td>Piled-up head of stones by a wealthy person in memory of him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Lungkhwa</td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>Raised by the villagers to mark the village boundary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Sheifun**

It is a complex structure of a menhir along with a small dolmen. These megaliths are always found inside the village. Though some of them are now existing on the high slope of the hill, once it was within the habitational area of the old deserted village. Thus **Sheifun** are always found inside or near the village in a series and by counting the number of **Sheifun** one can easily find out the number of **Khullakpa** (headman) of the village in the past (Plate X:a and b).
PLATE XI

Pl.XI:a
A group of five Sheifuns (one is partly seen), Longa Koireng site

Pl.XI:b
A closer view of Sheifuns
The rock-type used for the construction of this megalithic type is sandstone. The megaliths are made of large or small undressed stone slabs and they differ in their shape and sizes.

**Functions**

These **sheifuns** are connected with socio-religious function of the **Khullakpa**. Although the office of **Khullakpa** is hereditary within the Shong clan, it is not necessarily the succession through the sons of the Chief. The office of the Koiренg Chiefship is dependent on the decision of the village council which is known as **Khuo**. The newly selected **Khullakpa** is not recognised as a full-fledged **Khullakpa** (Chief-tain of the village) unless he performs the prescribed stone raising ceremony. The dolmen in front of the menhir, known as **Sheifun** erected by the newly elected Khullakpa serve as a seat for the new **Khullakpa** when the rituals of the said ceremony is performed. The village priest offer wine and meat to their supreme god, **Pathien** with chanting and all. After this the said **Khullakpa** is known as the full fledged **Khullakpa** of the village. Thus this type of megalith plays an important role in the Koiренg culture. On the other hand, the Koiренg people thought that these **sheifuns** are the images of each **Khullakpa** who ruled the village. In the Longa Koiренg Village.
of Senapati, the writer came across three groups of Sheifuns, each group being constituted by a number of Sheifuns, the number varying between five and twenty. The heights of the standing stones of the Sheifung varies from 40 cms to 150 cms. But the height of the small dolmens varies from 30 cm to 52 cms.

**Local tradition**

The sheifun ceremony is performed by the newly elected Khullakpa. If he is elected to the status of Khullakpa, he will announced to the villagers through the Luplakpa and other village functionaries that he would perform the said ceremony on so and so date according to his convenience. It is a feasting ceremony. And it continues for five days. During these days the Khullakpa will feed the villagers with food and drink. During the ceremony some youths of the village set out in search of suitable stones to be raised from the nearby stream or gorge. As the stones are not so massive, so healthy youths can collect them easily within these five days. For transporting these stones, they may use some kind of device for pulling by using creeper ropes and pushing from behind by using levers or by propping it with longer wedges.

When the stones are dragged up to the appointed stone
raising place, the village priest, Thempu purified them by using a new broom made out of Yangel and some leaves of Tumber. Then a hole is dug to raise the menhir. Inside the hole, an egg is kept and rice-beer is poured down. At this time, a mithan, a pig and a dog are sacrificed and the blood of the sacrificed animals is sprinkled on the stone.

All the invitees and village functionaries will attend the ceremony. The elected Khullakpa should stand in front of all and he is required to raise the stones in their proper places with the help of some villagers.

The newly elected Khullakpa is required to sit on the Sheifun (particularly on the dolmen portion) while the Thempu (village priest) will perform some rites and rituals with chanting of hymns.

To perform the megalithic raising ceremony on the occasion of election of a new chief, the villagers contribute some amount to meet the price of a pig. The newly elected Khullakpa is required to feed the village with plenty of meats of mithan, dog and pig along with large quantity of rice-beer. The Koirengs regard the Sheifun megalith as the living image of the Khullakpa.
When the Khullakpa dies, the funeral bier is required to turn round the Sheifun three times. The villagers consider that the Sheifun of the Khullakpa also loses its breadth along with the owner.

When the Khullakpa dies, the village drum donated to the village by the said Khullakpa is also buried along with him. So it is a duty of the new Khullakpa to prepare a new drum to donate to his village with a feast called Khuongthak or Khuongmei.

Khuongthak or Khuongmei (Inauguration of Drum):

The Sheifun ceremony is followed by Khuonthak or Khuongmei that is the inauguration of the new village drum. This is a very expensive feast of merit, which can be performed only once in one's lifetime. The ceremony continues for six nights and seven days in the house of the performer. The ceremony will achieve for the merit-seeker a high social status in the society and even after death in the land of dead as the drum dedicated to the village is buried along with him. There are ritual dances at every stage of ceremony accompanied by community feasting. This Khuongthak or Khuongmei can be performed by any member of the village council (known as Khou) to
celebrate the dedication of a new drum, but one normally cannot afford to perform it due to its heavy expenditure. Eventually it becomes the duty of the new Khullakpa.

2. Lungthak

Lungthak or piling of stones is performed by a member of the village council known as Khou or by Panchi, a village functionary who can give a feast of merit to the villagers. It is a heap of stone or a small cairn. They are normally found on the hill top or in its slope. They are also located either near the village or far away from the habitational area.

The rock type used for the construction of such structures are of various types of sandstone and quartzite. As it is made of small pebbles and large boulders of various sizes, it includes different types of rocks, available there. They are rough irregular pebbles and boulders without any decoration on it.

These heap of stones are not connected with the burials. They are connected with the prosperity of the performer so that he can attain a happy life in the land of dead as well as attain a higher social status during his lifetime.
Local tradition

As in the case of Sheifun ceremony the merit-seeker announces his willingness to the villagers as well as his relatives. On the appointed day, all the youths of the village would gather in the house of the merit-seeker. Then they will go out in search of stones guided by some elders. There they will clean a selected spot by clearing the jungle where the performer likes to raise the stones. Then the stones will be collected and piled up in the selected place outside the village gate and it will be properly fenced by bamboo. The Lungthak ceremony continues for seven days. Animals, like pigs and dogs are sacrificed and offered to the Pathian the supreme god of the Koirengs. Before sacrificing these animals, the performer will go to the forest to hunt wild animals. There is a rule among the Koirengs that the performer should sacrifice the animals along with the wild animals which he hunted. So it is a must for him to hunt at least a wild animal.

On the other hand, these Lungthaks also serve as the resting places of the passerby carrying loads of paddy, fire-wood etc. from the paddy fields and jungles.

3. Lunakhwa

It is a menhir type in structure. They are always
found on the top ridges of the hill and sometimes on its slopes. Hence they are always found far away from the present and past habitational areas.

The rock used for this purpose is sandstone which is abundantly found anywhere in this area. They may be included in the smaller group of menhirs as their heights never exceed more than 152 cms to 183 cms. And the smallest measures 92 cms x 61 cms x 30.4 cms in height, breadth and thickness respectively.

As stated earlier, this type of megalith is connected with the identification of village boundary. Nowadays some of the said megaliths are thrown away by the youths of the other villages due to a land dispute with the neighbouring villages.

Besides the Longa Koiren village of Senapati district, there is a number of Koireng villages having the same type of megalithic traditions. The villages are Sadu Koireng, Utonglok, Kamu Koirengs, Litan and Ngairong villages of Senapati, Chandel and Churachandpur districts. The megalithic sites found in these villages are described below:

B. KAMU KOIRENG SITE

The Kamu Koireng village is located on Kamu Ching(Kamu
hill). It is about 32 kms. via Andro and 34 kms via Yairipok from Imphal on the south-east. It is bounded on the east by Kamu Chingkhong or Waiphei Tampak, on the south by Kamu Maring, on the west by Andro hill, and on the north by Tangnom Waiphei. It is a small village of only 40 households with a population of 160 individuals. In this village only two types of megalithic structures are found. Each type is represented by a single specimen. The villagers and Khullakpa, Mr. Somthang Rongrashim, told me that the village is not a prosperous one, hence it could not perform different types of feast of merit which require a heavy expenditure. The two types of megaliths found in this village are listed below:

**TABLE 7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S1 No</th>
<th>Local Name</th>
<th>Classified type</th>
<th>Functional type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sheifun</td>
<td>Small dolmen</td>
<td>Stone chair raised by Khullakpa as his image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>associated with a standing menhir</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lunglei or Lungdel</td>
<td>Small cairn</td>
<td>A heap of stone piled-up by a wealthy person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C. THE SADU KOIRENG SITE

The Sadu Koireng is situated on the bank of the Iril river. It is about 26 kms. away from Imphal on the north-east. It is bounded on the north by Phayang (Kuki), on the east by Utonglok, on the south by Purem Liklee and on the west by Ikou village. The nearest market place is also Ikou Bazar.

It is under the jurisdiction of Saikul sub-division of Sedar hills (Senapati district). This village is named after their former habitational site on the Kowbrv-Laimaten range (Sedar Hills west, Kangpokpi sub-division) of Senapati district, whence they have migrated down to this plain area before three decades. Thus there are few megalithic remains associated with the culture of this tribe. They are listed below in Koireng language along with their classified and functional types.

**TABLE 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified type</th>
<th>Functional type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Sheifum</td>
<td>Small dolmen</td>
<td>Stone erected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>associated with</td>
<td>in the form of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>standing menhir</td>
<td>a chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to represent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>the image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>of present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Khullekpe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **Shei-fun**

Such type of stone is already described while defining the Shei-funs of Longa Koireng and Kamu Koireng respectively. Though they are similar in structure their sizes are different from one another. In this site we find Shei-fun of rudimentary character and small in size. There are three Shei-funs in this village. Now the villagers have accepted christianity. So they have more interest in the religious functions of christianity. They erected a large menhir about 244 cms. high in a pyramidal form to celebrate the 25th year of their conversion to christianity in 1987.

2. **Shei-Lileng**

It is a memorial stone. It is a small menhir raised in the courtyard of the performer. Thus this type is always found in the habitational area of the village.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified type</th>
<th>Functional type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Shei-Lileng</td>
<td>Miniature menhir</td>
<td>Memorial stone, specially raised for the unmarried boys and girls particularly for the untimely dead.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sandstone is the only rock-type used for the preparation of such megalith because it is the only rock abundantly found in and around the area. The shape is irregular. The size is also variable. They are all undressed rough stones without any decoration.

They are connected with monuments. The Shei-Lileng found in the Sadu Koirang measures 122 cms long, 30.4 cms broad and 17.5 cms thick.

Local tradition

When several years have elapsed, after the death of an unmarried person either a boy or a girl, his/her parents may decide to hold Borhe (for raising Shei-Lileng) ceremony, provided he has collected sufficient wealth to defray the cost. As much as two or three years before the planned celebration the performer offers some food and drink to Pathian (supreme god) and prays that, if his crops are good, he will perform Borhe and raise Shei-Lileng in the name of the deceased person. The Koirangs believed that this prayer will invoke god's blessings and the intending donor will get a good harvest.

When the performer has collected sufficient cattle, foot-stuff and rice-beer, and the time approaches for the
Shei-Lileng which is always celebrated in the month of February-March (Chaipi in Koireng language and Lamte in Manipuri) he informs his paternal kinsmen of the neighbouring villages and they set out for collecting firewood for the feast and also searching for stones suitable for the menhirs. At the same time the co-villagers will also come forward to render necessary help in organising the ceremony.

The ceremony, performed in honour of the deceased member of the family is called Borhe. And the menhir erected in this connection is called Shei-Lileng. Thus the Shei-Lileng can not be raised without performing the Borhe ceremony.

Now-a-days the villagers have fixed the duration to perform such Borhe which is within one year of the death. So the parents have to inform the villagers, relatives and friends whether they could perform it or not. If they wish to perform, the parent or performer would invite his kinsmen, friends and co-villagers to attend the ceremony.

As stated earlier, though collected in time, the stones should be kept outside the village until the actual feasting day.

On the day of Borhe, all the invitees, kinsmen,
friends and co-villagers will attend the megalithic rituals performed in honour of the deceased boy or girl (either a son or daughter of the performer).

The stone monuments for the dead are not lacking among the Koirengs, and though the ceremonies connected with the erection comparable with the grandeur of the Shei-fun or Lungthak or Lungdel feasts. Because it involves a considerable expenditure and sacrifice of at least a dog, a pig and a bull or mithan. In the village habitational area, generally in the courtyard of the performer, one finds miniature menhirs consisting of one to three small upright stones, and these are the memorials erected by wealthy parents in honour and loving memory of their children either a boy or a girl (unmarried ones).

The Koirengs buried their dead. Every village has a cemetery across the southern gate of the village. Moreover, every family has a tomb. In case of a new tomb, the family of the dead will purchase the land for the tomb with an iron (thirdam) hoe struck into the earth and rice-beer is poured over it.

The Koirengs regarded dead as the end of the life of a man in this world and departure of the soul to the land
of the dead (Malthikhuo). According to the Koireng belief the soul is reborn in the human world in the family of the grand-son and grand-daughter. There is a practice of keeping some mark of turmeric colour on some parts of the body before burying of the dead so that people may know from any future birth of a child whether that man has reborn in the family.

During the period of the funerals, animals are sacrificed, the heads are cut off and buried with the dead. The flesh is cooked and eaten by mourners, a part of the cooked meat will be buried. The belief is that whatever animal is killed or articles are buried with the dead will be taken by the departed one to the land of dead. A very interesting custom is that even for a person who died earlier to the present death, articles, clothes and eatables can be sent along with the burial of the present death.

Grave digging is an important aspect of the Koireng funeral ceremony. It is believed that injuries received in grave digging are not good. After the digging is over, a fire will be waived into the grave by way of cleaning it.

A platform made of wood and bamboo is called Rei-shuon is constructed near the grave and all the articles which
are cooked like the heads of dog, cattle, pig, goat and other vegetables are kept there, so that the dead may eat them in the journey to the land of dead. Even bow and arrows (in case of males) are kept in the platform. The dead body will be kept in a coffin and taken to the grave and buried.

The next ceremony related to the burial of the deceased person is Borha. Thus on this day, one of the oldest men of the village will kill the sacrificial dog, pig and bull provided by the performer and the meat is then cooked and feed to all the participants of the ceremony. It is an elaborate ceremony which is attended by all relatives and friends, and on this/such occasions rich people sacrifice oxen, buffaloes, goats, pigs, dogs and chickens. And such cooked foods, meat and rice-beer will be placed on the grave of the deceased boy/girl (both unmarried).

With this ceremony the deceased is introduced into the company of his dead relatives and the Koirengs believed that if it was omitted the spirit of the deceased would wander about on this earth and cause damage to the family and to the crops.

Most Koirengs are content with providing for the
welfare of their deceased relatives by the performance of the Borhe ceremony, particularly for the unmarried boys and girls, but some rich men may further honour the memory of their father or grandfather or even of a brother by the celebration of a memorial feast Borhe. But the erection of a miniature menhir is not allowed for the elderly persons. Usually, in the present day, one year elapse between the burial and the memorial feast is sanctioned. And during this time, a dog and a pig, selected for the sacrifice are allowed to grow.

D. UTONGLOK SITE

The Utonglok is a Koireng village. It is located at the foot hill of Makokching. The village is about 211 cms. on the north-east from Imphal. It is bounded on the east by Sadang Tangkhul, on the south by Dolaithabi (a Meetei village), on the west by Sadu Koireng and on the north by Satang (a Khongjai/Kuki Village).

In this Koireng village we could not find any other megalithic structure except Sheifun.
CHAPTER-III: 5

MEGALITHIC CULTURE FOUND AMONG THE

LIANGMEI OF MANIPUR

THE PEOPLE

The Liangmeis, a tribe of over 90,672 individuals inhabit about 40 villages, in Tamenglong and Senapati districts of Manipur. Like the Rongmeis, the Liangmeis speak Tibeto-Burman tongue, but their dialects are different. Both the tribes, however, recognise a fundamental relationship like partaking of each other's food and on rare occasions even intermarry. The Rongmeis are called by the Liangmeis, Marongmei or the plain dwellers and they are often describe themselves as the brothers of the same parents who in due course settled down in the plains.

The author have visited most of the important Liangmei villages for collection of data on the megalithic monuments of the Liangmeis.
The Liangmeis cultivate on periodically shifted jhum fields as well as on irrigated rice terraces. They use to prepare their jhum fields with hoes and it is the woman who does the greater part of the work, whereas the man is engaged in clearing the jungle and ploughing their wet rice fields. Buffaloes and oxen are kept for the sake of their meat and for ploughing and the goats, pigs and fowls purely for meat.

Hunting and fishing contribute to some extent to the food supply. The self-sufficiency of the Liangmeis extends also to the manufactures of their clothes, the women spins yarn from a kind of cotton like plant, which gives white and yellow colour flowers called Chalangpong. It has two varieties - one is white called Kukabo and the other is yellow called Kamajinbo. They colour the yarn with vegetable dyes. Light and fast colours are made from orchids mainly. They weave clothes which are both durable and very attractive in colour. The most important ornaments of Liangmei women are their Tabaikon (necklaces of large beads), Chiwchang (ivory necklaces), Tata (bronze bangle) and Chatan (large ear ring made out of cotton fibres and orchid flowers).

The village headman called Chawanq is the chief of the village. He is assisted by three persons viz. Khullakpe
(Gaun Bura), Phaimew (priest) and Chairman (a loan English term). The Chawang is the most powerful person. He is the owner of the land and also the chief of the village in every respect. He sometimes may control more than one village. Next to him is the chairman of the village who works for the welfare of the village, on behalf of the state Government. Next to Chairman is the Khullakpa (Gaumbura commonly known as G.B), he works as the peon for the Chawang (chief). In many ways he works for the welfare of the village, assisting the Chawang (chief). The last, in the administrative level, is the Phaimew or village priest who assisted the Chawang in the socio-religious functions of the village. Thus Chawang is the head of both secular and religious head. The office of the village chieftain, Chawang is hereditary in one family, being succeeded by the youngest son, but the villagers may depose a headman and elect one of his kinsmen. Even the office of the village priest (Phaimew), is held only by the consent of the villagers who may replace a Phaimew if his ritual performances prove effective.

THE MEGALITHS

Entering a Liangmei village and passing down several tracts lined by houses, one finds oneself in a large open space, where a number of megaliths are found scattered here and there.
They are found sometimes roughly circular in arrangement of horizontal stone slabs and upright menhirs. The horizontal slabs and boulders often piled one on top of the other from a raised platform, with menhirs standing haphazardly. This array of stones varies in size and shape from village to village, but everywhere it serves as a public place, where the villagers assemble for rest and gossip as well as for formal discussions of the village council. At the meeting of the village council, one particular stone seat is reserved for the Chawang (chief of the village), while other members seat at random.

Apart from the menhirs erected at memorial feasts, many upright stones arranged in the form of alignments, are also seen either in single row or in two rows outside the Liangmei villages in the vicinity of the rice-fields. As most of the megalith are erected within the living memory, it was possible for the author to collect ethnographic data on the methods of their erection.

The data are collected from the following Liangmei villages which are Oklong, Oklong Khunou, Maryram, Makuilongdi, Tongland I and II (upper and lower), Tapon, Benna, Makhan, Khunkhu, Shamuk, Khundong, Thingra, Nurathel, Khongjron, Lanka,
Pl.XII:a

**Tarao toh Tusom** (grave stone),
Puilong site
PLATE XIII

Pl.XIII:a

Taikulana Ranii also known as Taideli Atu (stone seats with an upright stone on a low platform raised in memory of deceased person), Maryram site

Pl.XIII:b

Chenku Tusoms (Memorial stones), Maryram site
Pl.XIV:a

Chenku Tusom (memorial stone), Broadest menhir at Oklong site

Pl.XIV:b

The investigator along with the informant and interpreter Maryram site
PLATE XV

Pl.XV:a

Stone circle with cairn filling (stone circle not clearly visible), Puilong site

Pl.XV:b

Two rows of menhirs in the form of an alignment, Oklong site
Twin Chenku Tusoms (memorial stones), Oklong site
Pl.XVII:a

Kaho Katanmei Saimengbao
(Stone for the bravest and riches person),
Puilong site
Pl.XVIII:a

A row of Chenku Tusom, the highest menhir at Oklong site (behind the investigator)

Pl.XVIII:b

A group of Chenku Tusom, Oklong site
Pl.XIX:a

Atugra also called Atukra (Witness stone, a menhir associated with three dolmens), Oklong site
A merit seeker who performed Chenku feast and raised a memorial stone Chenku Tusom (seen in the background) in his name, Oklong site
Kasaibao Tusom also known as Tasaibao Tusom
(A memorial stone raised in memory of a deceased person), Oklong site
Awangkhul, Makui I, II and III, Tiangmei, Tharon, Papram, Mar-
wang Pamei, Philon, Konsa, Kadi, Kajilong, Puilong, Songnung, 
Songyang, Hangmai, Hungding (Nagaland border), Etomei, Makhel, 
Piporam, Junnamai, Tama, Langmei Khunjao, Lamla, Lenglong Cha-
ton, Takao, Kuiilong, Namtiram, Nui(Nagaland) Buning, Tamei and 
Langpram (villages).

A. OKLONG MEegalithic Site

The Oklong village, where megaliths are abounding, is
located on the top of the Oklong range. It is about 120 kms. on
the north-west from Imphal via Senapati. The site is bounded on
the east by Fairangkot (a Kuki village), on the west by Sang-
kungmei and Willong (Maram villages) on the north by Maram Khun-
llen and Lairou, on the south by Makuilongdi (a Liangmei village,
which is supposed to be the oldest village of the Liangmeis).

There is a number of megaliths distributing all over
the present habitational area as well as the previously occu-
pied areas (now deserted). Almost all the megalithic remains
are in the forms of menhir. Other constituent parts are huge
boulders arranged in a circular structure, forming heaps of
stone and miniature dolmen. The different types (though simi-
lar in structure but differ in functions) of megaliths, found
in this area can be divided into five types as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified type</th>
<th>Functional type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kasaibao Tusom</td>
<td>Menhir along with some horizontal</td>
<td>Stone erected in memory of distinguished dead person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or</td>
<td>stones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tasaibao Tusom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chenku Tusom</td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>Stone for the rich man erected in his name who can give a feast of merit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Maning Taoba Tusom</td>
<td>Cromlech</td>
<td>Memorial stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tazan Tatbo Tusom</td>
<td>Cairn</td>
<td>A heap of stone raised to attain the highest social status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Atugra</td>
<td>Dolmen associated with a menhir</td>
<td>Oath taking stone which is regarded as the god or holy stone or holy stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Atukra</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Taidile Atu</td>
<td>Capstone</td>
<td>Graves stone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **KASAIBAO TUSOM OR TASAIBAO TUSOM (Menhir with table stones):**

   It is a composite structure. It consists of a platform of varied heights, about 43 cms or 62 cms high above the ground level, made up of a heap of stone slabs arranged in
regular interval on the platform and a standing stone (menhir), facing the entrance. It is always found inside the habitational area though they may be either on the hill top or on the slopes or spurs (Plate XXI:a).

The menhir is about 212 cms high, 61 cms thick and 106.7 cms broad. It is encircled by a number of horizontal slabs of irregular structure. The largest horizontal slab measures 81.3 cms long, 61 cms broad and 30.4 cms thick. It is somewhat similar to the stones placed over the graves. The rock types used for the construction of this structure is hard sandstone. They are unhewn rough stones without any decoration (Plate , XXIX:a).

This Tasaibao Tusom is connected with the sepulchral monument as it is erected in honour of a distinguished person after his death.

Local traditions

Before selecting the stone(s) to be raised, the intended performer should inform the village council about his wish.

Then he, along with his co-villagers, will go in search of a suitable stone. If the stone to be quarried is too
large and massive, they can take out a suitable portion by separat-\n
ing it from the massive block. They do this first by draw-\ning an outline of the desired size on the massive block, upon \nwhich some juice of Tiragang (a local herb usually grows on \nthe river beds) is applied over the outline marked over the \nrock. Next they will rub the incision on the rock with the help \nof an egg (unbroken). As my informants told me, if they do so, \nthe said stone will catch fire and automatically the stone will \ncrack along the already drawn outline of desirable size. After \nthis, the performer will use his bow and arrow ritually saying, \n'I will take my share whatever I wanted.' At the same time a \ncock or a hen will be let loose on the spot, so that there may \nbe no difficulty in getting the stone to its selected place.

An auspicious day to raise the stone on the selected \nspot is fixed. They always select the spot which is not likely \nto be affected by sliding and sinking of the bedrocks. They \nusually set up such stone along the paths leading to village \nhabitational areas or jhum fields or wet terrace fields or \nwater tanks or springs. Hence it should necessarily become a \nprominent landmark to identify any of the above mentioned im-\nportant spot of the village.

For transporting such stones they used a wooden sle-\ndge, which is made out of two huge logs which is jointed by
four bars or staves to form a ladder like structures. The two ends of each log is chiseled out to take the shape of a cannoe. A hole is also made in the noose or at the upper end of the front parallel logs. The sledge is laid alongside the selected stone. Once the stone is on the sledge, it is the duty of the puller to take care against the possible slip. For pulling or dragging the stone on the sledge, the Liangmeis use a hard, strong creeper called Tuchareng (creeper for dragging stone).

While the dragging process is continuing the performer's wife is not allowed to sit down on the ground. She will have to remain on movement inside the house till the stone reached its selected spot. If she felt tired she may sit on a large wooden plank. According to Liangmei tradition, if the woman or housewife of the performer sit down on the ground the pullers feel a heavy weight to drag the stone, if she walks to and fro inside the house - the stone moves on lightly. So the housewife maintain their tradition while dragging ceremony is going on. Meanwhile, the performer himself is required to walk in front of the dragging stone. Till the stone is dragged up to the selected spot, the performer's wife is not allowed to go out of her house.

When the stone arrived at the appointed place, the stone pullers will be refreshed by offering rice-beer. They
will afterwards raise the stone properly. In the meantime two bulls, two buffaloes, four or five pigs are sacrificed and the meat is offered with cooked rice and rice-beer to all persons attending the ceremony.

2. CHENKG TUSON (MENHIR):

Before a Liangmai Naga can erect a memorial stone to attain the highest social status, he must have performed a series of feasts of merits associated with the megalithic rituals. The first or initial feast of merit is called Chenku and the stone erected to mark the occasion is known as Chenku Tuson (Plates XIVa; XVb; XVIa; XVIIIa and XXa).

Chenku Tuson is a menhir of huge and massive block of stone. It occurs either on the hill top or on the slope or spurs, either near the habitational area of the village or far away from the habitational sites, according to the wish of the performer. Thus such types are distributed all over the village area. The total number of such menhirs found in this village site is 172.

The size of this type of menhir varies from 152.5 cms to 279.5 cms in height and 162.7 cms to 244 cms in breadth and 20 cms to 53.4 cms in thickness. Some have semicircular top
end, while others have straight or irregularly pointed top ends. Most of them are dressed stones having smooth surfaces. But the present author couldn't find any form of decoration or megalithic art on them.

The stones are connected with commemoration, and they are set up in commemoration of performing the first feast of merit.

Such a grand feast can be performed only by a wealthy persons.

The first stage for offering a feast of merit starts with searching for desirable stone.

This is followed by informing the intending merit-seeker's wish to the village council through the Chawang (village chief). Next to it was the selection of the stone already spotted. It is done with the help of some professional persons and the village priest (Phaimew). The Phaimew will select the stone which will bring prosperity. They always take the desirable size out of the massive block of stone by using their local procedure of breaking stones, as described above.

The auspicious day for dragging and setting up such memorial stones is fixed by the Chawang assisted the Phaimew.
The head and the base of the stone will be carved out by the expert village elders, before setting up. Like the Tangkhuls, the Liangmeis also believe that the stone thus erected may cause much harm to the performer and his wealth, if some mistakes are committed in erecting them.

About a month earlier to the date of the feast, the performer along with his co-villagers goes to the jungle to select a large tree so that they can make two huge logs of wood for making a sledge, necessary for dragging the stone. There, in the jungle, they prepare the materials for the sledge. The two logs of woods are provided with four holes for inserting staves and each log is carved to resemble the shape of a boat. When the staves joins transversely through the holes, the side logs together seem to resemble a pair of small fishing boats. Along with the preparation of this sledge, they also collect creepers as many as possible, which will be required for dragging the sledge with the stone.

About ten days before the Chenku ceremony the merit-seeker distributes unhusked rice to all the women of the village for pounding to be required for cooking and for brewing rice-beer for the feast.

The merit-seeker invites all his maternal and paternal
kinsmen and friends from other villages along with his co-villagers to attend the celebration. In return his paternal kinsmen are supposed to contribute in cash or kind such as bulls for sacrifice and to bring with them gifts of rice and rice-beer.

Before the guests arrive, shelters are built by the performer's villagers to accommodate all those who find no accommodation in the houses of friends and relatives.

On the first day of Chenku feast, all the guests from neighbouring villages and kinsmen assemble, those who have brought gifts, in cash or kind, hand them over to the merit-seeker.

As stated earlier, the selected stone had been quarried out previously from the site alongside a level path and had been left horizontally on its edge and several coils of strong creepers (Tucharenq) for ropes had already been collected.

First of all the sledge for dragging the stone on is to be brought. It may be a new sledge or an old one already used by some other merit-seekers of the village left away to be used by others, if necessary. The sledge was then held in
its place with one arm touching the stone by pushing it with the help of long wooden poles while others forced up the stone with levers of log gently and tipped it over so as to make the stone fall on the sledge along its length. Having got the stone on to the sledge, its position was adjusted with the help of the wooden levers if it lays fairly along the sledge with its weights as evenly distributed as possible. Most of the poles and levers made of special hard wood and preserve for such occasion are brought down from the performer's house. Some are also prepared on the spot to meet the requirement for the occasion.

Then the Phaimew(priest) utters many hymns and pours rice-beer over the stone and lets loose a fowl, in order that there may be no difficulty in dragging the stone into its appointed place. The stone was then lashed very firmly to the sledge with ropes made of creepers, tied both to the staves underneath and through the holes in the arms. Creepers for pulling the sledge were then attached, being run through the holes already made on the side poles. For the first day, the work is stopped at the sun set.

On the second day, proceedings began a little earlier, as there were more works to do. More creepers were attached to
the sledge, and in the meantime the Phaisew worship the spirit of the stone. Then the performer himself offers food and drink to the stone, saying, "your place is not here. We have made another for you. You must go to that place which we have made for you. Now you stand up, we will take you, be light".

The stone pullers, consisting of elders, young men and even small boy all adorn with colourful ceremonial dress, in all about 300 individuals or more, take their positions systematically, first starting with small boys, then young men followed by elders from behind to the first, all holding the rope of the sledge, keep awaiting the signal to start. The stone pulling ceremony among the Liangmeis is a grand colourful occasion. When the signal was given all started to pull. Once off, the stone started to move on slowly. The merit-seeker walks ahead of the pullers along with an elder person, who holds a special leaf and keeps on saying, "Kaichou Kaichou toulelo Ajang Hoi" (you have enough strength use it quickly or go quickly or go quickly, quickly, pull with equal force and stride). When tired the pullers take a brief rest get refreshed with rice-beer. Eventually, the stone was pulled up and laid on the slope, near the village path, above the narrow cleared shelf selected. Here the sledge is wedged to guard against the possible slip after which they were formally held in position.
for a considerable length of time, as though to make sure that they had settled down safely. On this occasion they were thus held up for one or two hours or more during which food and drinks fetched from the performer's house are served. For the day they leaves the stone as it is on the spot checking the wedges and lashes. The performer feeds the persons who take part in the proceeding of dragging the stone. As a rule these persons are not allowed to eat anything in their respective houses. The performer killed either cattle or pigs to feed them, besides rice and rice-beer.

On the third day, the shelf is levelled. At the hind end of the sledge, on which the stone is dragged, a hole of about 61 cms deep is dug in the earth by the village elders. The lashing on the stone are then cut, a stick being inserted under the creepers to take the hard stroke of the dao, as it is genne for the dao blade to touch the stone. Then an expert person selects which side is the head and foot of the stone. After this they will drag the sledge round to align the foot of the stone with the hole. Then, while the base of the stone was kept in place by means of pressure applied along the post poles pushed by a number of men to prevent the stone slipping of the sledge into the hole too soon, the other end of the stone being raised by inserting levers, raising it a fraction,
wedging it, pressing it up a little more, then wedging it again. In this way the upper end of the stone was lifted off the ground, with the help of a rope made of creeper tied around the upper end which is pulled up by others, who at the same time assist those keeping the base of the stone in place by putting one foot on it while they pulled. The pulling from the front, pressing from behind and propping it with longer wedges underneath every time, the stone was erected at last. The next effort cause the base of the stone to slide off the sledge into the hole dug at the spot, and at the same time, a pull on the creeper noose attached to the head of the stone brings it to an upright position. As the stone attained the vertical position all the pullers hold the stone firmly with their hands, to steady it, while a great yell goes up signalling the accomplishment of a great task. Then the stone is wedged under with to make it stand firmly on its base after which the hole is filled in, when the stone stands erect itself. The earth around the base is rammed then filled in and rammed again.

The stone raising day is the day of great feast. On this day, the merit-seeker kills a number of animals like cattle, pigs and fowls (at least two bulls, two buffaloes, five pigs) and prepare thirty to forty jers of rice-beer each contained forty litres or more. On this day, the merit-seeker and
his wife feed the guests and friends besides the persons, who took active part in pulling the stone, till they get pleased.

All the young men of the village play drums, and the village girls dance. Thus drumming and dancing last the whole day and night in the house of the performer. Then the stone is given the name of the performer in whose honour the feast is celebrated.

On the fourth and last day of the feast, all the guests and relatives retreat to their own home. The merit-seeker, however, is also required to give one more feast for the people of his own village in recognition of the services rendered during the feast and for erection of the megalith, the Chenku Tusom or mehir.

3. MANING TAOBA TUSOM (CROMLECH):

The next feast of merit following the erection of a Chenku Tusom is Maning Taoba Tusom. The merit-seeker now construct a new house called Chakiuki with Pomnin (house horn) in the front gable. The Maning Taoba Tusom consists of a long standing menhir, enclosed by a number of smaller stones. It
is a raised circular platform made of a number of large and small flat stones, with an upright stone erected in the centre to serve as the dwelling place for the soul of the performer after his death, during his visit or occasional peregrination around, to view his rice fields. Thus it is considered to be the most important memorial stone. It can be raised by the merit-seeker during his life time or by his sons after his death.

The process of stone raising ceremony is same as Chenku Tusom and it is raised in recognition of his prosperous life.

They are always found outside the habitational area i.e. on the way leading to their paddy fields. Thus their occurrence is always on the slope of the hill or on the spurs. It is about 457.5 cms in diameter and 61 cms to 91.5 cm. high above the ground level. The standing menhir is a roughly hewn stone; while the slabs of variable sizes forming the raised platform is made of rough stones. This megalithic structure is connected with the memorials dedicated to the spirit of deceased person, who performed a feast of merit called Chenku and raised Chenku Tosom. It may be performed while the merit-seeker was alive.
4. **TAZAN TATBO TUSOM (CAIRN):**

If a merit-seeker, who had already performed a series of feasts and raised *Chenku Tusom* and *Maning Taoba Tusom*, may perform the last feast of the whole process and raise another commemorative structure called *Tazan Tatbo Tusom*.

It consists of a heap of stone. It is found on the top of the hill. So it is always found far away from the habitational area.

The main rock type used for the construction of this structure is sandstone. It is about 610 cms long and 244 cms to 305 cms in breadth and 152 cms high above the ground level. Hence, it is a roughly rectangular platform. All these stones, which are the constituent parts of this heap of stones, are undressed rough stones without any form of decoration.

Such heap of stone called *Tazan Tatbo Tusom*, is connected with the memorials. The main function of this structure is to attain the highest social status. It is considered among the members of the Liangmei society that the performer of the *Tazan Tatbo Tusom* is the wealthiest person of the
contemporary society, because no one could perform this stone erection ceremony, without performing the previous grand feasts and raise megaliths called by the Liangmai Chenku Tusom and Maning Taoba Tusom.

The whole process of Tasan Tatbo Tusom ceremony is similar to those described above excepting the selection of the stone. For this ceremony, the performer is not allowed to select the stones require for raising the heaps of stones. The stones are selected by village elders and relatives.

As stated earlier, a great grand feast is associated with this megalithic rituals. The ceremony continues for five days. Everyday of the feast, the merit-seeker offers food and drink with meats of either buffalo or bull or pig or mithun, whichever is available. On the last day of the feast, the megalithic ritual is performed. The village priest performed a ritual to propitiate the god. In the meantime the friends, relatives and his co-villagers engage themselves in gathering stones. After the ritual, the piling of stone one on top of the other is started. When the construction of the stone structure is completed, the merit-seeker is ritually shaved and adorned himself with a new female dress to symbolize his attainment of the highest status in the society.
Feasting, drumming, singing and dancing continued the whole day till late midnight. Next morning the guests, friends and relatives of the distant places start disperse. The merit-seeker, is required to give a feast to the villagers in recognition of their services rendered during the great grand feasting and raising of the megalithic structure.

For completion of the memorial feast to attain the highest status, the merit-seeker is burdened with heavy obligations towards his kinsmen, who have contributed in cash or kind, and if in his life time any of the kinsmen decides to hold such feast, he in turn, must assist the kinsmen with gifts of cash or kind. On the other hand he feels proud to come to assistance to his kinsmen on such occasion.

5. **ATUGRA OR ATUKRA (DOLMEN WITH MENHIR):**

It consists of three dolmens composed of massive blocks of stones resting on four or five upright stones. They are found inside the main habitational area. There are two sets of such megalithic in the village. As they are connected with the judiciary functions, their occurrence is always inside the habitational area particularly at the centre of the village. The dolmens are accompanied by a standing stone
under the same name Atugra or Atukra, which is similar to the Sheifun of the Koirenga and Mawlynti of the Khasis and Beitung of the Marams (Plate XIX:a).

The flat stones of the three dolmens measures 182.4 cms x 115.2 cms x 31 cms; 127 cms x 113.4 cms x 20 cms and 120 cms x 92.2 cms x 26 cms respectively in length, breadth and thickness. The height of the dolmens varies slightly from 76 cms to 84 cms. The standing stone measures 96.5 cms broad, 60 cms thick and 273.36 cms high above the ground. They are all undressed stones. The rock type used for the construction of this type of megalith is sandstone.

This type of megalith is neither connected with burial monument nor with memorial. It is associated with the judiciary functions, mainly for oath taking. Faith in oaths is so deep rooted among the Nagas and they are so much respected by Liangmai Nagas that these oaths are very rarely taken. Generally these are resorted to only in the most serious and difficult cases when all other means failed to materialize.

Local traditions

Such structure is raised by the villagers collectively, when the village is newly established. The selection
of the stone is done by an elder member of the village, who is assisted by the village Phaimew (priest). Thus the elder persons go out to the nearby stream and search for a suitable stone for Atukra. After selecting the stones, they are ritually purified and a chicken is offered to the spirit of the stones. At night, the elder villager observes in his dreams whether or not the spirit of the stone is favourable. If unfavourable, he will select another stones and proceed as before. The stone finally selected is dragged with creepers to the place where it is to be erected near the intra-village path or at the heart of the village. They considered it the most holy stone, which can detect the right or wrong doer, so holy that no one dares to swear falsely on them.

As stated earlier, the Atukra is respected by the Liangmeis as the god. Heads taken on a raid were shown to this upright stone and then kept over the dolmen.

Thus in the most serious and difficult disputes which could not be tried by the council of village elders, oath taking ceremony in front of or on the Atukra is resorted to. The village elders normally ask both the defending and offending parties to bring either a dog or a cock or a human figure made out of wood, in front of the Atukra on a day of oath taking, fixed by the village council. On this day the
offender and defender are made to stand on the dolmens in front of the menhir and will swear one after another. Before this swearing in ceremony the Chawang (the village chief) assisted by the Phaimew (village priest) would ask the offender, to cut the facial part of the dog (if a dog is brought). Then he will be allowed to climb the flat stone by uttering these words: "If I am the wrong doer and telling a lie my mouth will be cut off or beheaded by the spirit of the Atukra". The defending person is also asked to observe the same procedure. If he had brought a cock or a wooden human figure, he will also be asked to beheaded the cock or human figure. Then he will be asked to climb on the Atukra and swear before audience, including the village council assembled there, saying these words: "I am telling the truth, if I am the wrong doer or liar, I may received the sufferings as the cock and the human figure had. Oh! Atukra you punish me if I had done wrong". It is firmly believed that the spirit of Atukra will surely punish the guilty person even with death. So they always try not to undergo such oath taking ceremony. The village authority maintains such method of trial to maintain social justice in the village.

6. **TAIDELI ATU (GRAVE STONE):**

Besides the above feast of merit and megalith erection, the wealthier Liangmei Naga also erect memorial stones,
in honour of and in memory of dead persons of his clan or his family. It is called Taideli atu or Taideli Tusom. It consists of a raised rectangular platform made of a number of large flat stones, with an upright stone erected either near one end or in the centre to serve as the dwelling place for the soul of the deceased person. The stones are collected from nearby streams by the villagers and for their assistance the person who erects the monument (the donor) feed them with meats of either bull or buffalo, cooked-rice and rice-beer. This structure is given the name of the person in whose honour the feast is celebrated.

Such monuments are built within three to five years after the death of a person. After erection of the upright stone, rice-beer is poured over it for purification. No elaborate feasts or rituals are performed in connection with this stone raising ceremony.

B. MARYRAM MEgalithic site

Maryram is a Liangmei village about 118 kms from Imphal on the north west. It is situated on the east by Oklong, on the south by Makuilongdi and on the north by Lairou and Khongnem villages.
The village is recently established by some inhabitants of the Oklong village, who migrated to the new village due to over population of their old village. There are a few megaliths in this village. Of them menhirs are dominant structures. The other type is the structure constructed on the graves. Now most of the villagers are converted to Christianity, consequently such tradition, which demanded a heavy expenditure is dying out. So in this village we find only eleven menhirs, out of them two were erected before 20 years ago, consequently the name of the merit-seeker is known to the villagers because the memorial stone (menhir) itself is known by the name of the performer, i.e. Sankireituba Saksigkatana and Kangrangsung Saksigkatana respectively. These two menhirs were raised by the late Mrs. Kangrangsung Saksigkatana in her memory and of her late husband Mr. Sankireituba Saksigkatana (Plate XIII: a and Plate XIV: b).

The memorial stone erected in the name of Sankireituba Saksigkatana measures 190.6 cms broad, 134.7 cms thick and 312.6 cms high above the ground (Plate XIII: b larger one), while the female stone (erected in the name of the performer, Mrs. Kangrangsung) measures 116.3 cms broad, 43.2 cms thick and 238.9 cms high above the ground (Plate XIII: b in the background).
These two menhirs are located at the left side of the main road leading to the village. The top end of the male stone is pointed. Some portion of it is also broken down. According to my informant and interpreter Mr. Ngatube Kelipunamei (chief of the Maryram village) and Miss Cicilia Pungdilea Ramungdinamei (Lady health visitor), the memorial stones for the rich man were raised in the year 1970. The ethnographic account of the rituals performed by the Liangmeis of this village is the same as that of Oklong village. And most of the words used by them is influenced by Maram Language.

The other remaining nine menhirs also belong to the same memorial stone known as Chenku Tusom. And the whole procedure for setting up these stones are similar to those found in Oklong village (described above).

Another type of megalithic structure, found in this village site is called Taideli Atu. Each Taideli atu (grave) has separate name which is named after the name of the deceased person in whose memory the megalithic monument is raised.

The different types of megalithic structures found in this village are listed below along with their classified and functional types:
### TABLE 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified types</th>
<th>Functional types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Chemku Tucum</td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>Stone for the rich man who can give a feast of merit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Teideli atu or</td>
<td>Stone seats</td>
<td>Grave stone raised in memory of a loving deceased person along with sitting flat stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teikalana runui</td>
<td>associated with a capstone and a small menhir</td>
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</table>

1. **Chemku Tucum (Menhir):**

   It is a menhir of huge or massive block of stone. It is situated by the side of village approach path and also found inside the village but by the road-side. There are eleven menhirs in this village.

   The size of this type of menhir varies from one another. The tallest menhir measures 312.6 cms x 190.6 cms x 134.7 cms in height, breadth and thickness. While the smallest one being 153.5 cms x 103.6 cms x 62 cms in height, breadth and thickness respectively. Some have irregularly pointed top ends, while others have semicircular or straight top-ends. Most of
them are dressed stones having smooth surfaces, but without any decoration on them.

These stones (Chenku Tusoms) are connected with commemoration, that they are set up in commemoration of performing the first feast of merit called Chenku. It lasts for five consecutive days. But it needs more than one month for the preparation of the great feast.

The procedure of erection of such Chenku Tusoms is similar to those found in the Oklong village mentioned above.

So the first stage for offering a feast of merit starts with the searching for the desirable stone.

This is followed by informing the intending merit seeker's wish to the village council through the Chawang (village chief). Next to it was the selection of the stone already spotted. The Phaimaw (village priest) will select the stone which will bring prosperity to its owner. If the selected stone is too large, they can take the desirable size out of the massive block of stone by using their local procedure of breaking stones as described above.

The auspicious day, for dragging and setting up such
memorial stones, is fixed by the Chawang assisted by Phaimew, the head and the base of the stone are dressed up by the expert village elders, before setting up. Because, according to the Liangmeis' belief, the stone such erected may cause much harm to the performer and his wealth, if some mistakes are committed in erecting them.

Before a month of the grand feast, the performer along with his co-villagers goes to the jungle to select a large tree so that they can make two huge logs of wood for making a sledge, necessary for dragging the stone. The procedure for making such sledge is also similar to those found among the Liangmeis of Oklong village, described in the previous pages.

About ten to fifteen days before the Chenku feasting is to begin, the merit-seeker distributes unhusked rice to all the women of the village for pounding with which will be required for feast and brewing rice-beer.

The merit-seeker invites all his maternal and paternal kinsmen and friends from other villages along with his co-villagers to attend the celebration. In return his paternal kinsmen are supposed to contribute something either in cash or kind.
Before the guests arrive, shelters are built by the performer's villagers to accommodate those who find no shelter or accommodation in the houses of the friends and relatives.

On the first day of Chenku feast, all the guests from neighbouring villages and kinsmen assemble, those who have brought gifts in cash or kind hand them over to the merit-seeker.

As stated earlier the selected stone had been quarried out previously from the site alongside the level path and had been left horizontally on its edges, and several coils of strong and stout creepers locally called Tucharenq, for ropes had already been collected.

First of all the sledge for dragging the stone on was brought. It was then held in its place with one arm touching the stone by pushing it with the help of long poles while others forced up the stone with levers of logs gently and tipped it over so as to make the stone fall on to the sledge, along its length. Having got the stone on to the sledge, its position was adjusted with the help of the wooden levers, so that it lays fairly along the sledge with its weight as evenly distributed as possible. Most of the poles and levers were brought down from the performer's house, and were made of
specially hard wood and preserve for such occasion but some are prepared on the spot to meet the requirement for the occasion.

Then the priest (Phaimew) utters many hymns and pour rice-beer over the stone and let loose a fowl, in order that there may be no difficulty in dragging the stone to the selected place of erection. The stone was then lashed very stoutly to the sledge with rope made of strong and stout creepers tied both to the staves underneath and through the holes in the arms. Creepers for pulling the sledge were then attached, being run through the holes already made on the two side of the poles. On the first day, if the sun sets down the work is stopped for the day.

Next day, more creepers were attached to the sledge, and in the meantime the Phaimew(priest) worship the spirit of the stone. Then the performer himself offers food and drink to the stone, saying "Your place is not here. We have made another for you. You must go to that place which we have made for you. Now you stand up, we will take you, be light".

The pullers, all dressed in full gala costume, holding the rope of the sledge, are awaiting the signal to start.
When the signal is given all started to pull, once off, the stone move easily enough, with an occasional rest on the way. The merit-seeker walks ahead of the pullers along with an elder expert person. Such person will hold a special leaf and keeps on saying "*Kaichu kaichu toulelo, Ajang hoi, Ajang hoi*" (You have enough strength, use it quickly, or go quickly, pull it with equal force and stride). While resting, the pullers were refreshed with rice-beer, but the merit-seeker and the elder expert person were not allowed to rest. That they will continued moving their legs pretending to be walking till the pullers again started dragging the stone (By this time, the elder person will also remain/continue saying many joking terms, especially used for stone dragging ceremony). Eventually the stone is pulled up and laid on the slope, near the village path. Here the sledge is wedged to guard against the possible slip after which they are formally held in position for a considerable length of time, as though to make sure that they have settled down safely. At this stage they will halt at a little distance from the house of the merit-seeker while food and drinks are fetched from the house of the performer for distribution among the stone pullers.

For the day, they left the stone as it is on the spot after checking the wedges and lashes. The performer feeds the
persons who take part in the proceeding of dragging the stone. As a rule, these persons are not allowed to eat anything in their respective houses. The performer kills either cattle or pigs to feed them besides rice-beer and cooked rice.

On the third day, the selected spot is levelled. At the hind of the sledge, on which the stone was dragged, a hole of about 40 to 50 cms deep is dug in the earth by the village elders. The lashing on the stone are then cut, a stick being inserted under the creepers to take the stroke of the dao, as it is genna for the dao blade to touch the stone. Then an expert person selects which side is the head or foot of the stone. Then, while the base of the stone is kept in place along the poles pushed by a number of men to prevent the stone slipping of the sledge into the hole too soon, the other end of the stone, being raised by inserting levers, raising it a fraction, wedging it, pressing it up a little more, then wedging it again, the wedges consisting of sections of hard wood of gradually increasing lengths inserted between the edges of the stone and the ground, the insertion of the longer wedges allowing the shorter one to be used again nearer the base of the stone. In this way the end of the stone was lifted of the ground, when it is harnessed with a creeper noose, tied at the upper end, which is pulled on by others, who at the same time assisting those keeping the base of the stone in place by putting one
foot on it, while they pulled. Thus pulling from the front, pressing from behind and propping it with longer wedges underneath every time, the stone is erected at last. The next effort causes the base of the stone slide off the sledge into the hole dug at the spot, and at the same time a pull on the creeper, attached to the head of the stone, brought the stone into an upright position. Then the stone was wedged underneath to make it stand firmly on its base, after which the hole is filled in, when the stone stands erect itself. The earth round the base is then rammed and filled in and rammed again.

As the stone raising day is the greatest feasting day, the merit-seeker sacrifices a number of animals like cattle, pigs and fowls and offers the meat of the sacrificed animals along with the rice-beer. On this day the merit-seeker and his wife feed the guests and friends in addition to the persons, who take the active part in pulling the stone, till they are satisfied.

Meanwhile, all the young men of the village will play drums, and the village girls will dance. Thus drumming and the dancing last the whole day and night, in the house of the performer. Then the stone is given the name of the performer, in whose honour the feast is celebrated.
On the next day, all the guest and relatives retreat to their own homes. The merit-seeker, however, must give one more feast to the people of his own village in recognition of their services rendered during the feasting of Chenku and raising up of the stone Chenku Tusom.

2. **TAIDELI ATU OR TAIKULANA RANII (GRAVE STONE)**

The other type of megalithic structure found among the Liangmeis of Maryram village is *Taideli atu* or *Taideli tusom* (Plate XIII:a). Such memorial stone is raised by a wealthy Liangmei Naga, in honour of and in memory of dead persons (of the clan or his family). It consists of large flat stones, with an upright stone erected either near the end or in the centre to serve as the dwelling place for the soul of the deceased person. The stones are collected from nearby streams/jungle by the villagers, and for their assistance the person who erects the monument (or the donor) feed them with meats of either bull or buffalo, cooked-rice and rice-beer. This structure is also given the name of the deceased person in whose honour the feasting is celebrated.

Such monuments are built within three to five years after the death of a person. After erection of the upright stone, rice-beer is poured over it, for purification.
C. THE PUilONG SITE

The Puilong village, where a number of megalithic remains are abounding, is located on the Kangchup range. It is about 22 kms away from Imphal on the west. It is under the jurisdiction of Kangpokpi sub-division of Sader Hills, Senapati district, Manipur. The site is extended from the top ridge of Kangchup range to the lower spur of the same range. The total area is about 6 sq.kms. It is surrounded by the Samuk village, the Eyei river and Haochong village of Tamenglong district on the west; by a tributary of Singda river and Kharam Waphei (a Kuki village) on the north, the Singda Lam, Singda river and Singda water supply colony with Singda market area and the Kadangband village of Imphal district stand at the eastern boundary. On the south there lie the Abulok river, the Geljang (a Khongjai village) and the Chiru villages. It lies in between 24°54' north Latitude and 93°39' east Longitude.

The Puilong village, at the time of its first settlement, occupied the upper ridges of the Kangchup hill. Then in course of time they came down to the middle part of the same spur/range. Recently this village has again came down to the lower part of the same spur. Each habitational area, occupied by the present villagers, abounds in megalithic monuments.
MEGALITHIC TYPES AT PUILONG SITE

The megalithic structures of the Puilong site, which is commonly known as Ireag Village to the outsiders are of various types. It can be classified according to their structures and functions associated with them. They are listed below with local names, classified types and functional types.

**TABLE 11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified type</th>
<th>Functional type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kaho Katanmei Saimingbao</td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>The stone for the bravest and richest person (during his life-time of the performer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kasaibao tusom</td>
<td>Menhir along with some horizontal stones</td>
<td>Stone raised in memory of a distinguished person (after death)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lungaibao</td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>Memorial stone for a rich man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tarao toh</td>
<td>Cap stone</td>
<td>Grave stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Maning Taoba tusom</td>
<td>Cromlech</td>
<td>Stone seats with a miniature menhir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td><strong>Roukhang toh</strong></td>
<td>Cape stone/small upright stone</td>
<td>Ancestor's stone raised vertically or horizontally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td><strong>Pet Bom</strong></td>
<td>Monolith</td>
<td>Foundation stone of the village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td><strong>Kapet Bom</strong></td>
<td>Stone circle with a flat stone at the centre</td>
<td>Burial place with pit for decapitated heads of animals and human beings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td><strong>Tabao Long</strong></td>
<td>Cairn</td>
<td>A heap of stone use as watching tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td><strong>Kareng Hang</strong> and <strong>Kareng Lree</strong></td>
<td>Stone walls</td>
<td>Village Gates (north and south or up and down)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **KAHO KATANMEI SAIMINGBAO (MENHIR)**

It is a monolith found by the side of the inter village road. It is 195 cms high above the ground 36 cms thick. It is somewhat quadrangular in shape but tappers towards the top to a point. The rock type used for the construction of this menhir is hard sandstone. It is a finely dressed stone, though it does not possess any form of decoration on it (Plate XVIIa).

This **Kaho Katanmei Saimingbao** is connected with commemoration as it is erected to show the outstanding fortune.
and actions of the bravest and the most fortunate person, while he is living.

LOCAL TRADITIONS

The first work of raising a Kaho Katanmei Saimingbao is the notification of the intending performer to the village council about his wish. Then, after getting permission from the village council, the intending performer should inform all his paternal kinsmen to attend a meeting which will be held in his (the performer's) house. In such meeting the intending performer should declare his wishes and there they will discuss all about the said ceremony.

The stone to be raised for Kaho Katanmei Saimingbao should be search for, by the paternal kinsmen of the intending performer. But the selection of the stone is done by the performer himself, assisted by a village elder. After selecting the stone, it is ritually purified by pouring rice-beer and let a chicken free (supposing it is offered to the spirit of the stone). They will return home before sun-set and in the said night, the intending performer will observe in his dream whether or not the spirit is favourable. If unfavourable, he will select another stone and proceed as before. Then finally,
the selected stone is dragged with creepers to the selected place where it is to be raised, generally near the inter-village path, terrace fields etc. so that it can be seen by the passerby or travellers.

The dragging of the stone is done by the performer's village youths. Before dragging, the stone is again purified ritually. On this day, the village elder would offer a pot of rice-beer (Tala, made of gourd's shell), an egg and a fowl to let loose. Beside this ritual, much care must be taken. If something is wrong in performing this ritual, the performer will suffer from blindness, breaking of teeth etc., etc. So an elder person is selected for performing such rituals by the merit-seeker.

On the stone dragging day, no cooked-rice is offered. They offer cooked-meat and rice-beer only. When the stone is dragged to the selected spot, they leave it there till night (on the same day). The merit-seeker will raise the stone, at night (on the same day), with help of the village youths. Singing and dancing by the boys and girls continue for the whole night. Meanwhile, the clan elder of the merit-seeker comes out and announces the outstanding works done by the merit-seeker during his lifetime till the day of performing that ceremony.
for Kabo Katanmai Seimingbao. The clan elder says "Mr. 'A' had 'N' times of greatest harvest in the village. He had owned 'N' number of (5 to 10) girls as his wife, he had killed 'N' number of big games (animals) like tigers, leopards, bears, boars, deer etc." Above all he also mentioned the number of human heads taken by the merit-seeker on raids etc.

Next day, the merit-seeker will offer a great feast. For this he had already prepared at least thirty jars of rice-beer called Zou-Karung (an earthen-ware or made out of large tree trunk) each containing twenty to thirty litres. He also arranges a big cattle, a buffalo, a mithun, a dog and a number of fowls.

No special ceremony is performed for slaughtering the animals. They cut the meat to pieces of considerable size. Some of them will be distributed to the married paternal aunts (father's sisters either elder or younger), sisters, daughters, and even the grand-daughters (if married) of the merit-seeker. And their husbands, locally called Tamimeikina, served as cooks for the feasts of Kabo Katanmai Seimingbao. If the merit-seeker does not have his own paternal aunts, sisters and daughters and even close relatives of such kinship terminology, he will distribute the meat to his clan's sisters, daughters etc. and their husbands render services as cooks of the feasts.
2. **Kasaibao Tusom (Menhir Along with Some Horizontal Stone)**

It is a composit structure. It consists of a platform of about 31 cm to 64 cm high above the ground level, heaps of stone slabs in regular intervals on the platform and a standing stone facing the entrance. It is found both inside and outside the village habitational area (Plate XXI:a).

The standing menhir is 70 cm high, 16 cm thick and 34 cm broad. The standing menhir is encircled by a number of horizontal slabs of irregular structure. The largest horizontal slab measures 78 cm long, 52 cm broad and 25 cm thick. It is somewhat similar to the stones arranged in the graves. The rock type used for the construction of this structure is hard sandstone. They are mostly unhewn rough stones without any decoration.

The Kasaibao Tusom is connected with the sepulchral monument as it is erected in honour of a distinguished person after his death.

**Local Traditions**

The local tradition regarding the erection of this monument is similar to those found in the Oklong and Maryram
villages described in the previous pages. Feasting last for two days consecutively. The main purpose for raising such megalith is to remember the life span of the deceased distinguished person.

3. **LUNGAIBAO OR CHENKU TUSOM (MENHIR)**

   It is a menhir, of large and flat stone. It occurs either on the hill top or on the slope or spurs, either near the habitational site of the village or far away from the habitational area. The total number of such menhir found in this area (village) is eight.

   The sizes of this type of menhir varies from 142 cms to 272 cms in height and 152 cms to 250 cms in breadth and 16 cms to 34 cms in thickness. Some have semi-circular top-end while others have irregularly pointed top ends. Most of them are roughly hewned stones having smooth surfaces.

   These stones are connected with the commemoration; that they are set up in commemoration of performing a feast of merit.

   The local tradition, procedures and the aim and object of the feast of merit connected with this structure are
similar to those found in the Oklong and Maryram villages (described in the previous pages).

4. **TARAO TOH (TUSOM) (CAPSTONE)**

It is a grave stone or capstone. It covers the grave pit directly (Plate XII:a). It is naturally flat and large stone of variable sizes. The largest one measures 312 cms long, 152 cms broad and 21 cms thick, the smallest being 160cms long, 112 cms broad and 14 cms thick. They are found outside the village habitational area. The rock type used, for the construction of this structure, is sandstone.

It is placed over the grave after performing a feast. It is performed usually by the descendents of a deceased person in his loving memory and honour. Any person wishing to place such capstone over the grave of a deceased ancestor, he must request the villagers through the village council.

For this, the intending donor should arrange a considerable quantity of rice, animals to be slaughtered and rice-beer. In this feast a fully grown pig and a cow must be sacrificed. If the preparation is completed, the intending donor fixed an auspicious day with the help of the village council especially the Phaimev (village priest).
For this purpose the village elders along with the healthy youths and the intending donor set off for searching and selecting the stone on the fixed auspicious day. Unlike other stones, dragging is not done for this capstone. They simply transported it by using ropes of strong creepers and some poles of hard wood specially prepared for this purpose. Thus they brought the stone, in this way, near the burial pit. Before placing the capstone over the grave the village elders assisted by the priest pour rice-beer over the stone and also over the grave (which were fetched from the performer's house in the village). This is followed by offering cooked-rice and meat to please the soul of the deceased person, after which the capstone is placed over the grave.

On this day, the donor will offer food and drink to the participants in recognition of their services rendered during the searching and transporting the grave stone. It lasts the whole day and night.

5. MANING TAODA TUSOM (CROMLECH)

It is an upright stone, encircled by a number of smaller stones (some are flat while others are rounded). It is a raised circular or rectangular platform made of a number
of large and small flat stones, with an upright stone, erected in the centre to serve as the dwelling places for the soul of the performer (after his/her death or of the deceased person if the donor wants to raise in the name of their family or clan), during his/her occasional visit to view his/her rice fields. Thus it is considered to be the most important memorial stone. It can be raised by the merit-seeker during his lifetime or by his son(s) after death.

The process of stone raising ceremony is same as the Lungaibao Tusom or Chenku Tusom (described above), as it is raised in memory of his prosperous life.

They are always found outside the habitational area, that is on the way leading to their residential areas or to their paddy fields (jhum or terrace). Thus their occurrence is always on the slope of the hills or spurs. It is about 452 cms in diameter (of the circular/paving stone slabs) and 60 to 100 cms high above the ground level. The standing menhir is roughly hewed stone; while the slabs of variable sizes forming the raised platform are made of rough stones only. This megalithic structure is connected with the memorials dedicated to the spirit of a deceased person (who performed a feast of merit and raised Chenku Tosom).
It is also a flat stone placed horizontally or vertically after performing the last rite of a deceased person. The last rite is called Takebao. It lasts for two to three consecutive days with feastings and drinking rice-beer, but can extend up to five days depending upon the performer.

It is performed by a wealthy person, usually in the month of December. In this feast the performer offers the guests, invitees and relatives cooked-rice, rice-beer and meat.

On the first day of the ceremony called Takebao, the performer should sacrifice a small fowl or a puppy ritually. The main purpose for sacrificing these animals (small) is that the soul of these small animals will go to the land of dead and meet the forefathers, relatives and ancestors of the clan, of the deceased person. After sacrificing these animals, the donor will offer dress, ornaments (even gold), utensils, vegetables, iron spear, bow and arrow etc. whatever needed by a member of the Liangmei tribe, as the share of the deceased person in his graveyard. After performing this ceremony ritually, the performer may raise an upright stone or place it horizontally near the burial pit. This ceremony is performed only when the
performer thought that many sufferings were caused in his family by the soul of the deceased person (particularly relating to fertility). Among the Liangmeis, there is a deep rooted belief that the family will be more prosperous if the soul of the deceased person is pleased with the family. Hence they used to perform Takebao ceremony and raise Roukhtangtoh commonly known as ancestor's stone.

7. **PET BAM (FOUNDATION STONE)**

It is a foundation stone, raised by the founder member of the village to commemorate the occasion. Structurally, it is a monolith. It is found inside the village habitation area (now deserted). Once this monolith was raised in the courtyard of the village founder who was also the then Chawang (chief) of the village.

The process of raising such monolith is as follows:

If the present village is too crowded and some villagers may decide to migrate to a new settlement area and to establish a new village. Among the villagers if more than one member may wish to become the Chawang (chief) of the village. For the selection of the new chief, a traditional method is
observed. For this purpose the intending persons should go to the selected place for new settlement together, each carrying a cock. There they will make their separate hearth and sleep that night with their cocks separately. Next morning they wake up early and listen to the first sound of their cock's crow. They firmly believed that the person whose cock crows first in early morning, is entitled to become the Chawang (chief) of the new village. This is considered as the divine selection. The person who has thus become the chief of the newly established village, must erect a monolith as the foundation stone called Pet Bam.

The new Chawang (chief) along with his clan members raise such structure ritually. This monolith, is considered to be the holy stone of the village. The Chawang uses to announce whatever ritualistic events to be observed by the villagers by standing on this stone. No elaborate feast is associated with this stone raising ceremony.

After raising this monolith, the Chawang had to construct another megalithic structure called Kapet Bam along with his clan members.

8. KAPET BAM (STONE CIRCLE WITH A FLAT STONE AT THE CENTRE)

It is a pit burial place surrounded by a circle of
Fig 2 Stone circle called Kopet bam. Measurements of the centre stone: 100 cm x 70 cm x 12.6 cm.
either huge boulders or stone slabs. The burial pit is also covered by a flat stone directly.

The Kapet Bam is connected, with the hunting of large and ferocious animals and even with the head-hunting tradition. When a person kills large wild animals individually or collectively, he/they should keep the head(s) of the hunted animal(s) in this burial pit of Kapet Bam. Like this the human heads collected through raids are also brought there and keep inside the pit by removing its cover. Then the person(s) should inform the Chawang (chief) of the village that he/they had killed such and such animals or decapitated such human heads and so on in detail. Then the Chawang will inform all the male members of the village to assemble at Kapet Bam in full war dress. Soon all the male members dressed in war costume would gather there and danced the war dance with the shouting of "Hou, hou, Jam, ahou jam, Hou hou hou", imitating the barking dogs.

In the village, the person who has taken the heads of foes or animals will observe personal genna. He would not be allowed to eat and drink on that day. On the same day, either in the day or night, his family will offer a feast to the whole villagers with the meat of either a pig or cattle. Next
day the performer is allowed to take food but some restric-
tion is imposed in eating some special fruits, vegetables
and beans such as bamboo shoots, soyabean, all creepers and
their products, either fruits or vegetables like beans, pum-
kins, gourds, etc.

After some months, when the fleshy parts of the
collected human or animal heads are completely decayed, they
take out the skull(s) and bring them to the performer's home.
There he keeps the heads permanently in his home (hiding from
outsiders if the said skull is of human beings). On this day
no elaborate feast is done, except the purification of the
skull(s) ritually by a village elder. The construction of Kapet
Bam is followed by (construction) making the heap of stone
called Tabaolong.

9. **TABAOLONG (CATRN)**

It is a heap of stone. It is always found outside
the village habitational area, particularly on the top of the
hill(Plate V:a). The main rock type used for the construc-
tion of these heap of stone called Tabaolong is sandstone.
This type of construction is done only by the new village
chief, after the construction of Pet Bam and Kapet Bam, with
the help of his clan members. Because it is the duty of the
Chawanq (chief) to protect his subjects from the enemies or any harmful events. The Tebeolong is used as a watching tower for the village. When the villagers found anything living beings missing, either cattle or human beings, they climb up on such Tebeolong and try to locate the missing person or cattle. In the early days the chief of the village appointed some persons who acted as watchmen in their scheduled times, so that they can detect it any enemy is approaching the village. If enemies are advancing the watchmen should rush to the village chief and inform him about situation, so that every possible defensive measure can be taken up easily by the village council.

As the construction work for this structure is done by the new chief of a new village along with his own clan members it is the duty of the new chief to feed the villagers till the work is completed. Further on any important event, the village chief climbs up the Tebeolong and announces the date of observance of annual genna (ritual prohibition) and food genna etc.

-10. KARENG HANG AND KARENG DRI (STONE WALL)

It is the village gate. They are always found on the boundary of the village, may be on the north and south or
on the east or west. The gate of north or east is called KA-RENG HANG and southern or western gate is called KRENG DRI in Liangmai dialect.

They use to worship at these gates either to prevent from the epidemic diseases for the coming year. Besides, they also see omens of the year's crops before sowing seeds in their fields. There they sow some seeds ritually as directed by the village priest. The sowing should be done by two unmarried youths and their hoes are left there by hanging on the gate.

After two weeks they will observe the germination of the seeds and from the nature of seedling grown near the gate, they can predict whether they will get a good harvest or not.
CHAPTER-III:6
THEMEGA LITHIC CULTURE FOUND
AMONG THE MAOS OF MANIPUR

THE PEOPLE

The Maos, a tribe of 49,458 individuals inhabiting about twenty villages, are distributed over the north and north-eastern part of Senapati district, Manipur. Linguistically they belong to Eastern Moga group. They speak Tibeto-Burman tongue. They have distinct patrilineal clans. The village headman functions as both religious and secular head and in his function as secular head he is assisted by the council of elders and in his function as religious head he is assisted by the village priest. They formerly had youths' dormitory organisation called Chukhrusii (boys' dormitory) and Chillozii (girls' dormitory). But such organisations are no longer prevalent. They have almost lost their traditional religion as most of them have accepted Christianity.

The Maos cultivate on periodically shifted jhum fields as well as on the irrigated rice-terraces. They use to prepare their jhum fields with hoes and it is the woman who does the greater part of the work, whereas the man engaged in clearing the jungle and making dykes for their terrace fields.
Buffaloes and oxen are kept for the sake of their meat and pigs are purely for meat.

Many Mao villages like the Poumals, are located on the hill tops or spurs surrounded by many fruit plants particularly pears, apples and other trees. Other villages, however, particularly the recently founded ones, cling to the gentle slope in the side of the narrow valleys immediately above the rice fields. Though overcrowding sometimes lead to new colonies splitting off from a too congested mother village, the Mao settlements have in general a remarkable permanency and they take pride on such very old traditions.

THE MEgaliths

Entering a Mao village and passing down several tracts lined by houses, one finds oneself in a large open space where a number of megaliths are found scattered here and there. They are found generally roughly circular in arrangement of horizontal stone slabs (dolmens) and upright menhirs. The horizontal stone slabs resting on a number of upright stones are very common. Some horizontal stone slabs are erected as raised platforms while some are found lying on the ground level. Besides, horizontal slabs and boulders often piled one on top of the
Pl.XXII:a

Uchize (House of the Mao village chief with house horn and in front wall showing the number of animals slaughtered during the feast of merit or taken by him along with animal heads decapitated on raids), Pudunnamei site.
Pl.XXIII:a

Yosotokho (Raised enclosure/platform serve as sitting places for formal discussion of the village council), Songsong site

Pl.XXIII:b

Kathitokho (Platform raised in memory of a deceased person), Songsong site
Pl. XXIV:a

Zhosotokho (an alignment of Zhosotu), Kalinamei site

Pl. XXIV:b

Zhosotu and Okimaki (memorial stones Zhosotus with commemorative dolmens Okimaki)
Pl. XXV: a
A circle of Okimaki on a raised platform
(snap taken from a distance place),
Panamaño site

Pl. XXV: b
A part of an Okimaki circle
(closer view of Pl. XXV: a)
PI.XXVI:a

Zhosotokho (an avenue of memorial stones called Zhosotu), Punanamei site

PI.XXVI:b

Remaining part of Pl.XXVI:a
other to form a raise platform, menhirs are also found erected haphazardly. This array of the stone monuments, varies in size and shape from village to village, but everywhere it serves as a general meeting place, where the villagers assemble for rest and gossip as well as for formal discussions of the village council. At the meeting of the village council one particular stone seat is reserved for the headman, other members may sit at random.

Apart from the monoliths erected at memorial feasts, many upright stones arranged in the form of alignments and avenues are also seen outside the habitational areas of the Mao villages, in the vicinity of the rice fields. Most of these into whose significance the present author inquired, had been put up within living memory and the author was therefore able to establish the methods of their erection.

There are five different types of megalithic monuments found among the Maos (Ememas) of Senapati district, Manipur. These are listed below with local names, classified types.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Local names</th>
<th>Classified types</th>
<th>Functional types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Zhosotu</td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>Memorial stones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following materials have been collected from the villages where the Maos are dwelling at present and in the past. The villages are the Songsong, Kalinamei, Rabunamei, Punanamei, Chounamei Khullen, Chounamei Khunou, Mao, Pudunamei, Chakummei/Chakkummei, Tabahomei, Tabumei, Tadubi, Sajouba Upper, Sajouba Lower, Makhel, Kaibi, Makhan Centre (Okhramei), Makhan Khullen, Makhan Khunou, Chabonghomei and Punanamei.

Among these villages listed above, the present author
have selected some villages which have the finest structure of megalithic monuments. They are described below in detail.

A. **SONGSONG GATE (CHACHOMEI VILLAGE) SITE**

The Songsong Gate (Chachomei village) is commonly known as Mao Gate, where megaliths are in large number and are located on a spur of Mount Iso (Tanipu). It is surrounded by Mao Bazar on the west, Kalinamei on the north-east Tatubi on the south and Pudunamei on the north-east. It is about 146 kms away from Imphal on the north. It lies on the eastern side of N.H. No.39 (Imphal-Disapur Road).

There are a number of megaliths distributed all over the present habitational area as well as its surrounding area included in its jurisdiction. The megalithic remains of the area consist of menhirs, alignments, avenues, cairns, and dolmens. There are also stone circles and stone walls. The different types (though similar in structure but different in functions) of megaliths according to my informant and interpreter Mr. S. Asikho and Mr. A. Nili (Village chief and secretary), still existing in this village area are of five types. They are listed below with their local names along with classified and functional types.
TABLE 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified types</th>
<th>Functional types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Zhosotu</td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>Memorial stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Zhosotokho</td>
<td>Alignments or</td>
<td>Memorial stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>avenues</td>
<td>collectively for the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>respective clan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Kathi-Tokhu</td>
<td>Raised platform</td>
<td>Resting or sitting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>places raised in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>memory of a deceased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Yosotokho</td>
<td>Raised enclosure</td>
<td>Sitting places which</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sure or raised</td>
<td>serves as the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>platform</td>
<td>meeting place for formal</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>discussion of the</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>village council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Okimaki</td>
<td>Dolmen</td>
<td>Commemorative, connected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>with peace negotiation over head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hunting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **ZHOSOTU (MENHIR):**

It is a menhir found either in the form of monolith or avenues. They are always found in the stone raising place of the habitational area. Some of them are also found in the form of avenues or alignments in the stone raising places of
their respective clans or Khels either in the vicinity of their terrace fields or near the village habitational area particularly near the main gate (by the side of the path). For example, Songsong village has four such Khels belonging to four separate exogamous groups viz. Chakrimesi, Abomei, Puzemei and Isukeina. So they have four different stone raising places.

The rock type used for the construction of such structure is sandstone of various types. They are roughly hewn and undressed stones without any decoration on them. They are all connected with memorials. The local traditions for erecting such memorial stones are described below:

Before a Mao Naga can erect a memorial stone in his name for the first time he had to perform a series of feast having different names. The series of feast is listed below:

1. Orakaso,
2. Novu,
3. Omokolu,
4. Yoso,
5. Yoshu,
6. Yosotokho (Qtdokodu).
7. Ochizo (Chishokoso),
8. Thovo (Othokosou),
9. Toho/Tohu,
10. Ebvukoho (Obviikopfoo),
11. Omoshiva,
12. Pittoshiva,
13. Shikhoshiva and

Feast-of-merit is considered as the highest form of competition and challenges in the Naga society affecting the life and social status of individuals. It may continue till death, because there is no upper age limit for the intending merit-seeker. The philosophy behind it is mainly the generosity of wealthy villages in feeding the poor and sharing the wealth with the entire population. Associated with the generosity is the opportunity of the merit-seeker to climb up the ladder of social recognition that promoted the Naga rich man to perform the series of feasts of merit as it brings honour to him. In short it can also be called a feast of honour.

Today, to a Christian Mao Naga, it sounds simply foolish to perform all these feasts of merit involving huge expenditure, but to the non-Christian Mao Nagas, life is simply meaningless without it, although it is very expensive.
Before a Mao Naga can erect a memorial stone for the first time in his name, he must pray to gods for blessings. This is the first thing to do among all the series of fourteen different types of feast of merit listed above. Thus worshipping of gods for their blessings is the initial feast of merit called Orakaso. It usually takes place during the dry season before cultivation work is started.

As a first stage of the feast, the performer should sacrifice a cattle without any sign of injury and deformity, and the meat is distributed to all the houses of the village, after offering some meat to the god. All the clan members of the village assemble there in the house of the performer are served with rice-beer. It is a common practice among the Nagas that the person, who intends to perform a feast of merit should declare his intention to the villagers particularly the elders, after performing this sacred rite. The donor of such feast should go either to the village priest or the eldest of the clan and put some paddy into a pot containing water. Later the water is poured out carefully and the paddy is kept there for three or four days. If the paddy germinates in the pot the plan of the feast is made public. But sometimes, according to their belief, it is happened that the paddy would fail to
germinate despite repeated attempts. In such a case, the feast could not be performed. Thus many rich men go to grave without their desire fulfilled (Shimray: 1986,109-110).

2. **NOVU (NOVI KOVII)**:

After the usual observances of genna and the formalities, the rich young man first of all performed Orakaso. It is followed by Novu (Novii Kovii), when people goes on drinking the whole day. Killing of animals for this feast was not compulsory. In some villages, it last only for a day while in others it may continue for three days.

3. **OMOKOJU (OMA KOZII)**:

Novii Kovii is followed by second stage called Omokoju (rice-beer ceremony), which lasted for four to ten days of drinking and eating meat. The first day is set apart for the people of his wife's village. One to four pigs are killed for the invitees from his wife's village and four bulls or cows for his own village. The exceptionally rich might exceed the minimum compulsory number of the animals to be killed. All the invitees, generally come with presents either paddy or other goods.
The real test of a man comes when he entered the third stage called Yoso (also called Zhoso or Ozhokoso). In this stage the erection of megalith and the stone dragging ceremony are performed. It is a long process to perform the stone dragging ceremony. To observe this ceremony, a day is fixed for drinking when the ceremony is started. After an interval of four or five days drinking is started again and continued for five days accompanied by drinking, eating, singing and dancing only by male members as females are not allowed to participate in the dance.

The big stone raised during this ceremony is called Zhosotu. By the side of the Zhosotu (newly erected by the merit-seeker) a small stone is also erected in honour of the wife of the donor. The minimum number of animals to be killed for the ceremony consist of eight bulls or cows, a buffalo and a pig. Rich man generally exceeds this number. One pregnant cow without any injury and deformity for the wife and a bull with all the natural features on its body for the husband are generally included. Such animals are termed Khrolo among the Maos and Khulo among the Poumais (both meaning animals without any sign of injury). One Khrolo is given to the
village of his wife (if she is from another village and if she belongs to the same village, no separate Khrolo is given to her clan). The heads of the animals should be returned to merit-seeker to be preserved by him as a proof of the number of animals killed during the ceremony.

The merit seeker and his wife performing such feast are qualified to wear a special kind of cloth named chososa (titled cloth made from a locally made thread) by which the other people will recognise him as the performer of choso, so that he is respected by all.

The merit-seeker under a strict religious taboo (frequently termed as genna, is expected to abstain from his wife for not less than eight months or more. This is repeated everytime, when the merit-seeker performs another feast of merits. In case of some other villages the time limit for abstinence is extended upto one year or more.

5. YOSHU

It is the fifth stage in the series of feasts of merit. This is the second time of stone dragging and raising in the name of the performer. If the performer is not trying
for the last stage of the whole series, he could jump to the sixth stage. But for the one who intends to perform the whole series, Yoshu is compulsory for him. Like the Yoso, this series called Yoshu is performed along with erection of megaliths.

6 YOSOTOKHO (OTDOKODU)

After the two consecutive stone dragging ceremonies, sitting platform called Yosotokho ceremony is observed in the sixth stage. Such sitting platforms, where people gather every morning and evening to gossip and talk about on the day-to-day affairs and sometimes discussing serious problems of the village, is a common scene among the Naga villages. For raising such platform an auspicious day is fixed when all the stones have to be brought to the selected spot and the platform construction is completed. Here too, the same procedure of sacrificing a healthy bull or a pregnant cow called Khrolo is repeated. On this occasion five or seven bulls or cows and two or three buffaloes are sacrificed. Further, a bull and a pregnant cow is given to the brother-in-law of the donor's wife in order to ascertain the significance of the platform which is meant for the menfolk only.
7. **OCHIZO (CHIZHOKOSO):**

On the seventh feast, one could perform Ochizo or Chizhokoso (construction of a house of status) ceremony. In constructing the said house every family of the village extends help to the performer with some material for roofing. Now-a-days almost all the houses are tin-roofed. In the past they used to help the merit-seeker with a bundle of thatch-grass as at that time it was the main roofing material. After the collection of all the materials the construction is to be completed within two days. Five or six cows and a buffalo are generally killed on this occasion though rich men exceed the number. Then he will have a fine house with two horns called Uchize on the gable, a sign of the 'states house'. However, the merit-seeker is yet to reach even half of the series of the feast of merit in the ladder of social recognition.

8. **THOYO (OTTHOKOZHU):**

Ochizo is followed by another feast of merit called Thoyo (paddy distribution ceremony). On this occasion, a basket certain about 18 - 20 kg. of paddy and half Kg. of meat are distributed to every family of the village. Two buffaloes and eight bulls or cows are killed. A bull or a pig will also be given to the brother-in-law's village in honour of the wife
of the merit-seeker. For this ceremony three special bulls or cows including at least one pregnant cow without any sign of injury on its body, are required to be offered in the name of the donor's wife.

9. **TOHU**

This is the ninth feast of the series. On this occasion the intending performer had to offer to each village, a selected khrolo (unblamished cattle as mentioned above). Generally eight bulls are distributed among equal number of neighbouring villages and the ninth animal is added if the wife of the performer is from a different village outside this group of eight villages. Moreover, the donor is required to offer eight bulls or cows and a buffalo to his own village. Eating, drinking and singing continued on this occasion for three days. No particular domestic work is performed during this ceremony. The heads of all animals distributed among the neighbouring villages are required to be returned to the performer under a strict religious rule, because the display of animal heads killed on this occasion by the donor enhances his status.

10. **EBVUKHO (OBVIIKOFPOO):**

The next ceremony is called Ebvukho or Obviikopfoo (pond making feast) which marks the tenth of the series when
a pond of drinking water for the public is constructed. The construction is to be completed in a day. Such pond is dug in the name of the merit-seeker with the help of villagers, who are fed with rice-beer and meat by the donor. For this feast at least five or six cows and a buffalo are generally killed to feed the participants though more wealthy performer can exceed the figure.

11. OMOHIVA

Pond making feast is followed by Omoshiva (pumkin distribution) ceremony. On this occasion the donor distributes pumkin instead of meat to indicate that he had nothing more to distribute. The merit-seeker distribute pumkin to every family of the village. The receiving family in return will bless him (the merit-seeker) to lead more prosperous life. At this stage, no animal is killed but drinking of rice-beer continues for two to three days.

12. PITTOHIVA

Like pumkin distribution ceremony, in Pittoshiva cucumber is distributed. It usually takes place in the month of Onoo (August-September). It is similar to Omoshiva in drinking as well as in distribution.
13. SHIKHOSHIVA

It is the last but one of the whole series of feasts. Actually this ceremony is the repetition of the above two. Drinking continues for two to three days. During this stage brinjal is distributed. But the series of vegetable distribution could not be performed all at a time or within a year. So these three stages viz. OMOSHIVA, PITTOSHIVA and SHIKHOSHIVA are usually performed with a break of one to two years involving each time drinking for two to three consecutive days.

14. OKIMAKI OR OKIAMAKI

Literally Okimaki or Okiamaki means drying up the pig in the sun and storing it over the fire place. It is the final and the greatest feasts of all the ceremonies. Only a few person could reach this stage because it needs a heavy expenditure and the risk involved in performing this final feasts is so great that it can be equated with all the feasts already performed in the earlier ceremonies.

In this feast, the meat of a pig, which is dried up in the sun and stored over the fire place after taking out its intestine and liver is cut into thin pieces and distributed to the surrounding villages. If some person refuse to accept this
meat, it is believed that he or she would die in the same way as the big. And an old pig cattle is also killed along with pigs on this occasion to feed the persons who are engaged in distributing the dried up pork. They consider that the meat of old cattle could not be digested easily and it will help the distributors in undertaking the strenuous journey from village to village. So after the necessary ceremony and rites, group of people would proceed to different directions to proclaim that they should cease head-hunting for seven years. Generally such pork is distributed to the headman of all neighbouring villages and they generally accept the offer, otherwise it is believed that they would die of dysentry - the worse type of disease according to them. If any distributor of dried pork dies while on the mission, he is honoured and the expenditure of the burial ceremonies is borne by the merit-seeker. It is also a strict taboo to kill those who are in this peace mission. If killed, by any person it is believed that the killer would die an unnatural death or of a serious disease unknown to them.

The donor would not eat but only drink rice-beer, till all the parties came back from their mission. Though this is the tradition of fasting in theory, but in practice they use to take meals on the night of every fifth day. Thus the
merit-seeker will take his meal after an interval of five days till the mission party return to him. But theoretically almost all the people told me that the merit-seeker will not take any food except drinking rice-beer and ginger. This process is same among all the tribes covered by a blanket term Naga.

There are no fixed number of animals to be killed for the final feast **Okimaki**. It should be enough to last the long ceremony. On the final day all the Nagas of surrounding village are invited to participate in the famous bamboo climbing competition. A bamboo pole is erected in the courtyard of the donor in such a way that nobody could reach to the top, for at the top of it, is hunged a pot filled with oily substance that flowed down the pole when moved. It is not done only for fun. They in fact believe that one, who could reached the top, would have the fortune of performing **Okimaki**. The ceremony and the climbing competition usually ended with heavy drinking and special food.

If the intending merit-seeker wishes to raise a memorial stone in his name only then he can perform the feasts upto the fourth stage in the series called **Yoso** starting from **Orakaso**. And if he wishes to raise a number of other megalithic structures, he must complete the series of feast upto
Okimaki, described above. Meanwhile, Yoshu, the fifth stage in the series, is a must for the intending performer of the whole series.

The stone thus raised during the Yoso or Zhoso ceremony is called zhosotu (memorial stone of Zhoso). By the side of the big stone monolith, a small stone is also erected in honour of the wife of the merit-seeker. The number of animals to be killed in the ceremony are eight bulls or cows, one buffalo and one pig. More richman generally exceeded the figure. One pregnant unspotted and unblemished cow for the wife and a bull with all natural signs on its body for the husband are generally included. Without it, the ceremony could not be performed.

Now the merit-seeker is allowed to wear a special kind of cloth called zhososa and from the wearing of which the other people will recognise him as a man of status to be respected by all.

The merit-seeker under a strict religious taboo was expected to abstain from his wife for not less than eight months. This is repeated everytime if the man performs another series of feast of merit and raised another type of megaliths. In case of some tribes, the time limit for abstinence to a year or more.
2. **ZHOSOTOKHO (AVENUE):**

It is a group of Zhosotu (menhirs) lined up in row(s) to form either an alignment or an avenue. They are found either near the village path of their khel (exogamous group) or in the vicinity of their terrace and jhum fields. So some of them are within the habitational area while others are far away from it. The raw material for constructing such structures is sandstone only. They are all roughly hewn stones without any decoration.

These structures are generally raised by a number of merit-seekers after performing a series of feasts. The Maos, like the Poumais, raise Zhosotu in the common stone raising places of their respective clan. At last it takes the form of either an alignment or avenue called Zhosotokho. The process of stone raising ceremony is the same as that of Zhosotu.

3. **KATHI TOSHU (CAIRM):**

It is a heap of stone piled up one after another to form a raised rectangular structure. Around this rectangular platform, stone seats are paved at regular interval. Within this platform either at one end or at the centre an
upright small stone is set up with a flat small horizontal slab. Literally Kathi Tokhu means (KATHI=Death and TOKHU=heap of stone) a cairn for the death. It is connected with memorial stone. The rock type used for the construction of this structure is sandstone. They are always found in and around the habitational area particularly in the courtyard of the respective donor. This type megalithic is considered as dwelling place for the soul of the dead person (Plate XXIII:b).

So this type of structure is raised by a wealthy donor in memory of a loving deceased person. In another word, it can be raised by a person, who can distribute two pieces of meat to each and every family of the village. It usually takes in the month of Phusii (May). There are 14 Kathi Tokhu in this village.

The Kathi Tokhu may be raised on an auspicious day fixed by the performer with the help of village chief and priest. On the fixed day, the stones are collected either from the nearby stream or forest or from any place where stones are easily available. The villagers raise the Kathi Tokhu in one day and on the same day, the upright stone is also collected by a village youth, belonging to a different family other than the family of the deceased person, in whose memory the raised rectangular structure is constructed. After the erection of
this small upright stone, they laid another small flat stone horizontally adjacent to it and rice-beer is poured over it by village priest for purification. Along with this, a quantity of rice-husked fried by an old man is put on the stone in order to protect the soul of the deceased person from attack by tigers on the way through which he comes back from the land of death. After completing all these, they shall call the name of the deceased person uttering this words: "Mr. A ... we prepare a resting place for you. So you come and take rest here".

Meanwhile, a number of animals either pigs or cattle is slaughtered in the house of the said donor and the meat of such animal is distributed to every houses of the village. Each house should get at least two pieces of such meat. The performer distribute them in recognition of their help rendered during the construction work of KATHI-TOKHU.

4. YOSOTOKHO(STONE PLATFORM):

It is also a heap of stone piled up one above the other to form a raised enclosure and platform. Both structures have the same function which serve as seats for villagers either for resting or for formal discussion. Such sitting place for public gathering where people gather every morning and
evening to gossip and talk about on the day-to-day affairs and sometimes discussing serious problems of the village, is a common scene in the Naga inhabited areas. They are always found at the heart of the village settlement area. It may be raised either by a merit-seeker who has performed a series of feast of merit starting from Orakaso to Yosotokho (described above) or by the villagers collectively or by the chief of the village. The rock type used for the construction of this structure is sandstone. The expenditure spent over it is borne by the performer or merit-seeker or the villagers collectively in case it is built by the villagers collectively.

For raising such platform or enclosure, the merit-seeker or the villagers would sacrifice at least five to seven cattle and two to three buffaloes. If perform by a person individually, the merit seeker distributes the meat to the villagers requesting their help in the collection of flat stones either from nearby stream or jungle. On a fixed auspicious day, the villagers would carry all the stones and raise a rectangular enclosure with a wall raising to a height of about 127 cms to 165 cms. It has two or more passages, which serve as entrance and exit of the enclosure (Plate XXIII:a). Some larger flat slabs are placed on top of the walls to serve as seats. Among them the largest slab (Seen in Plate
XXIII:a) is considered to be a holy stone and reserve for the seat of the deity. The thickness of the wall varies from 62 cms to 112 cms. The perimeter of this structure varies from 15.90 m. to 19.50 m. The construction work should start and complete on the same day of stone collection. So it needs much manual labour.

In addition to the number of cows and buffaloes, a Khrolo meaning a healthy pregnant cow, is also offered to the village or clan of the donor's wife in the name of his brother-in-laws.

5. **OKIMAKI (DOLMEN):**

It is a dolmen raised in connection with the peace negotiation over head-hunting after performing the final and the largest feast of merit of the fourteen series mentioned above. The dolmen raised to commemorate the feast of merit, is also known as by the same term Okimaki or Okiamaki. The process in raising this dolmen has been described in the foregoing pages.

The process of killing the pig for this feast is different from village to village. In some villages a small pig is tied on the hot stones in the river beds on sunny days without feeding till it dies under the sun. After some days
they bring it home, take out the intestine and liver and keep the animal over the fireplace till the meat dries up. The dried meat is distributed among the villagers. In other villages, the sun dried carcass is cut into pieces and each pieces is again dried over the fireplaces on a stone.

Other procedure of killing and distribution of the meat of Okimaki ceremony is the same in every villages of Mao in habited areas.

B. THE KALINAMEI SITE

The village is located just adjacent to Songsong gates. It is situated on a spur of Mount Iso (Tenipu). The site abounds in many megalithic monuments. The megalithic monuments found in this area consist of menhirs, alignments of avenues, raised platform and raised enclosures with platform among which the menhirs, about 200 constitute the largest number (Plate XXIV:a and b).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified type</th>
<th>Functional type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Zhogotu</td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>Memorial stones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 14
1. **ZHOSOTU** and

2. **ZHOSOTOKHO**

**Zhosotu** is a menhir associated with an upright smaller stone. It is planted either singly or in cluster. When such **Zhosotus** are raised in their stone raising places of their Khel, they form a cluster either in the form of an alignment or avenue, this cluster is called **Zhosotokho** in their tongue. So the number of such menhirs called **Zhosotus** included all the monoliths forming either an alignment or avenues. Hence the total number of upright stone is more than two hundred. Of them the smallest Khel is constituted by twentyseven such **Zhosotu** (Plate XXIV:a and b).

3. **KATHITOKHO/KATHITOKHU**

It is a raised platform made up of a number of

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<th>1</th>
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<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Zhosotokho</strong></td>
<td>Alignment(s)/</td>
<td>Memorial stones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 'Kathi tokho'</td>
<td>Raised</td>
<td>Memorial stone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 'Yosotokho'</td>
<td>Raised enclo-</td>
<td>Public meeting and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sure with</td>
<td>resting place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>platform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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flatish slab (small) of irregular sizes and shapes (Plate XXIII:b). The platform measures 5.10m x 3.12m x 72m in length, breadth and height above the ground. The rock type used for the construction of this structure is hard sandstone (some are bluish while others are brownish). They are always found in the courtyard of the donor.

The local tradition associated with this monument is similar to those found in Songsong or Chachacomai village, as described above.

4. YOSOTOKHO

It is similar in structure, function and local traditions to other Mao villages describe above.

C. THE RABUNAMEI SITE

This village is also located on the same range of Songsong and Kalinamei, which is a part or spur of Mount Tenipu (Isa). It extends from north-east to south-west. In this village, there are a number of megaliths, near the main village gate. Inside the village, the present author came across only two types of megaliths viz. Okimaki (dolmen) and Yosotokho or the raised platforms.
D. FUKINAMEI VILLAGE SITE

It is an Emamei (Mao) village. It is located on the same range of Rabunamei. It is about 150 km from Imphal on the north. It is surrounded on the north by Padunamei, on the south by Rabunamei, on the west by National Highway No. 39, Imphal-Dimapur Road and on the east by Tabahosei. A large number of megalithic monuments are found in this village. Among them Zhosotu (menhir) is the dominant structure. They are found in this village in the form of alignments and avenues called Zhosotokho (collection of Zhosotu). Beside this, one of the finest structures of Okimaki (dolmen) on a cairn is also found (Plate XXVIa).

In this village, the present author has come across the largest number of concentration of Zhosotu (menhir) in the form of Zhosotokho (avenues). Each avenue contain at least sixty to eightytwo monoliths. It varies in shape and sizes from khel to khel and within the khel itself. The smallest one measures 62 cm high, 56 cm broad and 30 cm thick. The highest menhir measures 210 cm high 96 cm broad and 64 cm thick. Some menhirs are very broad measuring 161 cm. There are 82 menhirs in one khel of the village (Plate XXVIa and b) and in the other khel there are 29 menhirs. Besides, there is also a number of monoliths found here and there inside the habitational area.
Another prominent structure is a cluster of Okimaki (dolmen) in a circular like arrangement (Plate XXV:a and b). This cluster is formed by nine dolmens. These are flat stones resting horizontally on three or more supporting stones. The largest horizontal flat stone measures 259 cm x 140 cm x 28 cm in length, breadth and thickness and 97 cm high above the ground. According to my informant these structures were raised in different times by different performers.

The local traditions and functions connected with the erection of these monoliths are similar to those described above. Total number of Okimaki found in this village is 14.

In this village site the Kathi-Tokho and Yoso-Tokho are of small size.

E. PUDUNAMEI VILLAGE SITE

This village is situated on the north of Punanamei village described above. It is about 152 kms away from Imphal on the north. It is about 6 kms away from Mao gate (on National Highway No.39). The area is abounding with many forms of megalithic monuments. Of them mention may be made of Zhosotu (menhirs), Zhosotokhong (alignments and avenues), Okimaki
(dolmen), Kathi-Tokho (raised platforms constructed in memory of deceased persons) and Yosotokho (raised enclosures or platforms constructed for public gatherings or village meeting places).

There are about 214 menhirs either erected as monoliths or alignments and avenues in this site. Some of them are found in either side of the tract close to the village new main gate but within the habitational area. Another cluster is found in the form of avenues just near the old village gate. One more cluster is found in the way leading to their terrace fields.

The total number of Okimaki (dolmen) in this village is 7. They are found in three localities. Two of them is found in group consists of three such structure. Another dolmen found in this locality is the largest among all the dolmens found in the Amemai inhabited areas. It measures 267 cm x 164 cm x 34 cm in length, breadth and thickness. Now this flat horizontal stone is broken into three parts form by two lines of crack due to weathering.

More than 20 Kathitokhu or raised platform are found in this site. There is also one of the finest Yosotokhu or a stone platform with stone seats and leaving stone slabs in the courtyard of the village chief.
CHAPTER III: 7
MEGALITHIC CULTURE FOUND AMONG THE
MARAMS OF SENAPATI DISTRICT

THE PEOPLE

The Marams, a community of over 50 thousand individuals, are distributed over the northern part of Senapati district, Manipur and fall into several groups differing slightly in appearance and costumes. The Marams have similar social structure with the Maos but differs in language and material culture. These two communities (Mao and Marams) claim themselves as Nagas and have a distinct patrilineal bias in the society. The village headman functions as both religious and secular head being assisted by a council of village elders in his role as secular head and by a village priest in his role as a religious head. They formerly had two youths' dormitories known as Hansaki and Lasaki for boys and girls respectively but it is now in its rudimentary form. They have almost lost their traditional religion as most of them converted to christianity.

The data on megalithic culture were collected from the Marams of Willong, Razaimei, Upper and Lower Sangkungmei, Maram Khunou, Maram Kabanum, Maram centre, Maram Khunjao etc.
These people speak Tibeto-Burman language, but most men and many women are also speaking Manipuri language and many Manipuri words have been absorbed into their dialect.

The Maram's economy system is based on agriculture and they practice both jhum (dry) and plain (wet) cultivations. Hunting and fishing contribute to their food supply.

The Marams dwell in permanent settlements which occupies the same site for many generations, they do not migrate unless forced by the most dire necessity.

In Maram society, there are five grades of houses viz. Jeleiki, Akaiki, Karaki, Kareinsaboiki and Sabaki. The Sabaki is the lowest while the highest grade is Jeleiki.

Different types of megaliths found in all Maram villages are listed below with local names.

### TABLE 15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Local names</th>
<th>Classified types</th>
<th>Functional types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beitung</td>
<td>Menhir associated</td>
<td>Witness stone with dolmen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pl. XXVII

Pl.XXVII:a

Jeleiki (the house of the Sagong, Maram village chief), Willong site.

Pl.XXVII:b

Jeleiki (the house of the rich man), Willong site.
A Maram girl attires traditional dress, Willong site
Tiisum (memorial stone). The highest menhir at Willong site

Tiisum. A special menhir with a groove to measure the height of the unmarried boys of the village to decide the marriageable age/height at Willong site
Arou Atus (A cluster of grave stones found capping over the graves), Willong site

Ranii Atu (A rectangular pyramidal raised platform), Willong site.
Pl.XXI:a

_Tiisum_ (Memorial stones) along with a part (side view) of _Ranii Atu_, Willong site.

Pl.XXI:b

_Tiisum_ in front and _Ranii Atu_ in the background, Willong site.
Pl. XXXII: a
The investigator along with the Willong village chief and his family, showing the carvings of human heads at the vertical and horizontal bars of the front wall of the house.

Pl. XXXII: b
The capstone underlying a secondary burial, Willong site.
Pl. XXXIII:a

The village gate at Willong

Pl. XXXIII:b

Sitting stones at Maram Khunou site
Central part of an avenue of Tiisums (memorial stones), Willong site.

Remaining part of Pl.XXXIV:a
Pl. XXXV: a

Another remaining part (eastern side) of Pl. XXXIV: a

Pl. XXXV: b

Remaining part (western side) of the avenue
Amailui, a small alignment raised to represent the male members of the Upper Sangkungmei site in 1906.
Pl.XXXVII:a

Tiisum (memorial stone), Maram Bazar site

Pl.XXXVII:b

An alignment of Tiisum at Maram Bazar
A brief note on the village-wise survey of megalithic types is given below:

A. WILLONG MEGALITHIC SITE

The Willong village is situated on the top ridges of Maguilong hills. The village is about 36 Kms on the west of Maram Bazar and 142 Kms away from Imphal on the north-west.
It is bounded on the east by Upper Sangkungmei, Lower Sangkungmei and Oklong, on the west by Yangkhullen and Yangkhunao, on the north there stands the Pulomi village of Nagaland and on the south the Chaka village.

The most important feature of the village is its mixed religio-cultural system and its abounding megaliths. This village has 205 households. Among these houses, 67 fall under the non-christian group, 78 under Roman Catholic group and the remaining 60 houses are included in the Baptist group of Christianity. The total population of the village is three thousand individuals.

The site is abounding with megalithic monuments of various types or structures. The different megalithic types located in and around this village are listed below with local names along with structural and functional types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified type</th>
<th>Functional type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beituna</td>
<td>Menhir associated</td>
<td>Witness stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>with dolmen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ranii Atu</td>
<td>Cairn</td>
<td>Watch tower and also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>resting place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This type of megalith is composed of two constituent parts. One is a standing menhir and the other is a flat stone resting on some supporting stones forming a miniature dolmen. This type of megalith was raised when they first settled there about fifteen generation ago as holy stones of the village as well as stones of judgement. Thus at the time of establishing a new village, the Marams as a tradition raise such Beitung. There are two Beitunga in this village. They are found inside the village settlement area.

Sandstone is the raw-material used for making these structures. The upright stone of the Beitung measures 128 cms
in breadth, 186 cms in height and 32 cms in thickness. The horizontal flat stone in front of the upright stone in the form of miniature dolmen measures 62 cms in breadth, 120 cms. in length and 30.5 cms in thickness and 61 cms high above the ground.

The Beigung is connected with oath taking ceremony which is associated with the following disputes:

(a) land dispute,
(b) theft case and
(c) other crimes related to adultery or rape or disputed paternity etc.

The Marams, as the Liangmeis and Rongmeis have a deep rooted faith in oaths and they are much respected by them to such an extent that these are very rarely taken. Generally these are resorted to only in the most serious cases where all other means failed to materialize. These types of stones, in the Maram villages are considered holy, so much so that no one dares swear falsely on them. Thus it plays an important role in the Maram social system particularly in the disputed cases, which could not be tried and solved by the village authority. That if two persons or parties quarrelled on any one of the cases mentioned above, it is the first duty of the village
council to find out the real guilty person to be punished under their traditional laws relating to the crime. If they could not find out the solution, they would take the help of oath-taking on the Beitung. The village authority directs the alleged person(s) to the Beitung and the oath-taking ceremony is performed, so that the spirit of Beitung will sort out, as they believed, the guilty person and punish him according to the degree of his crime. They also considered, that even death penalty may be sanctioned against the accused, if the crime is very serious. Consequently, they performed three types of oath-taking ceremony for every disputed problem. They are -

(a) striking on the Beitung (upright stone) by the butt end of a billhook (dao)
(b) sacrifice a fowl on the flat horizontal stone; and
(c) cutting the tail of a cat on the flat stone of Beitung.

2. RANII ATU (CAIRM):

It is a large heap of stones raised in the shape of a cairn. It has no regular shape and size. In this village there are three distinct Ranii atus which belong to different Sadung (clans) of the village. Because this village is composed of three different clans namely, Apyiilamei, Khangkhumamei
and Hanamesei. Hence three distinct cairns were constructed for three different clans. The members of each clan try to compete each other in erecting the cairn as to which clan could erect the best one. This kind of competition among different clan groups in erecting the Ranii atu contributed to enhancing social value of the megalithic structures (Plate XXXI: b; Plate XXXII:a and b).

The raw material used for constructing the cairn is hard sandstone. The shape of the cairn is variable but generally it is roughly quadrangular. The measurements taken in three cairns which belongs to different localities or Sadungs (clans) are given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of the locality</th>
<th>Measurements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Apyilamsei Sadung</td>
<td>427 cms x 396.5 cms x 305 cms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Khangkhuismai Sadung</td>
<td>457.5 cms x 427 cms x 335.5 cms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Hanamesei Sadung</td>
<td>427 cms x 366 cms x 274.5 cms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The top of each cairn has a flat surface which serves as the sitting and resting places of youths and aged persons during normal time. On the other hand it served as a watch-tower of the village sentry during the inter village
conflict. From the above measurements it is known that the cairn of Khangkhulnammel is the largest one but the finest structure is found in the Hargnammel Sadung. Each cairn has a staircase made by paving some regular flat stones. The top floor is also paved by such flat stones.

Besides these three distinct Ranii atus, there are a number of Ranii atus which are smaller than the three mentioned above, where the villagers assemble for rest and gossip as well as the travellers rest in the shade of the trees spreading its branches over such structures. They are abundantly found in and around the village area particularly near the village path.

The shape of this smaller Ranii atus is rectangular in structure with a height of 91.5 cms to 122 cms above the ground. These structures are constructed by the villagers of all Sadungs in a co-operative manner, particularly by the village youths. They collected a large quantity of flat stones of variable sizes and piled them up one over the other to form a rectangular enclosure from all four sides and filled the gap with earth. And over it again paved larger flat stones to serve as seats. The shape and sizes of each smaller Ranii atus differs from place to place. The smallest one measures 305 cms x 183 cms x 91.5 cms in length, breadth and the height above
These smaller Ramii atus are raised generally near the inter-village path leading to their jhum fields. These heaps of stones are used regularly by the villagers as resting places for them when they carry loads of firewood, vegetable, rice and even water jars from jungles, rice fields and springs.

The rock types use for the construction of these smaller heap of stones are sandstones and slates. These stones are all roughly hewn and possessed no decoration on it.

3. TIBUM (MEMORIAL STONE):

It is a monolith (menhir type) which has a distinct name of its own. Because each monolith is raised by a number of merit-seekers in their own names. The menhirs are found close to the settlement area, in the form of avenues. There are also many solitary monoliths found scattered over the village area. The total number of menhirs found in this village is about 240. Among them 126 upright stones are found clustering together at the Katak (stone raising place in Maram dialect) forming an avenue adjacent to the habitational area
And the remainings are distributed either along the paths leading to the tank and spring forming an alignment or on the way to paddy field. Thus their occurrence is found everywhere in the village area.

The rock type, use for these menhirs, is hard sandstone. They are roughly hewed blocks of stone. The sizes vary in a considerable degree, the measurements of some of them are given in the following table.

**TABLE 18**

**SHOWING MEASUREMENTS OF SOME SELECTED MONOLITHS OF SPECIAL VALUE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Measure-ments in cms.</th>
<th>Length/height x breadth x thickness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Highest menhir (bearing no.25) (Plate XXIX:a) above</td>
<td>472.8 x 244 x 30.5 cms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Broadest monolith</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>310 x 452.4 x 41.9 cms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The small(miniature) monolith(bearing No.26)</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>152.5 x 61 x 30.5 cms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. The monolith having a hollowed groove to measure the height of ground marriageable age (No. 14) (Plate XXIX:i)

5. The megaliths with two holes marking the height of two tallest persons existing in Willong village

The most important function connected with the monoliths could be traced from the local traditions.

The local traditions associated with these megaliths are as follows:

A wealthy man or woman or both may erect such large /massive stones in his/her name(s) so that he/she may attain a social position beyond which the majority do not aspire, during his/her lifetime and even after his/her death by their descendants with a view to preserving their names forever on the rocks.
Thus among the wealthy families, the male member of the family makes a stipulation in his verbal will, that a memorial should be erected in memory of him or his wife (or sometimes together). After declaring his wishes, the intending performer must observe sanctions and restriction called "genna". That for a year before raising the megaliths the merit-seeker lives apart from his wife. Otherwise the Marams believed that the stone to be raised will get cracked and it is not a good omen and as a consequence the merit-seeker's family will suffer in many ways. Besides observing genna for a year, the intending merit-seeker also worship their supreme god to prevent occurrence of natural calamity like earthquake or death in his family or kinsmen or in the village. If one of these events happened to the village of performer or in the neighbouring villages if his close paternoal kinsman dies, it is a must to postpone the stone raising ceremony for a duration of one month, for every such event. For instance, if two persons die within the proposed year of stone erection they must postpone for two months. Moreover, as stated earlier, if there takes place earthquake, the stone erection is postponed for one month.

First of all, the couple of merit-seeker must select the desire stone, according to the advice of an expert person, either a male or a female who is experienced in this field.
If the stone is selected with the help of male expert, he must be presented with a basket of meat, about 30 kg or more, after completing the stone raising ceremony. And if it is done under the supervision of a female expert, she must be given a loin cloth named Ali.

In the meantime, during the one year’s genna, the merit-seeker will collect the materials required for the ceremony in cash or kind, at least 40 to 50 jars of Azou (rice-beer) each containing 20 litres or more, and a number of cattle to be slaughtered during the feast which will last for seven days, according to my informants.

After observing one year’s genna (in its normal course) the intending performer is allowed to raise the selected stone in his/her name (or both if two stones are selected), on an auspicious day. The day of the ceremony is also fixed by a village priest.

The stone is selected one year before the ceremony and quarried out previously from the side of the hill or narrow gorge alongside a level path, and is left there lying horizontally on their edges. Along with this, several coils of creepers are to be collected. First of all, the sledge, made out of huge logs, for dragging the stone is to be brought.
The sledge is laid alongside its stone so that the narrower end of the stone is put next to the nose of the sledge. Suitable trees are cut and made into staves to put through the holes in the arms of the sledge to make a bottom to it. The sledge is then held in its place with one arm touching the stone by some men pushing on long poles; while others raise the stone gently with the levers of wood and tip it over so that it rests on the sledge along its length. Having got the stone on to the sledge its position is adjusted with the help of the wooden levers, till it lays correctly along the sledge with its weights evenly distributed. Once in position, the stone is ceremonially tied with a piece of creeper, after which the stone is lashed very tightly to the sledge with creeper ropes tied both to the staves underneath and through the holes in the arms. Creepers ropes for pulling the sledge are then attached.

Meanwhile pieces of banana leaf are placed on the ground, in front and at one side. Rice-beer from a small gourd specially brought for the purpose was poured on the stone. The gourd was itself left on the spot. Next a half grown chicken was released on the stone. Then the performer comes out guided by an old man, known to have a thorough knowledge of the correct procedure and at the same time he addresses the stone in these
words "Your place is not here. We have made another for you. Go lightly and go quickly". Thereafter the stone is pulled up. The stone pulling ceremony is a spectacular event in Naga society. In fact, all the villagers, elderly men, adults, young boys and even the small boys and girls adorned in their full ceremonial dress, take part in the stone pulling ceremony. Small boys take their places in front lines of the processions, followed by grown up boys, adults and the elderly men in succession. In all there have been in the procession at least two hundred or more men to pull the stone, among whom the greatest strain falls on those immediately in front of the stone and on the extra men who accompanied them alongside and behind to relieve them when they are tired. When the signal was given, all start to pull the stone along the zigzag hilly path. It is indeed a very strenuous job to pull the heavy stone along the steep hill slopes and sharp bends of hilly tract, but the experience stone pullers could negotiate smoothly to drag up the stone to the selected place of its erection. Eventually the stone is pulled up to the selected place. Here the sledge is wedged to guard against the possible slip, after which it is held in position for a considerable length of time, so as to make sure that it has settled down safely. During this period drinks are served to refresh the pullers. The stone is left like this for the night. The performer offers cooked rice wrapped in banana leaf when it is
left on the spot for the night. Once the stone were left in
the selected spot, it is prohibited to touch the stone no
matter what happened. That night the performer feed all the
villagers, guests, friends, relatives with cooked rice, meat
and drinks.

The next day, the selected spot for erection of the
monolith is levelled. At the foot of the sledge on which the
massive stone is pulled up, a hole about 60.8 cm deep was dug.
The lashing on the stone is then cut out. Then while the base
of the stone was kept in place by means of pressure applied
along the poles pushed by a number of men to prevent the stone
slipping of the sledge into the hole too soon, the other end
of the stone is raised by inserting levers, raising it a fra-
c tion, wedging it, raising it up a little more, then wedging
it again. Meanwhile the merit-seeker will keep some iron ob-
jects like the hoe-blades, knives and others if available,
inside the hole, as the Marams believed that the performer will
attain a longer life as the iron-objects and his/her fame will
be as lasting as the stone. In this way, the end of the stone
is lifted off the ground, when it is harnessed with a nook of
creeper-rope lashed around the top end, which is pulled on by
others, who at the same time assist those keeping the base of
the stone is place by putting one foot on it while they pulled.
Thus pulling from the front and pressing from behind and
propping it with longer wedges underneath every time, the huge stone is erected at last. They generally lift the monolith in an inclined position, the angle of inclination normally varies between 40 to 50 degrees for facility of sliding the base of monolithic into the hold dug on the spot. The next effort causes the base of the stone to slide off the sledge into the hole at the foot, and at the same time a pull on the creeper noose brought the stone into an upright position with those behind now pushing with their hand. As the stone reached the vertical position, they pushed in closed round the stone forming a sort of scrum with their hands on the upper part of the stone to steady it while the great shouting of hoi goes up.

The stone is wedged underneath to make stand firmly on its own base after which the hole is filled in with earth. The earth round the base is then rammed and fill in and rammed again. After this on the same day, the whole village is fed by the merit-seeker in addition to the guest and kinsmen of his clan. Moreover, the merit-seeker will distribute meat and rice-beer to every house-hold of the village. Drumming, singing and dancing by the members of the boys' and girls' dormitory named Hansaki and Lasaki respectively, continue for the whole night.

The next day all the guests from neighbouring
villages dispersed. That day, the merit-seeker is to give a feast to his co-villagers in recognition of the services rendered by them during the whole process of the monolith raising ceremony. When the feast comes to an end, the villagers dispersed.

Thus the menhirs erected in this way form an avenue, adjacent to the present habitational area of Willong village. This avenue extends about 15,860 cms in length from south-west to north-east with its breadth being 2318 cms. At the centre of this avenue there are two rectangular open spaces encircled by twentyeight menhirs. These two rectangular spaces have two different areas i.e. one is smaller than the other. The larger enclosure measures 1516 cms x 1014.1 cms; while the smaller one 1516 cms x 462.6 cms. On investigation, I was told that the unmarried man dance and wrestle inside the larger rectangular area on the village genna (prohibition) day for the annual festival of the dead ancestors.

The partition wall between the contiguous rectangular shape space, is formed by three large flat stones, which are set up closely to one another. Among the three large slabs, one is the largest in the avenue, as well as in the Willong site. It is 310 cms high above the ground level, 452.4 cms.
broad and 41.9 cm thick. It is located on the southern end of the partitioned wall. And in the same line there is another stone on the northern side which possesses two small cavities. On investigation, I found that these small cavities were made by two different individuals, who were exceptionally tall persons. They mark the height of their hips on this megaliths by piercing a hole for each individual separately at different times. The holes measures 144.4 cms and 99.1 cms high above the ground level. As my informants told me, these two persons were the only tallest individuals ever existed in this village four centuries ago.

There is also another monolith bearing my investigation number 25 which is the highest megalith found in the Willong site. It measures 472.8 cms high above the ground and 244 cms broad but the thickness is only 30.5 cms (Plate XXIX: a). There are many megaliths having similar height but smaller in breadth. The orientation of this megalithic is from north to south. Nearer to this stone there is a flat stone which measures 276 cms high, 200.8 cms broad and 52.4 cms thick. This flat megalith possesses a depression along its length. The depression occurs at a height of 167.7 cms above the ground (Pl.XXIX:b). The depression is 61 cms wide. On investigation, it is also learnt that this particular depression is made by their forefathers to measure the heights of their
unmarried boys. According to my informants, conventionally, in the ancient times, the Marams of Willong village, particularly the malefolk, are not allowed to marry any girl without attaining the height of the depression. Thus they use to measure the heights of their youths comparing to the height of the depression and decide his marriageable age. Hence this megalith is closely related to the Maram social system. Nowadays this tradition of measuring the heights of their youths becomes more relaxed as most of the villagers accepted Christianity.

Besides the megaliths forming the avenue, there is also a number of such massive Trisum in rows or setting up singly or in pairs. The megaliths inside the present habitation site of Willong village, are found in pairs (Pl. 221: a and b). The Trisum found in between the villages - Willong and Willong Khunou are monoliths (single standing stones). The Trisum found on the way to the tank and on the north-east and along the path leading to the unmarried boys and girls' bathing spring are all in the form of alignments. The same form of alignments are also found to the path leading to their jhum cultivation and terrace cultivation fields bordering the Lower Jangkhungmei area (on the south-eastern side of the village. Some of them have fallen down on the steep narrow gorge due to the construction of a motorable road.
4. **AROU ATU (GRAVE STONE):**

It is a grave-stone (*Arow* = grave and *atu* = stone). It consists of a small heap of stone or a raised platform built on the graves. In some cases it is constructed so nicely, that such structure looks better than the small *kanii atu*. This type of megalith is constructed in memory of their loving parents or any other deceased person. In some cases such graves are found in cluster covering the graves (pit burials) with large flat stones (particularly for a family or clan). In other cases such *Arou-atu* is encircled by a heap of stones to form the structure of *kanii-atu*.

It is constructed by piling up smaller and larger boulders of variable sizes around the pit burial. And such enclosures are filled in with earthwork. Some flat stones of variable sizes again cover such enclosure leaving only a small open space. The last object to be placed on the grave is the large flat stone to cover the grave when the deceased person is buried. Next to the large horizontal flat stone there is another upright flat stone to mark the grave. Now-a-days names of deceased persons are engraved on such upright stones in Roman script.

The rock type used in the construction of this *Arou*
atu is sandstone. The slabs both flat horizontal and upright are all rough and rude stones. They are always found located inside the village habitational area near the village path. Sometimes it is found in the form of capstone, either only a large flat horizontal slab or a dolmen that covers the pit directly or resting on a number of uprights. Such dolmen or dolmenoid capstones in groups set up close together to form a compact grave-yard in front of the finest cairn kani.atu of Khangkhuinamei Cadung (Pl. XXX; a).

The rock type used for constructing the huge capstone consists of hard sandstones. They have no regular shape and sizes because the selection of the capstone depends on the availability of the suitable flat slabs. The stone slabs used for the construction of Arou atu are generally undressed and unhewn. It does not possess any form of decoration. But now-a-days they use to inscribe the dates of birth and death, etc. in English to denote the life span of the deceased person. Thus they inscribe whatever they want to express in English language and script, with prefixing words like "In loving memory of Mr./Mrs./Miss so and so", which is an imitation of christian writings in their graves. Eventually these structures are erected in modern times are connected not only with the burials but with memorials also.
Local traditions connected on Arou-atu are as follows:

The donor who wants to construct an Arou-atu in honour of his/her deceased father/mother/brother etc. normally request the villagers through the head of the village council. Thereupon the village council will allow him to construct the Arou-atu in the name of the deceased person. An auspicious day will be fixed by the donor assisted by his clan elders. On the fix day all the villagers will assemble in the courtyard of the performer and they would ask him the place selected by the donor where he wants to raise the structure. On this day the donor should sacrifice either a buffalo or a bull to propitiate the spirit of the deceased person in whose name the megalithic structure is to be raised. The participants are entertained with a grand feast consisting of meat, cook-rice and rice-beer.

Hence, it is necessary for the intending performer to arrange the required materials in cash or kind which will be consumed during the feast for constructing the Arou-atu. Thus he must arrange a bull or a cow or a buffalo, four to five jars of rice-beer, each containing 30 litres and a large quantity of rice to feed the participants.
All the villagers, on the fixed day would go to the spot and gather stones and start the earthwork to fill up and raise the level of the grave. The stones thus raised form a rectangular structure of about 61 cms to 91.5 cms high above the ground level. It is about 213.5 cms to 244 cms broad and 305 cms to 457.5 cms long. At one end of the raised rectangular platform, an upright stone is set up along with a flat horizontal stone, if it is raised outside the village and not over the grave. In the case of Arou-atu, constructed around and above the grave pit in the burial ground the upright stone is set up near the flat capstone, which is considered to be the most important stone slab, for the spirit of the deceased person is said to come and sit on it during his occasional visit to view his rice fields. When the construction work is completed, the name of the deceased person is given to the megalithic structure in memory of him or her.

Such Arou-atu, like the smaller Ranii-atu as described in foregoing pages, serves as public resting places, specially for those carrying loads of woods, vegetables, water jars, paddy etc. from jungles, springs, jhum and terrace fields etc. Removal of such stones are strictly prohibited and heavy punishments is imposed upon the persons attempting to remove the stone.
5. **ATUCHKAKAMATI (HOLY-STONE):**

It is a huge block of stone resting on the ground without any support unlike other types of megaliths. As stated by my informants, it is nothing but a natural stone believed to have fallen down on the earth from the sky. Nobody is allowed to touched this stone. When measurements were taken with the help of the priest it is found 122 cms in length, 91 cms in breadth and 65 cms high above the ground. The author was not allowed to take photograph of the stone.

The rock type of this massive stone is sandstone. As it is a natural rude stone, it does not possess any decoration on it.

Though it is a natural, according to their belief it is a very important stone to the Maram villagers of Willong site. Because it plays very important role among the Maida-mais or non-convert Marams, in the socio-religious functions. The village observes different types of 'genneas' (social sanctions). This should be announced by the village priest only. He is the only person who could touch the holy stone, so he could stand up on this holy stone to make public announcement such as, "this village will observe such kind of genne for so and so purposes on this day or the following few days" etc.
The said priest would also announced the mode of observation of *genne*. Thus according to his advice, the village observes different *gennes*.

As stated earlier, it is connected with the socio-religious functions and no one is allowed to touch to this holy stone as it needs purification in such case. Thus it is considered so holy that if someone touches it knowingly or unknowingly, a heavy fine is imposed upon the guilty person. In such case, the village priest purifies the stone by sacrificing a bull or a cock and by smearing the blood of the sacrificed animal upon the said holy stone.

6. **ATWAMEI OCILA PHULjong KHEI KARAMELIANGBA**

   **ATWAMEI KHEI BANLE (HOODSTONE OR CAPSTONE):**

   It is a flat stone and it may be classified as capstone, because it covers a burial pit. It is lying at the centre of the courtyard of the *Willang Sagung* or *Khullakpa* (the chief of the village). Such type of stone is found in every Maram villages which is described in the following pages.

   Sandstone is the rock-type for the capstone. It has no regular shape. It is an undressed rude-stone without any decoration (Plate XXXII:b).
The function of this type megalith is associated with head hunting.

The local tradition for setting up this megalith is as follows:

The Khullakpa or the headman of the village is called Saqung (in Maram dialect). He resides in a special house, called Jaleiki. The office of the Khullakpa is inherited by the eldest son along with the house Jaleiki (Plate XXVII a and b). It would seem appropriate to describe the procedures for constructing Jaleiki house type of Khullakpa. This house is built on earth foundation with the two sides of the roof touching the ground, with or without a gable in the front. The most important thing for constructing the house of the Khullakpa is to bury at least a decapitated human head collected on raids. Thus for constructing a new house of Khullakpa or even for its repairing, a new human head is necessary to bury beneath the middle post of the front wall (foundation post). The previously buried skulls should be dug out and kept in a chamber outside the house particularly in the courtyard. In the lifetime of a Khullakpa, he may repair his house particularly the roofing materials twice or thrice, after which he normally constructs a new house. Each phase of repair or construction of a new house for the headman is
The number of heads taken by the Khullakpa and his antecedents (forefathers), are represented by the number of heads carved out on the wooden beams in the front wall (Plate XXVIII:a and Plate XXXII:a). The main pillars on the front side would bear the engraved figures of animals' heads, footprints etc. supposed to be those of animals killed at the time of building the house. The symbols of human heads are also displayed on these pillars. The human heads supposed to be taken by the owner during head-hunting, are displayed on the tallest central pillar. On seeing the number of symbols representing the human heads on the pillars, one could easily count the number of skulls buried under the central pillar. The old skulls buried by the predecessor of the new chief are dug out when a new house for the chief is constructed and the old skulls are buried in the courtyard in a chamber made of stone slabs, roughly square in shape which is covered by a large flat stone slab. This stone slab is called Atu amei ogije Phuigung Khei Karanijangba Atuwai Khei Banle (Pl. XXX:b).

B. UPPER SANGKUNGMEI MEgalithIC SITE

This site is located in and around the upper Sangkungmei village. It is situated on the spur of the Phakijang
range. It is about 30 Kms away from Maram centre on the west
and 136 Kms away from Imphal on the north-west. The site is
bounded on the east by Oklong, Lairou and Maram (a hill
station on the National Highway No.39 named Imphal-Dimapur
Road), on the north by the Nazarei river, on the south by
Razaimei and Lower Sangkungmei and on the west by Willong. The
total number of households in the village is fortyfive and its
total population is 250. Out of these fortyfive households,
Only two households remained non-christians (called maidamei
in Maram dialect). Thus except these two houses all are con­
verted to Christianity and among the christians, majority is
Roman catholic.

The village is populated by the Maram Naças. So their
social structure, food habit, house type, language, dress, or­
naments etc. are the same as we have come across in the wil­
long village inhabited by the same community(mentioned above).

MEGALITHIC TYPES FOUND IN UPPER SANGKUNGMEI

Different megalithic types are found in the Upper
Sangkungmei site. Most of the megaliths are found to be recen­
tly erected on the top ridges of the same range, Phakijang,
while the older ones are distributed in the deserted village
area, a little above the present habitational area. Because,
the inhabitants of the Upper Sangkungmei along with the villagers of Lower Sangkungmei (which is 3 Kms away on the south on the another spur of the same range, Phakizang) once occupied the same area under the common name Sangkungmei on the top ridges of the said range before 1906 A.D. In the year 1906, the village Sangkungmei is divided into two parts viz, Upper Sangkungmei and Lower Sangkungmei.

The different types of megaliths found in this Upper Sangkungmei area are listed below with local names and classified as well as functional types.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified type</th>
<th>Functional type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beituna</td>
<td>Menhir associated with a dolmen</td>
<td>Witness-stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ranii-atu</td>
<td>Cairn</td>
<td>Sitting-stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Arou-atu</td>
<td>Small cairn</td>
<td>Grave-stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tiisum</td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>Memorial-stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Amailui</td>
<td>Group of small menhirs</td>
<td>Small alignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tirosum</td>
<td>Large horizontal slabs</td>
<td>Meeting place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The megaliths found in this area have similar structures and functions as found in the Willong site with slight difference. The different megalithic types like (1) Beitung (2) Ranji-stu and (3) Arqu-stu found in this site are similar with those found in Willong site. But the (4) Tiisum megalithic structure, although have similar structure and function, is found to differ in local tradition in some respect. The other megalithic types name (5) Amailui and (6) Tiiroseum megaliths have totally different structure and function from those found in the above mentioned site. Hence only the structural and functional features of the megalithic types showing different features are described below:

4. TIISUM(MENHIR):

The structure and function of this type are similar to the Tiisum of Willong (described above) but differs in some local traditions.

That selection of stone should be done by the couple (the merit-seeker and his wife). In Willong it is done with the help of an expert person. One year's social sanction or genna is observed before selecting the stone but in Maram Khullen it is observed after selecting the stone. In
Sangkungmei, selection of the stone is done before one week and after selection of the stone, another type of genna is observed during which the intending performer and his wife are not allowed to take food. They are allowed to take only rice-beer, ginger and salt.

The procedure for dragging the stone is same as observed in the Wlllong village. Feasting also of the same nature. But the final process is different. That in Wlllong the megalith called Tli sum is erected after offering rice-beer, cooked-rice and some iron-objects into the hole in which the Tli sum is to be set up. But in Sangkungmei the stone should be inside the hole first (without resting on the sledge for a day as in the case of Wlllong) and feast will be continued in the performer's house. When the feast for three days is over, the performer will gather all the remaining food left out by the invitees, guests, kinsmen and co-villagers is brought to the Katak (stone raising place) with the help of his paternal kinsmen and put down inside the large hole already dug for raising the megalith. After putting these food refusals the earth round the hole is filled with earth and rammed. Lastly rice-beer is pour down over the megalith to purify and propitiate the spirit of the Tli sum. As in Wlllong, this village does not practise the keeping of iron objects inside
the hole before raising the massive stone. The concluding part of this ceremony is of the same nature.

5. **AMAILUI (ALIGNMENT OF SMALL MENHIRS):**

It is a small alignment consisting of eighty small menhirs. These stones are arranged in four rows, each row having twenty standing stones. It is found at the centre of the village, along the inter village (Pl. XXXVI:a).

The rock type used for the construction of these small standing stones is sandstone. They are all rough small flat stones of unequal length, breadth and thickness.

This group of small menhirs are closely associated with their population. As mentioned above, this village was established in the year 1906 A.D. Only one clan called longnamai Sadung came down to establish this new village, Upper Sangkungmei. At that time, when they select this spur for their new settlement, other clan elders advice them not to go down. They warn them that their population will not increase if they settle there. But the leaders and elders of the clan longnamai Sadung refused to hear their advice. They came down directly to this spur while others to Lower Sangkungmei, another spur of the same range Phakisang. The total number of
individuals migrated from their parent village, in 1906 A.D. was 200. Of these two hundred individuals, 80 were male and 120 were women. The clan elders suggested to raise small menhirs to represent the male members of the new village.

Thus each menhir represents the male member of Long-namai Sadung. Till then no menhir has been added to the alignment to represent the new born male members in the village nor does any stone uprooted to mark the death of the male members. The villagers seems to have a firm belief what their elders told them before their migration to the new village. The informant Mr. Luikang Khing Daniel told me that as per traditional belief, although the population of the new village may increase, they may not get good yeilds from their agricultural and horticultural fields. So they are still holding on to their previous agricultural fields and Kitchen gardens in their old deserted village site.

Moreover, the new generations, particularly the youths of the village took keen interest in preserving this representative stone alignment. They use to clear the jungle growths in and around the megalithic field seasonally. They also planted some small trees to give shade to megalithic field. My informant also told me that they should preserve and protect these memorials by using various possible measures.
Regarding the local traditions for raising such memorials representing the founder male members of the village is not clearly known as no one who witnessed the setting up ceremony is living. However, I have come across some village elders who know about these memorials from their fathers (the founder members of the village) orally, and told me that this type of megalithic erection was not associated with elaborate rituals. But, as a tradition, they offered a spotless black bull to propitiate their python so that they might not get any suffering from diseases and natural calamities. Besides, they also prayed for the prosperity of the newly created village. Thus after performing this, on the same day the villagers (founder male members) collect one stone slab for each of them. Then they planted for themselves first, then for their sons and grandsons. It is an exceptional form of memorials found among the Marams of Senapati district, Manipur.

6. TIIROSUM (LARGE HORIZONTAL SLAB):

It is a cluster of large slabs set up at regular intervals. It is found inside the village.

The rock type used for the construction of these slabs is hard sandstones. It has no regular shape but the
sizes are almost equal, with some slight difference. These are roughly hewn slabs but without any decoration on it. It is rectangular in some places and oval or nearly round in other cases. The measurements of the slab differs. Here I am giving only the measurements of the smallest and the largest slabs. They are as follows:

(a) smallest slab - 90.5cm long, 61cm broad and 30.5cm thick
(b) largest slab - 213.5cm long, 122cm broad and 35cm thick

These megaliths are neither connected with burials nor with memorials or commemoration. These are set up as public resting and meeting seats. The village council always meets at this place, where a seat is reserved for the chief of the village.

When asked about the origin and antiquity of their Tiirosum all the villagers of Upper Sangkungmei emphasise that these are there ever since their ancestors founded the village.
CHAPTER-III:0
MEGALITHIC CULTURE FOUND AMONG THE MARINGS OF MANIPUR

THE PEOPLE

The Marings constitutes the dominant tribe inhabiting the Chenael district of Manipur. They have a number of clans divided into many sub-clans. The Maring having a population of about 25,000 individuals, are found scattered in fiftytwo villages. Formerly the clan was the unit of family, but now this function has been taken over by smaller units. They have a system of bride price, the intending husband has to serve in his parent-in-law's family for a period of three years. They have the system of marrying the mother's brother's daughters.

The Marings have both boy's and girl's dormitories. Unlike other tribal traditions the Marings have a common name 'Rakhang' for boy's and girl's dormitories. Each dormitory has a leader or captain who is also known by a common term Rakhang Upa. Each dormitory is divided into two age-grades. In the case of boy's dormitory, the senior age-grade is known as Kha-tang Upa and the junior, Khang Dua each grade being identified by their costume, particularly by putting on a turban on their heads in the senior group. The girls' dormitory also has two
age-grades, according to their age groups. The senior group is known as Nga-ka-Upa and the junior group as Nga-ka-wua. Such gradation among the unmarried girls are distinguished by their hair styles. The junior girls are not allowed to have long hairs while in the case of seniors short hairs are not allowed. In Haring villages, at the present time, most of them particularly among the christians, the dormitory is dying out.

A Haring village is a close-knit social and economic unit with common village land. They look after the village affairs through a council of elders headed by a chief, who is assisted in performing his duties by an assistant known as mantri. Recently the Marings have developed a consciousness to affiliate themselves with the Nagas.

The data on the megalithic monuments, have been collected from the following localities: Kojam Maring, Laijing Khunou, Ninou, Langol, Khunbi, Karongthel, Machi, Kambang Khunou, Kambang Khullen, Leibi, Phazong, Kangoi, Tuinem, Lamlong Khunou, Satang, Marum, Saibon, Kulimon, Yangmol ching, Khoibu Khunjao, Siang, Thamlai, Parengtong, Khotei Khullen and Khunou, Phunal Sambum, Waithou Phunal, Kwarok, Awang Maring, Kamu Maring, Yapharok, Kangsang, Wabaching, Langol Khunou, Meinoukhong, Aidang, Sungourok, Khansing(Lamchai), Tuisem, Island(near Parallel), Teraphai, Sarei Khunou, Anphoubung, Phumlen, Tuisem(near
A. THE KOIJAM MARING MEegalithic SITE

It is situated on the Langthabal hill about 40 kms away from Imphal. The village is recently inhabited by the Marings who migrated down from the upper part of the same range.

According to my informant Mr. Angphul yakunga, this Koijam Maring village is founded recently in 1941 A.D. He claims himself as the founder of Christianity in this new village. This village accepted Christianity during 1962. Before their conversion to Christianity, these people observed different types of feast of merits associated with the megalithic rites and rituals. In this Koijam Maring village, there are three megalithic types. They are listed below with their local names, structural and functional classifications:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified types</th>
<th>Functional types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Khelpung</td>
<td>A monolith along</td>
<td>Village Gate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or Panthung</td>
<td>with a wooden post</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and other fencing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Every megalithic structure found among the Haring tribe is always associated with the erection of wooden posts which are usually forked ones. The forked wooden posts have different functions which will be described in detail, in the following pages.

1. **KHELPUNG OR PANTHUNG**

It is a village gate comprising several parts such as, the monoliths, wooden posts and a wooden fencing. The wooden materials are of two different types, locally called **Heimang** and **Uningthou**. The **Uningthou** is a post raised in association with the monolith, while the **Heimang** variety, is used as fencing material. This composite structure is found on the eastern and western boundary of the village habitational area.
known as Numit Thukna Panthung (Eastern Gate) and Numit Chipna Panthung (Western Gate) respectively. As stated earlier, the Marings use to undertake such construction work of the Fanthungs or Khelpungs (Village Gates) before establishing a new village. Each Fanthung either of eastern or western gates are associated with two blocks of stones (monoliths), which are found standing as the main pillars of the gate along with two wooden posts on the left and right side of the village path. Each monolith along with the erected wooden posts are encircled and protected by a number of smaller wooden posts which are erected closely in the form of a fencing wall. The fencing is replaced by a new one annually, particularly in the month of January-February. But in the Koijam Maring village at present only a rudimentary form of Panthung or Khelpung is found as the villagers after conversion to Christianity, are not taking interest in such old tradition.

The height of the monoliths found on either side of the village entrance gate measures 120 cms and 96 cms respectively. The breadth and thickness measures 61 cms and 52 cms and 61 cms and 48 cms respectively.

These Panthungs are not related with the memorials, commemorative or burial practices. These structures are closely
related to the socio-religious system of the village. The Marings consider it as the protector of the respective villages. For this purpose they raised such wooden and stone structures with many rites and rituals.

The intending Khulbu (the owner of the village) and Khullak (the chief of the new village) will ask the villagers to prepare a new village gate and to collect the required materials. When the materials are ready except the smaller logs for fencing, the intending Khulbu and Khullek will fix an auspicious day to construct the gate. It is a rule among the Marings that they must complete the construction work in a day.

So they arranged the following materials for the construction of Panthung (gate) either the western or the eastern gate.

1. Two block of stones
2. Two wooden post of Waohing (Thangji or Uningthou)
3. A number of smaller trees (Heimang)
4. Bamboo splits for using as lashing purposes and
5. Three pots of rice-beer locally calledwaitul.

First they raise the stones which may be a massive stone or smaller boulders according to the availability of the rocks. Then the village priest pours down waitul (rice-beer) over the stones by uttering the following words:
"Thāaleine thāalungle kei āangtu thuitha keitha-tung bumle"

"Stone you should promise to protect us from every evil spirit either of diseases or epidemics and even from enemies."

After raising the stones, they used to erect the wooden posts adjacent to the stones already raised. In this case also the village priest will again pour down the haitul (rice-beer) on this wooden posts uttering these words:

"Khulbu khullak yamale loukaltilbee pul boonu."

"Dyke you protect Khulbu (owner of the village) and Khullak (the chief controller of the village) from enemies; the crops from its insects and pests as we have made dyke for this."

These words are also uttered while fencing the enclosure of the raised posts of wood and stones with smaller logs. This fencing work is also completed on the same day.

The final work, that is the fencing of the enclosure of the stones and wooden posts, is renewed every year, with the same process as described above.
2. LAMAL BAM OR THELPUNG

It is a collection of small stones associated with six forked posts. It is found on the top of the spur where the habitational site is located. The materials used for constructing this structure are sandstone, a short and small wooden posts, smaller branches of a large evergreen tree and six fork or Y-shaped posts.

These structures are raised by the villagers collectively. They erect such structure for using as the seats of the village deities and every year they use to worship their deity on this spot to protect them from the evil spirits and diseases. They also worship the deities to protect their cattles and crops from diseases caused by germs, insects and pests.

Even though small in size, the small wooden post, twigs and stone slabs are very carefully raised. This stone raising ceremony last for three days. Along with this, village genna is also observed, during which no outsider is allowed to enter the village. Inside the village, no villager is allowed to pour or clean rice during these genna days.

In the mid-night of the first day of the village
genna, village elders along with the village chief and priest raise such stone after digging a ditch of about 30 cms to 60 cms in depth. Inside the ditch they keep a suitable slab or boulder and over it they raise a wooden post. They raise such structures late in the mid-night because they consider it ominous to hear the voices of women and children while erecting such structure. Meanwhile some energetic youths will guard the village gate Panthungs to prevent the outsiders from entering the village accidentally.

On the second day they will raise six forked, Y-shaped posts ritually by the village elders, chief and priest. On this day, they also plant some small branches of the same kind of tree used for the Y-shaped posts. On these small branches they keep the hard shells of ëgãs and tie some leaves of special herbs and trees (used for purification) after purifying the structures ritually. And the village elders spend the day by singing and sitting round the structure.

On the third day all the villagers contribute some money and buy some animals for a feast. After completing the ceremony, village genna is lifted up.

3. THEL AND THUJGALAI (MOTTE STONE)

It is composed of three flat stones placed horizontally.
it is always found near the village gate, usually outside the main habitational area, and under a big tree which serves as seats for the travellers. The rock type used for the construction of this structure is sandstone. The structure is called Thal in Moring tongue and the process of raising such structure is termed as Thilgalai.

Thilgalai can be performed by any wealthy person of the village. For this he should have arranged at least seven mithuns, besides rice and rice-beer.

When the preparation of the materials is completed, the wealthy person fixed an auspicious day guided by the village priest and chief. On the fixed day, some healthy villagers mainly youths proceed either to the forest or nearby stream or narrow gorge under the supervision of an elder person in search of suitable stone. They also bring with them creepers and a raft for dragging the selected stone.

Meanwhile inside the village, in the house of the performer, the village priest will worship Thulung Khrang a small stone which is specially kept for the purpose at the foot of the foundation post of the house. They worship this Thulung Khrang by covering it with a basket after keeping on a phal
(wooden seat). Such stone is also collected ritually from the narrow gorge by an expert person. As my informants told me that the said expert person will chant many hymns and the special stone will come to the spot where the priest is uttering hymns. It may take some days or only a day and a night. Usually it comes in the night. So the priest along with the performer should stay on the spot for some nights till the stone arrives when the stone arrives, the priest collect it and brings home. Inside the house, a special seat is arranged for the stone, that is also at the base of the foundation post of the house. After keeping on such special seat, it is cover with a net-like basket.

Besides, a long wooden seat called Pongsang is also placed. This seat is also prohibited to be used by members of other clan and even the girls of the family or clan who got married to other clans. This seat is exclusively meant for the family of the performer and his clan members and their wives.

When the stone for making Thel arrive, the performer will sacrifice a dog and take its liver out and place beneath the first stone in the row of the Thel. The first stone should be the largest one among the three. The second one, in the series, would be the smallest one in size while the remaining, medium size, one is placed in the third place in the series.
After completing this, outside the village, some villagers raise two forked-posts in the courtyard of the performer. There they will plant orchid plants and a great feast also starts along with the meat of seven mithuns. It may last for three to five days depending upon the wealth of the performer. Thus the Thel making process called Thilgalai is concluded. The performer is then allowed to build a special type of house within three years or so.

After three years, if the performer could not build a new house, he must purify his house ritually with a feast called Chim mathun. On this day the performer of Thilgalai should offer a feast to the whole villagers with his available means.

As stated already, the performer of the Thilgalai is allowed to build a special house. During the construction he is to perform a festival called Chim Masum meaning decoration on the house by using indigenous colours. They use termiic and lime. They use to mix termiic powder and lime powder to get red colour. Chim Masum is the concluding part of the performance, which includes Yarkiyao (feast for animals whatever he can hunt) and Pakiyao (feast for flower plants whatever he can collect).
8. **Langol Maring Megalithic Site**

The site is located on the Langol hill, Tengnoupal sub-division, Chandel district, Manipur. It is about 56 kms from Imphal on the south east. According to my informant, the village is the second oldest village among the Maring villages. The village is bounded on the north by Karongthel, on the east by Khunbi, and Lamlong, on the south by Khunbi Khunou and Kangoi, and on the west by Minou. The followings are the megalithic or modified structures found in this village, Langol Maring. The classification of the megaliths along with their local names is listed in table no. 21 below:

### TABLE 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified type</th>
<th>Functional type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>Panthung</strong> or Khelpung</td>
<td>A monolith associated with wooden post and fence.</td>
<td>Village gate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>Yuila</strong></td>
<td>Water tank</td>
<td>Water reservoir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><strong>Thelpung</strong> or Lam Al Ban</td>
<td>Composite structure of monolith, wooden post, Y-post, and some branches of wood.</td>
<td>Places or seats for deities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td><strong>Thul</strong></td>
<td>Horizontal flat stones</td>
<td>Resting places for the villagers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>Yedanga</strong></td>
<td>Circle of Y-posts</td>
<td>Commemorative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td><strong>Thulung</strong></td>
<td>Small pebble</td>
<td>Witness stone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PLATE XXXVIII

Pl. XXXVIII:a
Panthung also known as Khelpong (village gate), Langol Maring village.

Pl. XXXVIII:b
Lamal Bam, Langol Maring village.
Pl.XXXIX:a

Y-posts of Lamal Bam, Langol
Maring village
1. KHELPUNG OR PANTHUNG (Monolith with wooden post and fence at village gate)

It is similar in structure and function with that of Koijam Maring. But there is a slight difference in the material particularly the type of wood for the main wooden post. In Langol village the wooden post is made of Warhong (Gmelina arborea species). Other materials and procedures are the same as described above. Every year they renew their village gate called Khelpung or Panthung (Plate XXXVIII:a).

2. YULAM (Village tank)

It is a tank made out of huge boulders to provide a water reservoir to the whole village. It is traditionally found among the Lainingmak (non-Christian) Marings. It is constructed as a water reservoir and as a subsidiary work after the construction of village gate. It is used as a tank for the whole village. An elaborate function is associated with the construction of the structure.

3. THELPUNG OR LAMAL BAM (Monolith with Y-post; Village shrine)

The megalith called Thelpung or Lamal Bam is very similar to that of Thelpung found among the Koijam Maring,
but the rituals performed for erection of this megalith are different. The Thelpung found among the Langol Maring consists of a wooden post called Tung which is surrounded by eight monoliths. The wooden post is made of a special variety of tree locally called Ugoi belonging to Schima wallichii species (Pl.xxxviii:b and Pl.xxxix:b).

The rituals performed for erection of the composite megalithic structure are: (a) Laukalai, (b) Patuk, (c) Pat Langolai, (d) Be Longolai, (e) Maronaa, and (f) Umka which are systematically described below:

(a) Laukalai:

It is a ritual performed at the place of Lamal Bam by offering a cock so that the people could work hard on their rice-fields. Before performing this, no one is allowed to work in their respective fields. As it is a genna for the villagers to work in their fields, it may causes harms to their crops.

(b) Patuk:

It is a worship of the dwelling spirit of Lamal Bam, so that the seeds planted in the fields are not destroyed.
before germination. They offer some eggs to propitiate the spirit. After offering the eggs they break them by making a hole so that the yolk can be poured down over the Lamal Ban and keep the egg shells on the tip of the branches erected near the wooden post.

(c) **Pat Longolai**

It is a worship of the dwelling spirit of Lamal Ban to protect the crops against the insects and pests. The procedure of worship Pat Longolai is the same as Patuk.

(d) **Be Longolai**

It is related to the weeding of the full grown plants either paddy or vegetables in their fields during which they perform Be Longolai to protect the crops from injury from their tools or by animals.

(e) **Maronsa**

They perform this ritual to have a good crop of the year.

(f) **Umka**

It is also similar to Maronsa. They perform Umka
ritual to have a good harvest without any difficulty or destruction by nature.

If they cannot perform those rituals one after the other, they offer an animal at least once in a year. Whenever there are some hunt some wild animals, either individually or collectively their heads should be hung on such Y-posts of Lamal Bae. And every year they used to change these six Y-posts along with the smaller branches erected near the Tung.

4. **THEL** (Horizontal flat stone):

It is similar to other Thels described above.

5. **YADANGSA** (Circle of Y-Post):

It is a circle of Y-posts erected by a rich person to commemorate his performance of Yakiyo (feast for animals). It can be performed either by a wealthy person or by the whole villagers. It is normally performed in the month of April. If it is performed in the individual level the performer should have hunted at least ten to twenty wild animals during the year. Because Yakiyo ceremony is accompanied by dancing and singing in praise of the performance of the merit-seeker by naming the number and varieties of hunted animals during the
year. This ceremony continues for three days. While this ceremony is going on, no one is allowed to work in their respective fields. The merit-seeker, on the other hand, should offer food and drink to the villagers with the meat of mithun.

If Yakiyap is performed by the villagers at the village level, they should perform this in the courtyard of either Khulbu or Khullak (either the owner of the village or the chief controller of the village). All the male members (excepting the small boys) should set off for collective hunting to get a large number of animals. The heads of such animals should be displayed on the Y-posts of lamal bam, as it is a rule for the Marings to keep the heads of hunted animals either individually or collectively. Moreover, a feast should be arranged by contributing some amount in cash or kind from every house of the village and sacrificing at least one mithun.

6. **THULUNG (WITNESS STONE):**

It is a small pebble considered to be the magic stone or the witness stone. It is believed that the stone comes to the house of the worshipper when called by a priest or expert person with chanting of hymns. They call it witness stone (Thulung) because it comes naturally at the mid-night when called by an expert person with a promise. It is also called
magic stone for it may vanish on some day when the process of worship is completed.

C. THE PHUNAL SAMBUN SITE

It is located on the Phunan hill, Tengnoupal subdivision, Chandel district, Manipur. The site is 49 kms away from Imphal via Kakching on the south-east. It is bounded on the east by Sekmai river, on the west by Langmeidong (a meitei village) and Litan (a Koireng village), on the south by Anphoubung (a Maring village) and on the north by Kakching khullen. The village is populated by Lakanining (the Christian) Marings. It is about 6 kms from Kakching Bazar. Nowadays they do not perform megalithic rituals. Some ancient megalithic remains are seen, in this area, in a neglected state. In this village, there is found only one type of megalithic structure, locally called *Thel* or resting place, structurally classified as horizontal flat stones. The process of raising is similar to other *Thels* found in other Maring villages described above.
CHAPTER-III:9

MEGALITHIC CULTURE FOUND AMONG

THE POUMAIS OF PAOMATA AREA

The area inhabited by Poumai Nagas lies between the longitudes 93°47' E and 94°18' E and latitudes 25°10' N and 25°31' N. It is bounded on the north by Nagaland, on the west by Tadubi, Mao and Maram, on the east by Chakhesangs and Tangkhuls of Ukhrul district and on the south by Sedar Hills (Saikhal sub-division) of the same district (Senapati). The Poumai Naga area is drained by three rivers system namely, the Ngairi river on the north, the Barak river on the south and west and the Iril river on the east and south-east. According to the 1988 Revenue census. The Poumai population consists of 81,301 individuals, covering 63 villages.

The Poumais had a fairly developed society and culture and it forms a part of an interesting study. A brief mention may be made of the distinguishing features of a typical Poumai village perched atop a hill strategically for defence purposes at a time when internecine tribal wars were preponderent. These are the self sufficiency of its economy; the chief of the village, who controls the affairs with the help of a council of elders. The patriarchal family system and a simple marriage system. In religious matters genna or taboo
plays an important role. The chief deity of the Poumais is Chirakho or Kirako (the spirit of the house). Music of the Poumais is a refreshing pastime in which both young and old indulge. The Poumais attaire very colourful costume. They believe in life after death.

THE MEGALITHS

Entering a Poumai village and passing through several tracts lined by houses, one finds oneself in a large open space, where a number of megaliths are found scattered here and there. They are of different shapes and sizes. Some are found roughly circular in arrangement, of horisontal slabs and boulders often piled one on top of the other to form a raise platform. The dolmens are found in groups sometimes associated with either heap of stones or raised platforms or stone circles which serves as seats. Menhirs are found abundantly in the stone raising places, called Chushebu, of their respective clans. This array of stones, varies in size and shape from village to village, where the villagers assemble for rest and gossip as well as for formal discussions of the village council. At the meeting of the village council one particular stone seat is reserved for the headman, but other members may seat themselves at random.
Pl. XL:a

Zhosoachu (memorial stone), The highest menhir at Saranamei site.

Pl. XL:b

Chikai (The house of the merit-seeker who performed Zhosou and Chiveisou feasting ceremonies), Saranamei site.
PLATE XLI

Pl.XLI:a
An avenue of Zhosouchu for Yumai Clan
Saranamei site

Pl.XLI:b
Remaining part of the avenue seen
in Pl.XLI:a
Another avenue of Yumai clan at Saranamei with the latest menhir (reddish brown in colour) raised in February 1992

Upper remaining part of Pl.XLII:a
Chukho (Circular cairn), Saranamei site

Chukho, Saranamei site
Pl.XLIV:a

Pachon Chukho (sitting stones), Saranamei site.

Pl.XLIV:b

Bupfii (sitting stones placed on the top portion of a circular cairn called Chukho, Saranamei site.)
Neisa Chukho (Shouting place of the village chief), Saranamei site

Chadei Chu (Cat killing stone), Saranamei site
PLATE XLVI

Pl.XLVI:a

Seibechu (cattle's stone), Saranamei

Pl.XLVI:b

Khopho-chu (grave stone), Saranamei
Pl.XLVII:a

Chuchukho (Part of a circle related to head hunting), Saranamei.

Pl.XLVII:b

Chukhe (Stone dragging sledge), Saranamei.
Pl. XLVIII:a

Raikhubus (dolmens), Saranamei

Pl. XLVIII:b

Raikhubus (dolmens), Saranamei
PLATE XLIX

Pl.XLIX:a

Teis (Wooden vats for keeping rice-beer), Saranamei

Pl.XLIX:b

Tei (Another wooden vat for keeping rice-beer), Saranamei
Pl.L:a

Pounding of rice for brewing rice-beer called Pou-Yaoh

Pl.L:b

Preparation of Pou-Yaoh (rice-beer) before keeping inside the Tei (wooden-vat)
The first stage of dragging and beating the sacrificial animal (buffalo) called Haveijii, in March 1993 at Saranamei.

Final/closing stage of dragging and beating the sacrificial animal, Haveijii, on March 1993 at Saranamei, Paomata.
Pl.LII:a
Stone to be raised in the name of Mr. S. Themoso, on 9th Feb., 1993.

Pl.LII:b
Another stone on the sledge, while the pullers are resting and refreshing on the way (in the name of Mr. K. Sanii) on 7th Feb., 1993.
Another stone is pulled by the young boys while the elders are pushing behind. It is to be raised in the name of Mr. Th. Bao-o on 8th Feb., 1993.
Apart from the menhirs, erected at memorial feasts many upright stones arranged in the form of alignments are also seen either in single row or in two rows outside the Poumai villages in the vicinity of rice fields. Most of these, had been put up within living memory and it was therefore possible to establish the circumstances of their erection.

The information regarding the megalithic rituals found among the Poumais have been collected from the following villages where the Poumais are dwelling at present since past. The villages where the megalithic sites are located are listed below:

1. Saranamei
2. Phuba
3. Maiba
4. Tungam
5. Tungjoi
6. Liyai
7. Koide
8. Lakhamai
9. Phabung Khullen and Khunou
10. Oinam
11. Purul
12. Tingsong
13. Ngamju and
14. Prisaummei
1. **THE SARANAMEI VILLAGE SITE**

The Saranamei village area, where megalithic are abounding, is located 2 km away from Paomata Centre, on the top of the Siimal-Deichirang. It is about 128 kms from Imphal Via Tadubi and Paomata Centre. The site is bounded on the east by Phuba village, on the west by the Tungam village, on the north by the Liyai khunou and khullen villages, on the south by the Barak river and on the farther south by Maram villages.

The village area of Saranamei abounds in megalithic monuments. Almost all the megalithic remains are in the form of menhirs. Other types found in this site consist of horizontal flat-stones dolmens, flat stone-seats, stone circles and cairns. The different types of megaliths, according to my informants and interpreters Mr. S.Kro, Mr. V.Haosil, D. Shihrii, Leedson Asheo and several others, still existing in this area are of nine types. They are listed with their local names, classified types, and functional types.

**TABLE - 22**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified types</th>
<th>Functional types</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Zaogochu</td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>Memorial stone</td>
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| 2. | Chukho | Cairn | (a) Foundation stone  
(b) Sitting place  |
| 3. | Faohon Chukho | Stone circle | Resting place  
(seats) associated with dolmen |
| 4. | Raikhubu | Dolmen | Gossiping platform  |
| 5. | Seibechu | Horizontal flat stone | Relating to forecasting evil things |
| 6. | Chadeichu | Monolith | Relating to judiciary |
| 7. | Neisa Chukho | Small cairn | Platform for public announcement |
| 8. | Chuchukho | Stone circle | Relating to head-hunting |
| 9. | Khophochu | Horizontal flat stones | Capstones of the burial graves |

*1. ZAOSOCHU

It is a monolith (Plate XLla). It is raised in the Chushebu or the stone raising place of their clans. So they are found in cluster for every clan, either in the form of an
alignment or avenues (Plate XLI: a & b; Plate XLI: a & b). Almost all of them are found in and around terrace fields but particularly near the paths leading to their fields (dry and wet), jungles and other inter village paths. The rock type used for the construction of those structures is sandstone. Some monoliths are also found inside the habitational area.

Before a Roumai Naga can raise a Zhusochu (memorial stone) in his name for the first time, he must pray to the gods for blessings along with a series of feasts namely (a) Kasou, (b) Vaoa, (c) Luiji, (d) Zhusou and finally (e) Shiveisou. This series of feasts is performed after his request to his clan elders and village authority is granted.

So, if a wealthy person wishes to perform Zhusou, stone raising ceremony in the next year, the Chikumai (village authority) or the Tsiko (clan elders) or both should be invited in the previous year by the intending performer(s) to his(their) home and served them with rice beer. At this time, the intending merit-seeker should express his wishes to the villagers through them. The Chikumai (village authority) and the Tsiko (clan elders) will announce the name(s) of the intending merit-seeker(s) while performing the Zhusou (feasting for stone raising) ceremony. On this day almost all the villagers will come.
to know the number of persons(s) who perform Zhusou ceremony in the next year's stone raising months Donil, Rupii and Sapei (January, February and March). If there are more than one merit-seekers, the Chi k umai and Tsii ko (village authority and clan elders) will prepare a list of their names and make it known to the villagers along with the sequence of performance of Zhusou by different persons one after another.

This is followed by a series of feasts which are listed below:

(a) RASOU

It is not an elaborate ceremony. The intending merit-seeker along with his family members, guided by the village priest, worships by offering rice-beer to Kirako (spirit of the house) to protect them from any sufferings during the coming series of feasts.

(b) VAOVE

Once such a public or general announcement is made by the village authority and clan elders and Rasou is completed, the intending merit-seeker should sacrifice a cow or oull or buffalo having no spot of injury and the meat of the sacrificed
animal is distributed to all the houses of the village, after making offerings to their supreme God and Goddess called Khallichira and Teipfii Khamiru to mark the first feast of the series called Vaoee. All the clan heads of the village will assemble in the house of the merit-seeker, where they will be served with rice-beer. This is followed by another elaborate feast called Moujii.

(c) MOUJII

It is an important feast. The intending merit-seeker is not allowed to perform Zhusou (feast for stone raising) unless he performs Moujii feast. For this, the intending merit-seeker should prepare a number of things including collection of rice to prepare rice-beer, a number of animals which are also to be without any sign/spot of injury and a large quantity of banana leaves and fire woods to meet the requirements.

After completing these arrangements, the intending merit-seeker would announce the fixed day of the Moujii feast. Unlike the Liangmeis, Rongmeis, Marams and the Tangkhuls, the Poumais never offer cooked-rice to the visitors or participants. The main items to be offered to his invitees, friends, relatives and his co-villagers are cooked-meat and rice-beer.
so the preparation of rice-beer is an important task (Plate L:b). Because it needs a huge amount of rice for brewing rice-beer (Plate L:ia). Before brewing they arranged a special container made out of a very big log. The tree-trunk is made hollow by chiselling and to make the container called Tei (Plate XLIX: a and b). Each Tei contains 4,500 to 6,000 litres of rice-beer according to its size. For brewing rice-beer they keep the pounded rice into the large wooden container and wash it with water. Then the washed-rice should be taken out in several baskets and let it dry in the sun. After getting it dried, the villagers again pounded them into rice-flour and from such rice-flour the famous rice-beer called Fouysoh is brewed. And every performer is required to prepare two or three such Teis full of rice-beer for Moujii ceremony. It last for four days generally but may continue depending on the materials arranged by the merit-seeker.

On the first day of Moujii, all the animals either buffaloes or cows or bulls must be sacrificed and the meat of the sacrificed animals is distributed to all the houses of the village and rice-beer is also offered to all the participants.

On the second day all the clan heads and members of the village authority along with the villagers particularly
all the aged persons and youths (both male and females) will assemble in the house of merit-seeker to drink rice-beer. There the merit-seeker will offer them rice-beer till they are satisfied.

On the third day, presentation should be brought to the house of the performer either in cash or kind (paddy, vegetable etc.) by the villagers and relatives. In return the merit-seeker will serve them with rice-beer.

On the fourth day, relatives and friends either from the same village or from outside will come and rice-beer will be again served to these visitors.

This process of drinking rice-beer may be continued for many days till the prepared Pouyach (rice-beer) is completely finished. After this they also consumed the residue of the rice-beer as a favourite item, which marks the concluding part of the Moujii ceremony.

(d) ZHUSOU

It is the feast for stone raising ceremony. All the friends, relatives and co-villagers will help the intending
performer in every stage of his work in the preparation and collection of materials for the feast of merit, Zhusou. These villagers and relatives of the merit-seeker will render their help in cultivation (the wet and dry paddy fields, both planting and harvesting), in collecting plaintain leaves, firewoods, creepers which is use as ropes for dragging stone(s) called Churai and in the preparation work of wooden jars for keeping rice-beer called Tei, (if the merit-seeker wants to use a new one) and also in husking, pounding and brewing of rice-beer Pouyaoh and also in the preparation of Chukhe, sledge (Plate XLVIIib).

The first stage in the preparation of Zhusou ceremony is the selection of stone.

The intending merit-seeker will search a suitable stone along with the village priest (or any expert person) called Khaohro. After selecting the stone, they will cover it with leaves and branches of trees so that women and children could not reach the stone easily. They protect the selected stone by this process as the selected stone is already purified. If it is touched by women and children they will not consider the selected stone as purified or sacred. So they will proceed with the same process of selecting of stone. On
the same day the merit-seeker will return and will observe the omen of the dream in the night. While, sleeping on that particular day, much precaution is taken up by the merit-seeker. He must wear all the cloths in its proper order. Special attention is given to the materials to be used as quilt. If he sees a deceased person in the dream, the spirit of the selected stone may tell him that the person who is the owner of the stone is not born. In that case, the intending performer will not select the stone for erecting in the Chushebu (stone raising place of the clan). So he will select another stone and proceed in the same manner till he sees a good omen. If the omen is good, he will continue the preparation for dragging the stone thus selected. This is followed by making a tract for dragging the selected stone on an auspicious day with the help of villagers and relatives. Some will set off for searching of a specially strong and stout thorny creeper called Churai (meaning stone's creeper) while others are engaged in the construction work of Tei and Chukhe that is wooden vats/jars for rice-beer and stone dragging sledge (Plate XLIX: a and b; Plate XLVIIib). The performer will serve them with food and drink. The food included cooked-rice, cooked-meats (either chicken or pork as other meats are not allowed on this occasion, because they should be served with special diet) and rice-beer.
More than one hundred and fifty or two hundred individuals are engaged in dragging the stone. If the male members do not fulfil the required numbers, female members may join the dragging party. All are attired with full gala costume. Now-a-days modern dresses are also allowed (Plate LIII:a).

The performer and his wife will also come to the site. While dragging the stone, they will not join the pulling party but the performer will handle a spear while his wife will cover her head with cloth. Meanwhile the Khoohro will keep a small chicken in a cage at the place where the stone was first located and the village youths will kill the small chicken by throwing stones after which they will run away from the site.

Once more, before the stone is moved to its position, a kind of creeper called Lerai is fitted to the Churai (rope) which has already been tied on the stone, so that small children could join in dragging the stone by holding on to the creeper (Lerai) (Plate LII: a and b). They are followed by the juniors and seniors for dragging the stone.

When the stone reached the selected spot, the performer and his wife will return home. The participants will also assemble in the performer's house. There they will be served
with rice-beer, it will be continued for three days consecutively. Sacrifice of animals will start while the stone is still on the sledge at Chushebu after dragging.

On the first day of the feasting ceremony of Chusou the village khaohro (male priest) would ask the merit-seeker to bring a small calf first to his (performer's) courtyard. When the small calf reach the courtyard of the performer, the Khaohro will touch the animal with a small stick ritually. Then all the children below ten years of age are allowed to beat the small calf with sticks. This should be done in the morning. This is followed by the sacrifice of a buffalo called Haveijii (having no sign of injury or deformity). For this Haveijii also the Khaohro touch with his small stick ritually (supposing that he killed the animal). Then he handed it over to the village youths to kill it by traditional methods (Plate LIIa and b).

The meat of the sacrificed animal is distributed to all the houses of the village. With the Haveijii sacrificed, the process of animal sacrifice in the morning session of the first day is completed. In the evening all the villagers will come and gather in the performer's house for zaopeiso (to drink rice-beer together by using cups of banana leaves).

In the next day, they will start with zaopeiso
ceremony by sacrificing in the evening a number of cows and bulls. Then as usual the meat of the sacrificed animals is distributed to all the villagers. The participants, invitees, guests and visitors are also served with rice-beer.

On this day, the performer should offer an animal either a buffalo or a cow (having no sign of injury and deformity) called Haveijii (in case of buffalo) and Khulo (in case of cow) to the clan of his wife. So that, the merit-seeker is allowed to wear a titled cloth named Krakhra (made out of local made threads with special design). The head of such animals offered must be returned to the performer.

On the same day, a Khaoveophya (a male pig which has no sign of injury or deformity) is also sacrificed and the meat of the sacrificed animal is distributed to the male members, who had performed Moujii and Chusou and such distributed porked is called Shih. Meanwhile on this day, a big pig will be killed by a friend of the merit-seeker and cooked the meat in his house. Then the cooked pork will be brought to the performer's house and it will be served with rice-beer to the participants.

The third day is commonly known as Kra Yuteithe (presentation day). Because on this day presentations called Kra
will be brought in the evening to the performer's house by the villagers and relatives in cash or kind and in return they will be served by the host with rice-beer. Hence this day is called Kra Yuteithe (presentation day).

On the fourth day, all the workers (including those friends, relatives and youngsters of the village who rendered their helps in pounding rice and brewing rice-beer) will be served with Pouyach (rice-beer) and Yukhu (residue of rice-beer). It may continue till the rice-beer and its residues are there.

Either on the fifth or sixth day, the stone, already dragged and kept at the stone raising place Chushebu, may be raised. And after completing the stone raising function, the merit-seeker is allowed to wear Zhoasosa (the titled cloth).

(e) CHIVEISOU

This is a ceremony performed for decorating the house of the merit-seeker to signify his status, particularly the front wall and the front of the gable are decorated with traditional insignia (Plate XL:b). Decoration on the gable is done depending on the designed expected by the performer. But the decoration on the gable is a fixed one for the village chief,
called Veo or Khullakpa. That they have two sharp pointed ends of the gable. No carving work is done on it. So it is only straight and pointed. But for others, the gables are a bit broader with a hole on the top (Plate XL1b). In the case of Veo or Khullakpa the engraving work on the front wall represents the number of heads (human heads) decapitated on raids. And for those persons, other than the village chief, the front wall engraving represents the number of animal heads slaughtered during the whole series of feast.

For this Chiveisou ceremony, the performer should arrange at least a cattle and two buffaloes. Moreover, the performer should arrange a number of Teia (wooden jars) full of rice-beer.

The decoration work can be done either on the house already built or a new house, depending on the wish of the merit-seeker. In the case of village chief, the construction work should be completed in a day and at least a human head collected by the process of head-hunting, should be buried under the main pillar of the house. But now-a-days instead of human head, human hairs are used as substitute. It is also firmly believed by the Poumais that if someone had taken one's head hair and buried under the main pillar of village chief's house, the longevity of such person may not be more than one
year. And on the other hand, the receiver of the said human hair will die within one year if he had taken any food or any edible things from the house of the owner of the hair. So care must be taken while taking other's head hair, otherwise the performer may lend in serious trouble of revenge even life attempt. So, the house of the village chief is frequently checked and repaired every year and durable materials are also used in the construction of his house.

Chiveisou continues for three or four days at least. If the performer wishes to build the house newly it takes more days.

2. CHUKHO (Cairn)

It is a heap of stone piled up one upon the other to form somewhat circular structure with a raised platform. On the top of such Chukho (cairn) a series of smaller flat stones are placed to serve as seats. There are different types of such structures raised on different occasions but have similar functions. Some of them are memorial while others are commemorative (village foundation stones etc.). They vary in shapes and sizes (Plate XLIII: a and b), it ranges from 97 cm to 250 cms in height above the ground, the circumference being
varies 960 cms to 1420 cms. According to the nature of structure and owner, different names are given to these structures. For example, *Pepaao Chukho* (foundation stone of Paomei), *Peohpa Chukho* (foundation stone of Yumai), *Leve Chukho* (foundation stone of Ramaj), and *Yumai Chukho* (foundation stone of Yumai clan) etc. Each Chukho has two staircases either on the same side or opposit to each other. And the Chukhos which are constructed in memory of a deceased person is known by different names of the respective deceased persons; such as Mr. A's Chukho or Mr. B's Chukho etc. They are all found inside the village habitational area and also in the courtyard of every owner either of the clan (in the courtyard of the clan chief) or individually.

The procedure of construction of Chukho is similar to those of *chaosochu*. But the Chukho related to the individual level, could not be raised if the donor is not a performer of *chusou* and *chiveshou*. If the donor of the Chukho was a performer of a series of feast of merit he is allowed to build such structure by giving another feast but not an elaborate one like the previous ones. He should offer food and drink to all the participants till the construction work is completed. A name was given to such structure in whose memory it was constructed. The last thing to be placed in such memorial Chukho is an upright small stone.
In the case of village founder's Chukho, all the villagers (the male members of the village) are allowed to collect one stone for his own share to pile up at the courtyard of the village founder or chief, signifying a bond of unity with the village founder. Here is a story in relation to the village founder's Chukho as stated below:

Once upon a time there were a large number of people in the Saranamei village. During that time, every male member of the said village is allowed to collect a stone as his share and pile up in the courtyard of the village chief. As my informants, Mr.H.Kronii, Kh.Johnas (Village Secretary), H.Shekho (Head of Dumai clan) and V.Baosil (Chief of Yumai clan) told me that the present existing Chukho is constructed during the most populated time. Afterwards the large population was divided into four clans under the supervision of four clan chiefs. They are Paomai, Domai, Yumai and Ramai clans. Among the four chiefs, chief of Yumai clan is the head of all four clans. Now they use a new term or loan Hindi word Raja to these clan chiefs and Maharaja to the head of all chiefs (who is selected among the four Rajas/clan chiefs). Then every chief of every clan has its own Chukho in their respective courtyards and has separate names of each clan described above.

The Chukho erection is not accompanied by feast or
ceremony. Only the chief who possesses such structure, may bear the expenditure for feeding the workers while constructing such structure. Though their sizes are different they possess some similar features. But in case of the memorial Chukho the shape and sizes have a wide range of variation. In some cases it also takes the shape of a resting seat called Paohon Chukho (Plate XLIVia).

3. PAOHON CHUKHO (Stone circle)

It is a stone circle made up of smaller and larger flat horizontal stone (Plate XLIVia). Some of them is erected on some supporting stones like small dolmens. The largest one is in the central part of the curvature facing the two narrow spaces meant for entrance. The largest flat stone measures 182 cm x 121 cm x 29 cm in length, breadth and thickness. It is 62 cm high above the ground level. Such structures are found in every locality particularly near the clan megalith called Chukho. In this village, there are four such types of megalithic structures. They are always found on a higher level of the habitational area of the clan and also under a tree. The rock-type used for the construction of this Paohon Chukho is sandstone. They are all roughly dressed stones having smooth surfaces but without any decoration on it/them.
These stone circles are not related with any ritualistic feast. They can be constructed by any wealthy person by contributing either some amount to meet the expenses over it or by offering food and drink while constructing such structure/monument. But before constructing such Paohon Chukho, the intending performer should take formal permission from the clan elders as well as from the village authority by offering them rice-beer in his home. If permitted by these members he can proceed according to his wishes.

4. RAIKHUBU (Dolmen)

It is a cluster of dolmens. They are always found inside the village habitational area. They are also associated with a small heap of stone or a raised platform. They have variable sizes. The smallest dolmen measures 46 cm in height above the ground level. The size of the smallest flat stone measures 122 cm x 62 cm x 10 cm in length, breadth and thickness respectively; while the highest dolmen is 136 cm in height above the ground level. The largest horizontal slab measures 212 cm x 160 cm x 37.6 cm in length, breadth and thickness respectively. The supporting pillars are also formed by piling up a number of small slabs along with an upright stone to serve the purpose (Plate XLVIII: a and b). The rock type, used for the construction
of this cluster of dolmens, is sandstone. They are composed of roughly hewn and unhewn natural rocks. No decoration is found on it.

The main function of this structure is associated with the peace negotiation over head hunting. On the other hand, this structure serves as sitting or resting place for the villagers, where they gossip and old men do odd jobs there. It cannot be constructed by any wealthy person unless he performs Zhugou more than three times and continues the series of feast of merit including Chiveisou. If the intending merit-seeker is the performer of the whole series mentioned above, he is allowed to raise such structure.

The stone searching, dragging, raising along with feasting and the process of preparation of the materials required for the ceremony are similar to those described above. But the expenditure will be more than doubled the Zaosocho, as it has to collect more stones that will take longer time not only for searching but also for pulling. Till the selected stones reach the village, the intending merit-seeker is to offer the participants with food and drink. The food included rice and chicken or pork.
5. **SEIBECHU (Horizontal Flat Stone):**

It is a flat stone placed horizontally on the ground. The shape is irregular (Plate XLVI:a). It measures 435 cm in length, 163.2 cm in breadth and 21.6 cm in thickness. The rock type used for this structure is sandstone. It is found in the courtyard of Mr. V. Baosii, chief of the Yumai clan. It is roughly dressed stone without any decoration. As my informants and interpreters told me that this stone is placed there since the time immemorial when the Saranamai village was settled there for the first time. Since that time, they had been using this stone for worshipping of a small calf with rituals, every year.

For this, the Veo (chief of the village), rears a special puppy every year. When the puppy is fully grown to a healthy young dog, the Veo fixes an auspicious day and make it known to the villagers. For this ceremony he procures a calf without any spot of injury. The Veo, on the fixed day, would sacrifice the young healthy dog and distributed the meat to all his subjects. The Veo then tie ritually the selected small calf to the specially placed horizontal stone. Then the Veo will observe geena (taboo) during which he is not allowed to take any kind of food except drinking Pouyaah (rice-beer). The whole day he will sit down near the calf and keep an eye on
the said animal for it is his duty to locate the direction of the head of the calf when it mews for the first time on the slab. When the calf mews once on such a stone and its position is located, then the Vego let the animal free. It is firmly believed that the direction to which the calf turns its head and mews once on such ritual slab, gives indication of the direction from which harmful natural calamities, such as heavy rain or hail storms or snow fall that can destroy the crops of the year, may come. So they abandon the area directed by the calf from planting crops for the season. If they neglect this forecast, they may not get a good harvest. Hence they consider such forecast very essential for cultivation.

6. **CHA-DEI-CHU (Judiciary Monolith):**

It is a monolith relating to judiciary function (Plate XLVib). Such function is performed every year till to-day, among the non-christians. It is done by an expert person only. The stone measures 78 cms broad, 82 cms long and 60 cms high above the ground. The rock type is sandstone. It is an undressed natural stone.

As the name signifies, the monolith is meant for cat sacrifice. A cat is sacrificed every year on this monolith under the guidance of an expert elder person. They hire such
such person from other villages, if there is no such expert
in the village by making some payment in kind.

It is performed for the purpose of eradication of
evil persons particularly thieves. The Poumais think that if
they perform such rituals and kill the cat with all villagers,
the thief (if there is in the village) will die in the same
way and in the same year. While killing the cat ritually, the
villagers also think that they kill the soul of thief.

7. **NEISA CHUKHO (Small Cairn):**

It is a heap of stone relatively small in size. It
is considered ritually very important. It is found in the front
of every Chukho of every clan. It is formed by pilling up of
undressed blocks of stone having different shapes and sizes.
On the top of it there lies a flat horizontal slab which is
somewhat larger than the other stones. On this flat stone the
village chief uses to climb up and shout whenever he wants to
make some public announcement. So this stone is known as **Neisa
Chukho** (Plate XLV:a), meaning shouting stones.

8. **CHUCHUKHO (Stone Circle):**

It is a circle of large and small boulders. It is found
in the residential area of Yumai clan. It is related with the affairs of head hunting (Plate XLVIIia).

These stones were used when a person or group of persons brings, to the village, hunted head(s) on raids. The hunted heads should be kept on these stones and the head hunters formally inform the Veo (village chief), and he in turn beats the village war-drum so that all the male members of the village should assemble in his courtyard in war-dress to perform a victory dance and sing victory song. Meanwhile the Veo will ask the head hunter(s) whether he/they would like to keep the head(s) in his/their home(s). If he/they wish to keep the head(s) he/they should offer a feast next day. If he/they could not offer the feast the Veo will continue to ask to each and every persons assembled there whether any one would wish to keep the hunted head. If nobody wishes to keep the hunted head(s), the Veo should offer the feast and it is his duty to keep the head(s) in his house, and such number of heads, he may display, by engraving on the front wall and front post of his house.

After completing the feast, the village elders along with the Veo and the owner of the head (the owner may be the Veo himself or other persons who can give the said feast) will dig a hole and bury the head(s) there till its fleshy parts are completely rotten.
After some months or even a year as necessary, the head(s) is/are taken out of such ditch and washed it with water and ritually purified by the keohro (priest). Then the owner may keep it in his home in a place out of the reach of children and outsiders.

9. KHOPHOCHU (Grave-stone):

It is also a horizontal flat stone. It is always found capping the burial pit directly (Plate XLVIib). It has a great variation in shape and size from grave to grave. The largest one measures 450cms x 150cms x 76cms in length, breadth and thickness respectively. In some cases in modern time, it is found remodelled with by using cements, concret to form a larger rectangular flat surface.

No elaborate ceremony regarding the selection, and erection of this grave stone is performed. After burying the deceased person, along with its grave goods they simply cover the burial pit with this large flat stone.
UKHRUL DISTRICT

It is a revenue district of Manipur, located on the north-eastern part of the state. Starting from the administrative boundary of Manipur North district and Sadar Hills Autonomous district (together known as Senapati district), it extends eastward to Burma border. On the north this district extends upto Nagaland border and on the south upto the Administrative limit of Tengnoupal Autonomous district. The district covers an area of 4544 sq.kms and it is the second largest district in Manipur. In this mountain region lie the sources of Chingai and Thoubal rivers. It is a thinly populated region, with a density of 18 persons per square kilometre. It has five sub-divisions viz. Ukhrul north (Chingai), Ukhrul (Ukhrul), Kamjong Chassad (Kamjong), Phungyar Phaisait (Phungyar) and Ukhrul South (Kasom Khullen).

The district is mostly populated by Tangkhul Nagas who have the reputation of making careful utilization of cultivable land. They practise terrace cultivation. There are also some people of the Kuki group who practise shifting cultivation, but they constitute a very small component of the population of the district.
The Tangkhul, a tribe of over 90 thousands individuals are found, distributed all over the five sub-divisions of Ukhrul district, Manipur. Once the Tangkhuls, known as Wungs, occupied a compact area of eastern part of Manipur extending from Tengnoupal in the South right up to the Somra tract (now in Burma) in the north-east. As days passed, except in their songs, the original name 'Wung' was no longer mentioned. And now, they claim themselves as Nagas.

The Tangkhuls have patrilineal clans and have a distinct patrilineal bias in the society. The village headman functions as both religious head and secular head but in his function as religious head he is assisted by the village priest and in his function as secular head he is assisted by a council of village elders. Once the boys and girls had their own dormitories at different houses. The man, who has a fairly large and good house called Lengcheng Shim and possessed one or two large beds called Surako would become the guardian of a dormitory.

Though the Tangkhuls originated from one clan, each village had its own dialect. Of course, one was not quite different from the other, only change in names and variable pronunciation of words made one unable to understand the
language of the others. In olden days, the Tangkhuls, being fond of head hunting, used such false words and names, so that women and children might not understand what they intended to do. As days passed, each village developed its own dialect and at present one can find about 300 dialects among the Tangkhuls of Ukhrul district.

However, since the introduction of education and christianity in the hills, the Tangkhuls have come together again, and started to speak the same old language as their common mother tongue as before. Tangkhul language is not very different from Manipuri as far as uses and etymology are concerned (Shimray, 1976:3). The Tangkhul group of dialects belong to the Tibeto-Burman group of language. At present the common lingua franca among different groups of Tangkhul is Manipuri language.

The remains of megalithic culture have been located in many sites (villages) of the Ukhrul district. These are:


The Megalithic sites in Tangkhul area investigated by the writer are described below:
Pl.LIV:a

Maran Lungs (Memorial stones),
Humphun site

Pl.LIV:b

A series of Maran Lungs
(Memorial stones),
Chingai site
Pl. LV: a
Rahai Lung (Plastered modern form), Chingai site

Pl. LV: b
A typical Tangkhul house decorated with house-horn (Lengchemshim), Chingai site
Pl. LVI:a

Maran Lung (Memorial stones) with Maran Tarungs (memorial posts), Chingai site

Pl. LVI:b

Maran Tarungs and Maran Lunas, Chingai site.
Village chief, Chingai, who is a performer of Maran Kasa with his titled cloth Ruivad.

The performer of Maran Kasa along with his wife wearing the titled cloth.
A. **CHINGAI MEGALITHIC SITE:**

The Chingai megalithic site is situated on the Chingai range in the Chingai sub-division of Ukhrul district. It is about 147 kms from Imphal on the north-east. Chingai is a composite village which comprise of four constituent villages namely Somthar, Kashung and Shatsang and Haorei. In Tangkhul language Chingai means peace loving people. The site is abounding with megalithic monuments of various shape and sizes. The megalithic types found in and around this area are listed below with their local names along with functional and classified types.

**TABLE - 23**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified type</th>
<th>Functional type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>Rihai Luna</strong></td>
<td>Cairn associated with menhir</td>
<td>&quot;fitness-stone&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>Marankasa</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) <strong>Maram Luna</strong></td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>Commemorative-stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) <strong>Maram Tarung</strong></td>
<td>Wooden forked post</td>
<td>Commemorative wooden post</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **RIHAI LUNG (Cairn with Menhir):**

   It is a small cairn made by piling up small and large boulders of variable sizes. They are always found inside the village and particularly at the courtyard of the headman of every village. It has a unique feature. The villagers gather the boulders and construct the cairn. At the centre, there are three distinctive stones which represent the king, queen and the first son of the king, in actual term representing the chief of the village, his wife and the eldest son. The remaining boulders represent the subjects of the said king or Khullakpa. Now-a-days, most of it is represented by a well dressed and inscribed single large upright stone and the whole heap of stone is also plastered forming the base or foundation by using R.C.C. materials (Plate LV:i).

   The rock type used for the construction of such small cairn is mainly sandstone, though there is a small quantity of quartz. It has no regular shape. Some are circular while others are roughly elliptical or oval in shape. They painted the main three stones representing their Khullakpa, Khullakpi and the first son of Khullakpa by white colour of indigenously prepared dye.

   These stones are connected with various social functions.
The Tangkhuls expose the head(s) of their enemy (enemies) collected through head-hunting raids on the Rihai Lung and the villagers in war costume dance a victory war dance around it. These stones are all regarded as laipham places where Gods dwell. They also believe that any dislocation or any form of disorders in such cairn causes harm to the whole village. Therefore they keep such places carefully. Thus, the cairns in the Tangkhul villages are regarded as so sacred that one dares swear falsely on them.

The local traditions associated with the construction of the cairn is as follows:

When a new village is established the Tangkhuls use to pile up this type of small cairn (Rihai Lung). Before they settle down in a selected place they first prepare the place to erect such Rihai Lung. It may be erected either collectively or individually. The person(s) who wishes to establish a new village should make the following offerings to their supreme god Kameo. These are: a mithun (Sheichang), a buffalo (silui), a bullock (simuk), a cock (hai) and a pig (hok). In some villages, the person who wants to established a new village must offer any one of the above animals. If the man is a wealthy one, he can offer all the animals listed above. If the
person is not a rich man he may offer according to his capacity. Thus there is no hard and fast rule about the number of animals to be sacrificed for establishing a new village. But at least, one animal must be sacrificed to the god so that the god who is supposed to be the owner of the selected area will get pleased. They also observe some devinations on this occasions. This is done by producing a big fire and smoke by burning dried and fresh grass and leaves. By observing the nature of the fire and smoke, they predict whether the new village would become either a thickly populated or thinly populated one. If the thin smoke goes up highly in the air without any disturbance, they would consider it as a sign of thin population but the people will be wise, skill and famous. If the smoke spread widely over the ground and could not go up straight and high, it means that there will be a large population in the village but they cannot attain the highest status in order of merit.

The cairn is also used as witness-stone for settlement of disputes by taking oath. The process of taking oath is as follows:

(a) when two persons failed to settle a dispute, the village council called Hangnga or Hanga, headed by the headman of the village would ask both of them to perform a ritual on their
village cairn (Rihai Lung) by offering either a pig or a fowl. The liver of the sacrificed animal/fowl will be taken out carefully and divided it carefully into two equal parts. Then each person should take a part of liver in his hand and swear by saying, "he will die after eating this year's new crops along with this liver if he did wrong". While doing so the two persons should stand on the Rihai Lung and the blood of the sacrificed animal will fall on it.

Thus, Rihai Lung is connected with settlement of the disputes, like (i) land dispute, (ii) theft (iii) adultery, (iv) false witness and (v) for the one who covet his neighbour's property. Because all the Tangkhuls consider it so holy that no one dare to swear falsely on them. They firmly believed that the guilty person is punished by the spirit of the Rihai Lung, according to the degree of the crime. They also consider that death penalty is a must for the wrong doer if they perform the ritual on such Rihai Lung.

(b) Head hunting is closely associated with this Rihai Lung. Before the Tangkhuls embraced Christianity (i.e. before 1896) head-hunting was practised by them. Thus there is a common saying 'An eye for an eye; a head for a head' and this was their tradition.
Head hunting was nothing but a process of dominating other people. It was believed by the Tangkhuls that the person who could get the head of his enemy would be the master of the one killed by him or in other words, the soul of the killed becomes the servant of the killer in the land of the dead. It was also believed that if a person killed an innocent person, the killer would become the servant of the one he killed.

When certain person does some heinous act against another person, the rightful person had a chance to kill the wrong doer instantly. However, if the guilty person could manage to escape into the city or other places of refuge, he should not be killed; but the matter shall be decided by the village Hanga.

The Tangkhuls present the decapitated head(s) to the Rihai Lung inside the village which is of peculiar sanctity as the abode of a deity or laipham. If a person or some warriors collectively have returned home with heads taken in a foray, a genna (ritual sanction) is observed in the village, and women are not allowed to have any relation with the individual or warriors for three days after their return.

When the decapitated head(s) is laid on such Rihai Lung, the Khullakpa or headman of the said village issues
order to all the male members (except the small boys) to be present there in war costume to perform a war dance around the Rihai Lung. After performing the dance, the Khullakpa would ask the individual (in case of personal hunt) or the warriors (in case of village war collectively) to keep the beheaded head(s) to his or their homes. It is also necessary to give a feast to the whole village, by the person who wants to keep the decapitated head. If the head-hunter is a poor person and unable to offer the feast, he would refuse to take home the head. Then the Khullakpa would ask the head of the clan of the head-hunter to keep the head. He would surely keep the head and offer the feast. If he does not wish to keep the head, the Khullakpa himself would offer the feast of victory and keep the said head(s) in his home.

On the same day, in front of the Rihai Lung, an auspicious day is fixed for the grand feast by Khullakpa along with the village priest. Till then the decapitated head will be kept buried in a secluded site, so that the fleshy part may be rotten. After the feast, the skull is taken home and kept in the first room of the house.

(c) Besides this, the village priest also offers and sacrifices fowls or other animals to Rihai Lung to prevent occurrence of epidemic in the village. On such occasion
strangers are forbidden to enter the village.

2. **MARAN KASA**

*Maran Kasa* is a term employed to denote both *Maran Lunga* (Menhir) and *Maran Tarungas* (forked wooden post). It is connected with erection, in front of the house of the performer, five logs of wood with big branches carefully trimmed to suitable heights called *Maran Tarungas* and two or more stones of suitable size (152 cms to 213 cms high) known as *Maran Lungs*. The logs of woods *Maran Tarungs* bears figures of buffalo's heads, animal's foot-prints etc. chiseled out with an exe.

(a) **MARAN LUNG**

*Maran Lung* is a menhir or monolith, sometimes two or three erected at one place. They are always found inside the village particularly in front of the performer's house. Thus it is always associated with the main habitational area.

The rock type used for the erection of such *Maran Lung* is sandstone. The shape is irregular. Some are flat stones while others are cylindrical or large quadrangular blocks of stone. Almost all the *Maran lungs* are undressed,
rough stones without any decoration. In some cases, such memorial stones are found inscribed to denote the name, date and the expenditure for its erection (Plate LIV: a and b; LVI: a and b; and LVII: a and b).

The local traditions associated with the erection of these monuments are as follows:

If a wealthy person wants to raise a memorial stone in his memory, he will announced it verbally to all the villagers. Before this announcement, he will select the suitable stone to be dragged and raised. Then he will see the omen of his dream on the same day. If the omen of the said dream is good, one male pig will be sacrificed to feed the villagers and on that day, the head of the family makes a formal announcement that a monument would be erected in his memory and if possible one in the memory of his wife by the next year. Customarily this year, the performer will cultivate his paddy fields with the help of the villagers in order to get a good harvest for the feast.

In the case of harvesting, it is a must for all the villagers to help the performer. At this time, the performer will kill a pig and bring the cooked pork to the rice field to feed the villagers. The villagers also help in transporting the paddy from the field to the performer's barn.
After harvesting, the boys and girls of the village along with relatives (particularly boys and girls of the nearby and far off villages) of the performer, together work to clean the courtyard of the said merit-seeker. On this day also, the host will offer food and drink to the boys and girls. Next day, the boys and girls will help the merit-seeker in drying the paddy for the feast. On the third day the women of the village pound the rice required for the feast. On the fourth day a portion of rice is cooked for brewing rice-beer for the feast. A household genna (prohibition) is observed on this day when no stranger is allowed to enter the house of the merit-seeker. On the fifth day the process of brewing rice-beer will start. At least 100 or more waichums (wine jars) each containing 60 to 70 litres of rice-beer are required to be brewed for the feast. The villagers help the merit-seeker in brewing the rice-beer.

On the sixth day, the merit-seeker will sacrifice a pig and the blood of the sacrificed animal should be smear on the stone selected for the Maran Lung. The intended performer will see the omen of the dream that he dreamt on this day. This is followed by uprooting the selected stone and preparing for dragging it on an auspicious day.

On the ninth day, all the friends and relatives of
the performer, mainly boys and girls, will go to the jungle
to collect fire wood, plaintain leaves etc. for the feast.
On this day also a pig or a bull must be killed to feed the
helpers. All the friends and relatives would take the meat
in the place of work. Such animal's meat are not allowed to
eat inside the village. They must consume all the meat and if
there is any left over it is thrown away in the jungle.

The collection of fire wood and plaintain leave may
continue for 2 to 3 days till sufficient quantities are co-
llected. After the preparation is completed, an auspicious
day is fixed to drag the selected stone.

Thus the dragging of the stone will be held on an
auspicious day. On this day a number of buffaloes are killed
and the meat cut into pieces is distributed among every house-
holds of the village because cooking and eating of meat in
the performer's house on that day are prohibited. The perfor-
mer may kill one or more buffaloes on that day depending upon
the number of household in the village. If he kills one bu-
ffalo, one piece of meat will be given to each household, and
if two or three or four buffaloes are killed, every family
will received as many as the number of buffalo killed.

In 1963, in the month of December, Mr. Tuiwung
Kashung, the headman of Chigai village performed such type of Maran Kasa ceremony and he erected both Maran Lung and Maran Tarung. Thus he raised two memorial stones Maran Lung - one for himself and the other for his wife, and five memorial wooden posts Maran Tarung (Plate LVII:a and b).

The process of erection of the monoliths as narrated by Mr. Tuiwung Kasung, the headman of the village and my interpreter Mr. Ngamgha Kasung is described below:

The performer, the village priest and all the healthy young man of the donor's village and neighbouring villages invited by the performer and his relatives together went to the spot where the selected stone was quarried. Meanwhile the village priest will bring some blood of the slaughtered buffaloes and will smear it on the selected stones to be dragged, so that the stones may get lighter while dragging.

The healthy young men tied the stone with the creepers, known as Kurei and Thingairu (the hard and flexible rope commonly called Stone dragging rope) as directed by the village priest and elders.

Then all of them holding the rope stood in two rows
awaiting the signal of the priest. All of them were dressed in gala costume. The performer, stationed himself in front of all of them. After purifying the stone with the buffaloes' blood, the priest will shout loudly to start the stone dragging process.

On the way home, if the pullers feel the stone very heavy, the performer will offer Tangkhul war dress Raivad Kachou and a big chain made of valuable beads named Chamthei. It is a deep rooted belief among the Tangkhuls that such offerings will be very helpful to please the spirit of the stone. If the spirit of the stone is pleased and delighted, it will go smoothly and lightly on its way. Such offerings are made for taming the spirit of the stone.

Thus the pullers dragged the stone up to the courtyard of the performer. When the stone reached home, all the male members among the invitees will stand up taking six pieces of small sticks in each hand awaiting the stone to enter into performer's courtyard and they will throw each pieces one after another without touching anybody or any living thing. Unluckily, if some one comes in contact with such small sticks, it if firmly believed that the individual will suffer some sort of illness.
When the stone arrived at the raising place, a bull will be sacrificed. The blood of the slaughtered bull will be poured into the hole dug to raise the stone. They had already preserved the blood of the slaughtered buffaloes in the morning separately and that blood is also poured down into the hole and sprinkle it over the stone(s).

This is followed by killing of a one year old pig. It will be cut into pieces of certain measures of about 20 cms. in length. This cut pieces of pork should be distributed to each and every house of the village and also to the relatives in other neighbouring villages. Even though one piece of meat, this is the most valuable one, because in everybody's mind there is a comparison of the quantity and quality of the meat distributed on that day with that distributed previously by other performers. They remembered and decided the value of the feast based on the number of meat distributed during the feast.

Then all the villagers will come to the performer's house along with the distributed pork pieces, salt, chilli, rice and even cooking utensils. They all cook there separately for each families in the courtyard of performer. The performer's family is strickly prohibited to offer anything on this day except meat and rice-beer.
Meanwhile the process of erecting the monolith is started by the villagers. Before raising the stone the expert persons and priest would decide which side is the foot of the stone. It is generally considered that the end found exposed in the quarry is the head of the stone and the portion found buried in the earth before quarrying is considered to be the foot of the megalith. If the stone is erected wrongly keeping the foot on the top and the head beneath the earth, it will cause disaster to the performer's family. Thus many precautionary measures are taken up before raising the stone permanently.

For erecting the monolith, as many men as possible applied themselves for pulling from the front and raising from behind and propping it with longer wedges underneath everytime the stone was raised a little. The next effort causes to slide the foot of the stone into the hole and at the same time a pull on the creepers noose brings the stone into an upright position, those behind now pushing with their hands. As the stone attained the vertical position it was wedged underneath to make it stand firmly on its own base, after which the hole was filled in with earth when the stone stood erect by itself. The foot was then rammed and filled in and rammed again.
It is followed by erecting a tall bamboo post. Before setting up, the upper end is modified in the form of a nest made out of close-knitted bamboo splits. Then a cock will be killed. The head, legs, stomach, intestine and the remaining body parts will be kept separately hanging from such nest-like bamboo structure. After this, all the members of the performer's family will come out of the house and throw out water from their mouths like spitting. Each male member does it six times and the female members do it five times. Along with this spitting they should say "you keep away all bad things, sins etc." After performing this ritual, they will make a hole for erecting the bamboo pole.

The Tangkhuls believed that the flesh of the cock will be taken by crows and other flesh loving birds and that will be a good sign to the performer's family. So they would not suffer any kind of sin for the killing of many animals in connection with the feast for raising the memorial stone (Maran Lung). If the flesh of the displayed cock is not taken by any bird it is considered that the family of the performer has committed some sort of moral offence or is burdened with sins from the point of view of religion.

Thus the raising of a tall bamboo pole is the
concluding part of the feast of raising memorial stone Maran Lung.

The performer is entitled to wear the same cloth as Khullakpa and the Lungchingba (one who drags and erects stone in his name) is honoured by all. He is also entitled to wear Reivad Kachou (Laiphee in Manipuri - it is a well embroidered black cloth) and the fortune of the family is bound up with the stone.

(b) MARAN TARUNGS

Maran Tarungs is the most expensive function, and very few people could afford it. The one who could perform Maran Lung and Maran Tarungs more than once in his life time is considered as the one of the richest and most generous person.

Generally, the head man or the chieftain only could perform this honourable function. Even the headman, who had not built a class 'A' building named Lengcheng Shim could not perform U-Hongba.

The performer of U-Hongba must feed the whole villagers for days together - sometimes a whole month, that is,
until the logs of wood could be brought from the jungle and raised them all in front of his house. The cost of U-Hongba is traditionally counted by the cost of animals killed for the purpose. The number of animals specified for such feast depends on the number of villagers to be fed during the ceremony. But the performer should arrange at least ten pigs, a dog, one cow, ten buffaloes and a number of cocks and of course plenty of drinks and food.

As Maran Tarung comes under Maran Kasa, its objectives are also two fold. The first objective is to feed the whole villagers out of his bounty and abundance. Secondly, to raise wooden post in his memory.

The first work of the merit-seeker is to select the suitable trees to prepare for Maran Tarung. Generally they select large pine trees. Because they need the inner or central oily part of the pine tree which is the most durable than other trees. Thus they chiseled out the outer layers to get the harden oily central portion. Hence the merit-seeker needs to hire carpenters who are habituated in the field because it also needs to keep the nodes and central portion of the branches of the tree by trimming to suitable size.
In this case also, after selecting the suitable trees for *Maran Tarung*, the merit-seeker will bring home some pieces of the selected trees and see the omen in his dream that night. If the omen is good, one male pig (biggest one) will be killed to feed the villagers and on the same day he will announced, to all the villagers that he wishes to set up a memorial wooden post in his name or in his wife's name in his courtyard.

For this purpose all the villagers will collectively help the performer at the time of harvesting paddy. In return the performer will kill a pig in the paddy field and feed them along with cooked rice and rice-beer. This pork cooked in the paddy field must be consumed in the field and if there is some excess meat, this must be thrown away in the field, as such meat is not carried home.

For preparation of the ceremony and the feast, the villagers and the relatives come forward to help the merit-seeker in cleaning the courtyard, in drying and husking the paddy, in pounding rice, in brewing the rice-beer, in collecting fire-wood, banana leaves etc.

In the meantime, the performer will sacrifice a male pig and the blood of the sacrificed animal is carried to
the jungle, where the selected trees are located. There he would smear the blood on the selected trees and he dreams on it. Once he selected the trees for raising the memorial posts, he is required to observe fasting during which he cannot eat rice and meat till the day when the villagers drag the trees or logs of wood. From that day onwards, he may not eat fowl and for a year intercourse with his wife is prohibited.

On the sixth day, after brewing the rice-beer, the merit-seeker sacrifices a number of cattles including buffaloes which are to be sacrificed first. At least ten buffaloes will be slaughtered in the morning of the sixth day (after brewing) and the meat will be distributed to every house to the village. The meat distribution system is as follow.

The flesh of the sacrificed animals are cut into a number of pieces and distributed among the participants and villagers equally irrespective of social position and status of the villagers. The number of pieces of flesh given to each family should be equal to the number of animals sacrificed for the feast. Thus the merit-seeker sacrifices ten buffaloes, every family is given ten pieces of meat so as to indicate the number of animals sacrificed as it reflects the social status of the donor.
For this, in the village, every family keeps an empty basket in the front of the houses, and the distributor would keep the share of the family in the basket(s).

The procedure of dragging the logs of woods is given below. The account given here is taken from the notes recorded during my field work through my interpreter Mr. Ngamsha Kasung.

The logs of wood had been trimmed to make ready for dragging. The longest of the log measures 671 cm. in length 183 cms in circumference. Normally, the healthy persons, particularly the younger men beautifully adorned with elaborate head-gears and gala dress are engaged in transporting such huge logs of wood on their shoulders.

When the logs of wood arrive at the appointed place, they will make five holes for setting up those five wooden posts. Before raising the logs a bull will be sacrificed by the village priest and the blood of it will be pour down in the holes prepared for setting up the logs. Meanwhile the host will also offer the blood of the sacrificed buffaloes to the priest and he will sprinkle the blood upon the logs of wood.
In the meantime, before raising the posts, a big pig (at least one year old) would be killed and cut into pieces of certain measures about 20 cms in length but they never consider about its breadth and thickness. The participants and villagers will acknowledge the value of the piece of meat.

After this, the post (decorated with beautiful varieties of orchid plants) are set up permanently at the selected place.

This is followed by the gathering and feasting. That all the villagers will come to the performer's house with the pork distributed earlier along with salt and chillies. Even cooking utensils and rice should be brought if they want to take rice. On this day, the performer is not allowed to offer rice, salt, chillies, cooking utensils etc. He can only offer uncooked meat of sacrificed animals and rice-beer.

Among the Tangkhuls, the post set up whether straight or branched are connected with the sacrifice of mithun once upon a time, but now replaced by buffaloes or with other feasts which can only be performed when the donor enjoys
exceptional prosperity, as the expenses of such feasts are very heavy. The post symbols are associated with the fertility of crops and cattle. On the other hand, it adds to the social status of the performer, who becomes entitled to display certain outward and visible signs of his high position and also placed himself under certain restrictions as to his conduct and food habit.
CHAPTER III
MEGALITHIC CULTURE OF THE
THANGAL NAGAS OF MANIPUR

THE TRIBE

The Thangals, a tribe of over 4,000 individuals are distributed over the northern parts and north-eastern parts of Manipur and distinguished into several groups differing slightly in appearance and customs. Unlike the other widely dispersed tribes such as Liangmei, Rongmei or Kabui, Maos, Marams, Tangkhuls etc., the Thangals live in a small and compact area. Only a few villages have a large population.

The Thangals, like other hill tribes of Manipur, cultivate on periodically shifted hill fields (jhum fields) as well as on irrigated rice terraces. On these wet-fields they use plough occasionally, but they usually use hoes in their hill fields as well as to a great extent in their terraced fields. Women do the greater part of the cultivation work. Buffaloes and oxen are kept for the sake of their meat and for ploughing and goat, pigs and fowls are purely for meat.

The feature that distinguishes the Thangals from all neighbouring tribes even to the most casual observer is the peculiar dress of their women, who wear a colourful traditional dress.
The principal social-units of the Thangals are the village community, the phratry and the clan, of which the last is an exogamous group. Marriage within the village or phratry is tolerated, though by no means frequent. Every village consist of members of two or more phratries and of several clans.

The Thangals have a distinct patrilineal bias in respect of descent, inheritance and succession. The village headman functions as both religious and secular head, as we find among the Mao and Maram Nagas. He is assisted by a council of elders and in his function as religious head by the village priest. They formerly had a youths' dormitory organisation, but it is now defunct as they have almost lost their traditional religion as most of them have accepted Christianity.

The materials presented in this chapter is collected from the Thangals of the Makeng Khoirao Thangal village of Saikhul, Sadar hills, Senapati district, Manipur. In addition to the description of megalithic practices, it is also interesting to look into the relationship between the megalithic monuments and certain modern tribal customs. An attempt has been made in this chapter to present the data on the ethno-archaeology of living megalithic practices together with the associated feast of merit and other rituals found among the Thangal Nagas.
of Makeng Khoirao Thangal village.

**MAKENG KHOIRAO THANGAL SITE**

The site is an old deserted village of the present Makeng Khoirao Thangal, located at the foot-hill region. But the site is named after the present village because the area is still occupied by the same tribe. It is situated on the northern part of Saikhul town, Senapatl district. It is about 35 Kms. away from Imphal on the north-east. The site is bounded on the east by the Iril river, on the south of Ichai-Karong and the Saikhul town itself, on the north by Mayangkhang and on the west by the Ichai river, the Yaigongpao and the Tumuyon Khullen on the further west. The site is located on the Thangal range occupying the top ridges and its spurs. They still erect megaliths on the top ridges of the same range. It extends about one and a half kilometre. The altitude of this area is 1320 mts. M.S.L.

**THE MEGALITHS OF MAKENG KHOIRAO THANGAL SITE**

The megaliths found in this area can be classified into two types. The types are tabulated below giving the names in Thangal language with their classified and functional types.
Pl. LVIII: a

Nā dōnba dāo sonbā (memorial stone)

Pl. LVIII: b

Nā dōnba dāo sonbā (memorial stone)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Local name</th>
<th>Classified types</th>
<th>Functional types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Ṇa dōnbā Dao sonbā</td>
<td>Menhir</td>
<td>Raising of stone(s) for their forefathers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Kāsi tharo Unkhang</td>
<td>Capstone</td>
<td>The cover stone of the grave pit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **ＮＡ ＤＯＮＢＡ ＤＡＯ ＳＯＮＢＡ (Menhir):**

It is a long standing stone normally found in groups, but in some cases erected hapazardly. Their occurrence is always on the ridges of hills and its spurs. Though they are found far away from the present habitational area, the site was once within habitational areas of the earlier settlers of the same village.

The rock type used for the construction of these menhirs is bluish sandstone. They are mostly long slender and tall structures. Some have a thick and stought structure, while some are made of flat and large slabs. Some of them are natural huge blocks without dressing or decoration. But some of them are roughly hewn and trimmed to make them flat slabs and slender
structure, though they do not possess any form of decoration on them (Plate, LVIII:a ).

The megalithic structures found in this village area are connected with memorials and other functions as described below:

Each menhir is erected in honour of the performer's wealthy parents. On the other hand, the merit-seeker or intending performer also attains a higher social status among the members of his community during his lifetime and also after his death. The same honour is also attained by his children and grand-children.

LOCAL TRADITIONS

The local traditions associated with these megalithic monuments are as follows:

Before a Thangal Naga erect a memorial stone in his name or in honour of his deceased father/parents, he must perform a series of genna, worships and feastings. In another word, this stone raising ceremony is performed to display the performer's wealth and prosperity. Any wealthy person can erect such
memorial stone named Na dōnba dāo sonbā in memory of him or of his loving deceased parents.

If a wealthy person wants to raise a stone in the name of his deceased parents, he must announce his willingness to the general public, by offering a jar of rice-beer to the council of elders. While making the announcement, the intending merit-seeker selects some expert persons, who are habituated in the field, for selecting and dragging the stone to be raised. Then the merit-seeker, along with the expert persons, set off to the forest for collecting wood for the feast and for searching suitable stone for erection as menhir. The selection of suitable stone may take some days even two or three weeks due to the non-availability of suitable rock-types. When they come across a stone of desirable size the searching party along with intending performer would stay there taking shelter around the selected stone. After this, the intending performer comes forward and sacrificed a chicken. Then one of the expert persons will purify the stone ritually and the sacrificed chicken is offered to the spirit of the suitable stone. At night the intending performer is believed to have observed in his dreams whether or not the spirit of the stone is favourable. If unfavourable, the intending performer will proceed to select another stone. Faith in dreams is so deep rooted and they are
so much respected by the Thangals that the spirit of the selected stone is believed to have come in the dream of the intending performer and reveals the name and sex of the selected stone. They also believed that the spirit of the selected stone will come in the form of a known person. If the stone is a male, the intending performer can see a favourite male member of his village in his dream, while sleeping around the stone. The name of the person that he saw in his dream will be the name of the selected stone. If the selected stone is a female one the intending performer will see a woman who is known to him and the name of such woman will be the name of the stone. Meanwhile, they also consider that the spirit of the stone is favourable and will bring prosperity to the owner if the performer sees a good male or female in his dream. On the other hand if he sees a bad person, male or female, in his dream, the spirit of the stone is not considered favourable even it is raised in his courtyard. It will not only bring harm to his family but also to the whole villagers. If the omen of the dream is not suppose to be a good one, the same process will be repeated to select other stones. Because from such dream, they are supposed to experience while sleeping around the desired stone, they can decide whether the selected stone is a suitable one or not. If the dream is suppose to be the good one, some of the searching party will go back home of the intending performer to narrate the whole story.
about the dream and selection of the stone. Then the family will arrange some healthy youths of the village to guard the selected stone against stealing, by other members of neighbouring villages, till an auspicious day of dragging is fixed. When the healthy youths reached the spot of the stone, the intending performer will return home. The village youths along with some expert persons stay there for days and nights to guard the stone. While they were guarding the stone they would also tamed the stone to be the best one to the owner and the villagers.

The village priest, then fixed an auspicious day and the intending performer arranges a number of healthy persons to drag the stone, according to the sex of the selected stone. He arranges only the male members if the sex of the selected stone is male. Because male members are allowed to drag a male stone and female members are allowed to drag a female stone. So the performer will arrange some healthy females to drag the female stone along with some other healthy and expert male persons to help the female draggers. Because it is a deep rooted faith among the Thangals that the stone dragging should be done by the same sex according to the attributed sex of the stone.
On the day of stone dragging, the performer and his wife observe gena during which they are not allowed to partake any food except ginger and rice-beer. It is also a gena or taboo to go out of his house. If the performer and his wife do not observe such gena, the selected stone, to be set up in his courtyard, would bring many harmful effects to the family as well as to the whole village itself. So they must stay inside his house without taking any food so that they could not see any ominous thing and evil sounds from their surrounding environs. So it is the only way of providing protection against the evil effects in erecting the megalith.

The intending performer arranges all the required materials before the fixed day. Then the performer observes gena by staying in the house and the villagers set off to the jungle to pull up the stone. In the forest, the village priest let loose a fowl on the stone then pour rice-beer and ginger juice to purify the stone. He also utters many religious hymns. The pullers in full gala costume, standing in two rows, at least 30/40 pullers in a line, holding the creepers, serving as pulling rope, are awaiting the signal to start. After completing the ceremonial purification, the priest along with an elder person of the village, give the signal to start. Then they all collectively dragged the stone, with all their efforts to reach the selected spot, which is
usually in the courtyard of the performer. At places they take rest and were refreshed with rice-beer and cooked meat brought from the performer's house.

When the stone, to be raised, is brought to the courtyard, the performer and his wife will come out of their house and they will pour rice-beer over the stone for purification.

Besides, the merit-seeker will sacrifice a buffalo at the same time he will take some blood out of the slaughtered animal and again smear it on the stone for further purification. Meanwhile all the guests, relatives and the co-villagers of the performer will gather at his courtyard and the merit-seeker will shout loudly calling the name of the stone as revealed to him in his dream, to stay with him and his family forever. He also evokes the stone to bring prosperity and fame to his family as well as to his co-villagers. While evoking the spirit of the stone, the performer assisted by the healthy-pullers raised the stone to slide down to the pit already dug. When the stone stood erect firmly inside the pit, they filled the pit with earth and rammed it again and again.
After erecting the stone firmly the merit-seeker offers a grand feast to all the participants with good food and drinks. On the same day after the last feast, the performer and his wife are allowed to wear a special type of cloth called Un-touphi. This special cloth can be worn by the merit-seeker and his wife only during their lifetime. After them their sons, daughters and son-in-laws can use them up to the stage of first grandson and grand daughter-in-laws. In other words, this special cloth can be used up to the third generation. And such special cloth is also used as the wrapping cloth of the sacrophagi of the performer and his wife when they die, as a mark of honour of the departed soul of the performer. On the other hand, the sacrophagus wrapped by such special cloth, symbolises the wealth of the deceased person in the land of the dead.

2. **THE KASI-THARO UNKHANG(Capstone):**

   It is another type of megalith found in the Makheng Khoirao Thangal site. It is a large flat horizontal stone covering the grave pit. It is found in the old deserted village area. My informants, the Khullakpa (Headman) of Makeng Khoirao and his assistants, told me that, once upon a time before christianity came to that area, grave is always dug inside their
respective courtyard, so these grave pit covers are found inside the habitational area. But now-a-days, as the villagers accepted christianity, they have a separate grave-yard and every grave is marked by using a post of cross mark either of wood or R.C.C. They cover their grave pits either by small boulders or small flat stone slabs but unlike the Kasi Tharo Unkhang.

The Kasi Tharo Unkhang consists of an undressed large slab. It does not possess any kind of decoration on it. The sizes are variable which range from 122 cms x 183 cms to 61 cms x 152.5 cms. The thickness could not be measured as some parts of the slab remains hidden under the ground surface. The thickest stone slab measures 32 cms above the ground level.

This megalithic structure is connected with the burial monuments.

The local traditions associated with these megalithic burials are very simple. They normally cover the grave-pit to protect it against the possible damage caused by wild animals. Moreover, it also serves as a door for the soul of the deceased person. If they did not close the pit with this stone, they considered that the spirit of the deceased person will come
back to the earth particularly to the family and his/her clan in the form of evil spirit and cause many sufferings. So they perform this kind of grave covering ceremony normally in the month of December, but the time depends on the wealth of the performer as the ceremony entails heavy expenditure and associated with a great feast.