

# LOWER SIANG PEOPLE



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# LOWER SIANG PEOPLE

A Study in Ecology and Society

With best  
to Dr. Prad  
R. Das  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

Present study is based on the fieldwork carried out in the Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh during the period from December 1968 to March 1969.

The object of the Survey was to make a base line study of human ecology and social organization of some groups of Adis in the selected villages in the lower region of the Siang district. The aim was to determine whether a change in the ecology of an ethnic group leads to corresponding changes in their social, political, economic and religious life. It was observed that Arunachal Pradesh in general and Siang district in particular are undergoing tremendous changes since Independence. These are mainly due to the construction of roads, introduction of settled cultivation of wet rice, irrigation and urbanization. The economy of the people are gradually changing from the traditional form of shifting cultivation to settled cultivation. The villages are gradually shifting from the isolation of the hills to the valleys where settled cultivation is possible. This situation has induced other changes in their social, political and religious life.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Four villages were selected for detailed investigations. The villages were selected on the following considerations. It was observed that the landuse pattern of the villages follow closely the ecological considerations of the site and the cultural practices of the people. Therefore the sample villages are from different topographic peculiarities inhabited by different ethnic groups.

'Lika', the first village selected for the study is inhabited by a section of the Gallong. It is a foothill village and the people call themselves as Tais. They are in close touch with the people of the Assam plains. The township of Silapathar is hardly at a distance of ten kilometres from this village. It is the nearest railhead for entry in the Siang district.

'Kabu' is the second village and located in the interior of the Siang district. It is located by the side of Siyum river at a distance of about 150kms from the foothill village of Lika. This village is inhabited by Gallong who were living on the hill tops but later on shifted to the broad valley of Siyum river due to the introduction of wet rice cultivation. The village is situated at an altitude of 1000 m. from the mean-sea level. The Gallong of this village combine shifting and settled cultivation as their

subsistence economy. The proximity to the Along town has a powerful influence on the economy of the people.

'Pangin' is the third village and is inhabited by the Minyong. The village is situated on a high river terrace. The people practise both forms of cultivation, *viz.*, shifting cultivation on the surrounding hills and terraced cultivation by irrigation on the artificial terraces.

'Balek' is the fourth village and inhabited by the Pasi and other groups of Adi. These people have migrated to this village from the interior areas. They have adopted settled cultivation and use plough. Proximity to the town of Pasighat has profound influence on the economy of the people.

### NATURE OF MATERIALS COLLECTED

The materials collected by us pertain to the Gallong, Minyong and Pasi of the Siang district. Census of about 300 households of different tribes was taken to estimate the demographic trends and patterns among these tribes. The household census further shows interesting patterns, on the family size and structure, occupational patterns, marriage distance, clan types and their spatial distribution, migration and depth of the settlements. Socio-cultural data were collected on the life cycle, *viz.*, birth and death rites, name giving ceremonies, marriage types, etc. In the field of economic life, data were collected on the land-use types, *viz.*, shifting and settled form of cultivation, agricultural practices with emphasis on the changes. In the villages of our study there was a marked shift in emphasis from the primitive Jhum cultivation to the permanent sedentary cultivation of wet rice in the flat alluvial valleys. Consequently the villages are shifting from the higher hills to the lower valleys where sufficient land for wet-rice-cultivation is available. Another noteworthy trend in the economic life of the people is the high rate of rice consumption in the shape of *apong* (rice beer), a favourite drink of the local people. In some villages we have noticed that about 50 per cent of the rice produced is converted into *apong* and thereby the village people find shortage of rice for about 3 months in a year. This shortage of rice is generally met by purchase from other villages or from individuals in the village who have surplus rice or by bartering the live stock or ornaments, for rice. House construction, sickness, marriage, death, etc., bring heavy pressure on their stock of paddy as during these festivals the household involved has to feed the village people. Some of their superstitious practices are depleting their animal wealth. The practice of not taking milk makes their cows to be driven away in the forest for grazing. They are uncared for and die due to diseases and other accidents in the forest. They have no cattleshed in the village. Mithuns, one of their most covetous animal are also driven away in



the forest for grazing. Many inter-village cattle disputes arise due to the loss, theft or damage to the cattle. In Kabu village it was observed that for the sake of recovery of a 5 year old boy who was suffering from cold and fever, 5 pigs, 5 chickens, 1 dozen of eggs and one calf were sacrificed. In addition, 10 liters of *apong* was given away to the priests and other participants of the worship. About 10 persons were fed in that house for doing the special worship. Data was also collected on their political and religious life. Exhaustive vocabulary of natural phenomena was collected to explain their ecological adaptations. Since the party stayed right in the village dormitories, it was possible to establish direct contact with the people and observe their daily life.

**PART I**

**ECOLOGY**

## CHAPTER I

### LAND AND PEOPLE

#### PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

##### LOCATION

Siang is one of the five districts in which Arunachal Pradesh is divided. It is located in the central part of Arunachal Pradesh roughly between 93°11' to 95°35'E longitudes and 27°22' to 29°20'N latitudes. It is hemmed in between Subansiri in the west and Lohit in the east. In north the boundary of the district touches Tibet. In south it touches the Assam plains. The district occupies an area of 23,723 Sq km<sup>1</sup> and ranks second among all the five districts. Arunachal Pradesh was formed in 1954 out of the former Balipara frontier tract, Abor and Mishmi Hills and Tirap frontier tracts of the then Assam State. The Agency has been made into a Union Territory in 1972 and placed under the charge of the chief commissioner. Access in the Siang district is possible by road from Assam. The nearest railheads for Siang are Silapathar and Murkongselek being on the north-east frontier railway. Besides, there is a regular steamer service in between Dibrugarh town and Oyiram Ghat in Siang across the Brahmaputra river.

##### RELIEF AND DRAINAGE

The district forms part of eastern Himalaya hence it is highly mountainous. The district may be divided into two types of physiographic zones viz., the Great Himalayan type in the north and lower Himalayan type in the south. The junction of the Siyum river with the Siang river forms a rough division between the above two zones. The zone south of this confluence is considered as Lower Siang in this report. The district is drained by the river Siang and its tributaries. The river flows in a deep gorge through a meandering course from north to south across the district and meets the river Brahmaputra near Sadiya in the Assam. During its course through the Himalayas, the river Siang descends through 2,500 meters while the altitude of Sadiya, where it meets Brahmaputra, is only 150 meters above the sea level. Apart from many unnamed tributaries falling into Siang mention may be made of the Siyum and Yamne rivers which are important tributaries falling into Siang from the right and left banks. The Yamne river meets it from the left bank. Near the Assam plains the Lohit

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1. District Census Handbook, Siang district, census 1971.



river meets it from the left bank. The river Siang and its tributaries have strong denuding power and with the help of earth movements have divided the area into segments often named after the tribe inhabiting them. The Abor hills, for example, lies between the Siyum river on the west and the Siang river in the east. Similarly, there are segments of land inhabited by the Gallong, Minyong, Padam, Pasi, Ashing, Bokar and Bori. The river Siang is perennial and at places flows through deep and narrow gorges in the upper region. In the lower region its valley is more open and the river terraces are quite prominent. In the foothills it flows through braided channels and it enters the Assam plains. During the rainy season, water in the Siang river rises so much that it overflows its banks in the lower Siang region. In winter season, the water lies deep in the valley and at many places the river becomes fordable. The valley of Siang river, lies for the most part at heights of 1,300 meters or less and the river has a number of rapids so that it is not navigable even by bamboo rafts and dug outs.

#### GEOLOGY

The generalised physical succession of rocks varies from northwest to southeast in the district. In the NW are the Mechuka crystallines consisting of high grade schists, marble, paragneisses, etc. The Gondwana rocks dominate the middle portion of the district. It consists of carbonaceous phyllities, sandstone, shales, etc. The southeastern part of the district forms part of the siwaliks. It consists of upper-Tertiary-Quaternary sediments. Thus on the basis of geological structure the district may be divided into three broad regions *i.e.*, the upper, middle and lower.

#### TOPOGRAPHICAL ZONES

On the basis of relief, drainage and geological structure the district may be divided into two broad zones, *viz.*, the Upper Siang and the Lower Siang. Roughly the 1200 meters contour is the dividing line between the two zones. These zones differ in ecology and in their socio-economic life. Upper Siang is inhabited by Tagins, Bokar, Boris, Membas, Milangs, etc. The lower Siang is largely inhabited by the Gallongs, Minyongs, Padam, Pasis, etc.

#### CLIMATE

Owing to the rapid changes in topography the climatic conditions tend to change within short distances from south to north. There is a contrast in temperature and rainfall between sheltered valleys, foot hills and mountain tops. The Siang valley as it opens out towards the Assam plains, gets heavy rainfall. Here the average rainfall is 380 cm. In the extreme northern portions the rainfall is of the order of 250 cm annually. S. W. Monsoon is the chief rainfall season, July being the rainiest month. The pre-monsoon

showers begin towards the end of March and the monsoon proper lasts during May to the end of September. Winter rains are a regular feature of the region; in fact few months are without rain. June and July are the wettest months. The rainfall is generally heavy in the whole region and communication between different areas is suspended for months together. In spite of the wide range, there is enough rainfall over all the region for wet rice cultivation and rice crops can be sustained even in low rainfall areas, with the help of stream irrigation.

Snowfall is experienced in the upper Siang valley at a height of 4,500 meters and above. However, the snow line is not as low as in the western Himalaya, where also most of the annual precipitation is in the form of snow in the winter months; nor is the snowfall as heavy because many passes at considerable heights in Siang are usable even in the winter season. Temperature varies considerably from place to place depending on elevation. December and January are normally the coldest months and the minimum temperature ranges between 5°C to 10°C. Temperature rises rapidly in March and continue to rise till July.

#### SOIL

Soil types are closely related to the underlying geological formations. It has already been discussed that the rocks are generally of the Himalayan type and consist of shales, schists and conglomerates; the derived soils are sandy and become progressively clayey in composition as the head of the valley is reached. Soil acidity is high, caused by heavy rainfall and the heaviness of soil cover. In general, soils in the hilly region contains high humus and nitrogen due to extensive forest cover. The freshly cleared forest lands exhibit a thick layer of leaf mould rich in organic matter, but as a result of early rains the top soil is quickly washed off.

In Siang district, soils in the foothills are diluvial in nature being either loams or sandy loams mixed with Kankar, brought down by rain from higher altitudes. Soils in the valleys are clayey, alluvium and rich in organic content. Because of moisture retentivity, they are difficult to work when wet. The main characteristic of the soils is their acidity which increases with rainfall and heaviness of soil. Generally, the north facing slopes of the mountain ranges support a considerable soil cap; the south faces of the mountains are to precipitous and exposed to the denuding agencies to be commonly covered with soils. Because of this, the settlements are mainly found in the northern slopes of the hills and the southern slopes are devoid of human habitations.

#### FLORA

Vegetation throughout the Siang district is complex with considerable

variation in the composition of the different plant communities. In general, there is a close relationship between vegetation complexes and soil type, although rainfall, drainage, slope, aspect and altitude all may be determining factors in certain cases. Not infrequently a distinct complex is found in the midst of another that is composed of quite different genera. Because the people of Siang use vegetation (rather than soil) as an index to potential land fertility when clearing new land for shifting cultivation or reclaiming old ones, it is essential to describe certain vegetation types of the district.

As in other parts of Arunachal Pradesh, the vegetation in Siang ranges from tropical evergreen in the foothills, to temperate evergreen in the middle and Coniferous and Alpine at higher altitude. The Tropical rain-forests are the typical three storied forest, containing either a few species or one or two predominating species in the upper canopy. Examples of the former are the Hollong-Makai (*Dipterocarpus*, *Macrocarpus*, *Shorea-assamica*) forests, and of the latter, the Hollock (*Terminalia myriocarpa*) forests. Altitude and side of the hills play an important part in the mountain areas. Unlike the drier western Himalaya where conifers occur at comparatively low elevations, in these moist eastern Himalayas the conifers are found mixed with broad leaved Deciduous species to a large extent. The purer coniferous forests occur only at the higher elevations.

The forests near the villages have suffered from felling and burning for shifting cultivation and the deforested areas are often covered with secondary growth.

#### FAUNA

The wild life is rich and varied. Tigers, elephants, leopards, deer and wild pigs are found near the foothills. The higher ranges are the abode of Takin deer, musk deer, barking deer, clouded leopard and other cold climate animals. However, there is less wild life than can be expected with such large forested areas. The tribal people, being keen hunters and meat eaters, destroy wild life in and out of season. The mithun (a semi domesticated gaur or wild cattle) is highly valued as a source of wealth and mutton. It roams about free in the forest, finding its own food and is brought home only when it is to be slaughtered or exchanged in barter. The rivers abound in fishes of various types.

#### CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

##### PEOPLE

According to 1971 Census, Siang district had a total population of 121,936. The scheduled tribe numbering 105,833 constituted 86 per cent of the total population. The tribes belong to different groups. Their numerical strength according to 1961 census is Gallong 29,876, Minyong

—19 523, Padam—6 988, Pangi—5 472, Shimong—3 412, Bokar—2 392, Mema—2 431, Bori—1 835, Pasi—1 840, Khamba—1 110, Karka—1 545, Ramo—676 and Pailibo—720. The tribe-wise population in 1971 Census is not available. Besides, there are certain smaller groups such as Takams and Tangams whose numerical strength is quite negligible.

The people of the district were called 'Abors' by the plainsmen. Now they aspire to call themselves 'Adi' meaning 'Hillman'. The Adi group is the largest section of the indigenous people. They number 93 496 according to 1971 Census. Racially they are classified as mongoloid. The distribution of the villages are mainly along the courses of the three main rivers, the Siang, the Yamne and the Siyum and their tributaries.

Besides, the tribal population, there are non-tribals also in the district. According to 1971 Census, the non-tribal population in the district was around 16 102 comprising mainly Assamese, Bengalees, Bihari and Nepalese. These non-tribal groups are mainly distributed in the administration centres *i.e.*, district, subdivisional and circle headquarters. They are mainly in government employment in various offices, schools, hospitals, and as licenced porters, petty businessmen, cobblers, washermen and barbers, etc.

## GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

### TRIBES OF THE SIYUM VALLEY

The tribes living in the Siyum valley are the Bokar, Bori, Ramo, Pailibo and the Gallong. The first four groups inhabit the upper section of the Siyum valley. The Gallongs occupy the middle and the lower portions of the valley upto the point where Siyum meets the Siang river.

The Bokar claim descent from the first man. Abo Tani who had several sons, one of them was Nikar whose eldest son Karbo was the father of Bodung, who in turn had two sons. From the younger son Dungumi runs the direct line of descent of the present day Bokars. The ancestors of Bokar used to live in Mate a place near India-Tibet border. They are said to have migrated in the lower areas due to pressure of population. They are now distributed in about twentytwo small villages in the upper section of the Siyum valley. Gessing is their biggest village. The other villages are Pangri, Yangramg, Taihiong, Rote, Pidi, Ruying, Kate, Luto, Ramni, Simegong, Papigro, Tadadega, Lapugora, Yorkongdo, Namasiba, Mote, Pote, Karle, Manigong, Ingo and Pulum. At present Manigong is elevated

to the status of a circle headquarters and as a result of which some Government offices and residential quarters of the employees have sprung up. Access to Manigong is possible from *Along*, the district headquarter, both by footpaths and by air sorties. Bokar villages are situated on the hill-tops above 1 600 metres. The temperature of the Bokar area remains quite low for a major part of the year. Millet is their staple food which is supplemented by hunting Takin deer. Bokars had trade relations with Tibet and used to sell them leather and bones of animals in return for Tibetan sword, salt and iron pieces. After the sealing of the border the Government of India, have opened store godowns and purchase the materials sold by the Bokars. The Bokars maintain good kitchen gardens around their huts and produce gourd, pumpkins and leafy vegetables.

Bori villages are situated on the top of the hills along both the banks of Siyum and Sike rivers. The Bori territory is surrounded by high hill ranges in the east, west and north and opens out in the south due to the river valley. Some of the important Bori villages are named Yiyo, Dupa, Payum, Pame, Gasheng, Gatte, Gameng, Paying, Bagu and Mega. Boris come down to the Gallong and Minyong villages for trade purpose. They bring pieces of iron and barter them with pigs and dogs from the Gallongs and the Minyongs. Boris eat the dogs also. The pigs are carried in bamboo baskets while the dogs are tied in a rope and carried away. The Boris practise jhum cultivation and produce paddy, taniyok seeds, tayak, tami (millets) and palekh (maize). They also produce potato and arum in their kitchen gardens. The Boris keep long hair and wear cane hats. They also come to Along town as porters. Most of them contacted at Along town were suffering from skin diseases and eye troubles.

Pailibos, inhabit a small area of rough terrain on the right bank of the Siyum river. Their neighbours on the south-east are the Gallongs from whom they are separated by Bayor hills, to the east of them are the Bori villages, to the north-east are the Bokars and on the north-west are the Ramos. Important Pailibo villages are Yapuik, Irigo, Yapu, Tadogitu, Tagur, Lipo, Pauru, Boge, Sille and Tato.

The Gallong occupy a vast area in the middle and lower sections of the Siyum valley and its tributaries like Sido, Simen, Sippu and Sijji rivers. Their villages are situated on the river terraces of moderate elevation. In addition to the hills, the terraces provide ample scope for Jhum cultivation. The Gallongs are said to have migrated from the upper regions of the district in the distant past. Streams of migrating families came down from time to time from the upper areas, and in the absence of adequate geographical knowledge, they followed the easiest tract along the course of the rivers.

Gradually, they established permanent and large sized villages in the lower areas where the valley was more open and the terraces were more wide. In the course of migration they divided into groups and adopted different clan names. Thus uni-clan villages grew up in the Gallong territory. As the population grew large, the clans dispersed widely and settled in villages inhabited by other clans. Thus multiclan villages grew up. All the tribes mentioned above occupy the western part of the Siang district.

#### TRIBES OF THE SIANG VALLEY

The Siang river flows through the central part of the district. This valley is inhabited by a number of tribal groups. Their distributional pattern from the north to south is as follows.

The Ashings, numbering about 1 206, inhabit the upper section of the Siang valley. The Ashing area starts from Tuting in the north and extends as far as Ramsing village in the south. Tuting is situated on the right bank of Siang. Some of the important Ashing villages are Ninging Pango, Bomdo, Minging and Mosing. All these villages are situated on the right bank of the Siang river and fall in the altitudinal zone above 1 600 metres.

The Tangams numbering about 254 originally inhabited that part of Adi country which extends from the Gorge, which the Siang breaks through, to as far as the 29th parallel of latitude. More than a century ago, they were pushed down and were evicted from the best land, and forced to migrate towards Kugging. They are now found distributed in Nyereng and Kugging on the right bank of the Yang Sang Chu which is a tributary on the left bank of Siang river.

The Shimongs (3 413) occupy the northernmost region on the left bank of Siang. Jedo is their northernmost village situated between the Yang-Sang-Chu and the Siang river. The area occupied by the Shimongs extends as far as Gobuk in the south. Some of the important Shimong villages are Anging, Sianging, Paling, Rikor, Pucing and Gobuk. All these villages are situated on the left bank of Siang river and fall in the altitudinal zone above 1 600 metres.

The Karkos (1 545) occupy the region on the right bank of Siang between Ramsing and Pankang villages. Their territory falls in the middle Siang valley.

The Minyongs numbering about 19 523 occupy the right bank of Siang. Their territory starts in the south of Karkos. Their northernmost village is Pankang and the southernmost village is Renging. They remember their ancestral home near Telilidung a snowy range near India-Tibet border. In

their southward migration, the Minyongs did not follow the course of Siang, instead, they came down the Angong valley to Mani-Pera and crossed Takek-Adi near Dibok and finally settled at Riga. Later they managed to cross the Siang river near Taek-Pigo near Riu village and spread over the area from Kebang, Tamsing and Pangin. Their present distribution in the district is along the right bank of Siang and part of the valley lying between Siang and Yamne rivers. In their migration the Minyongs divided themselves into groups and adopted different clan names. The clans were then divided into subgroups and settled in different areas.

The Pasis numbering about 1 834 occupy the lower sections of the Siang river. Pasi villages start from the foothills where the Siang river enters the Assam plains. Their place of origin is said to be at Sigong (Sera Pateng) near India-Tibet border from where they were driven by other powerful groups of the Adis and migrated south halting at Nugong, Ringong, Koliyiac, Pegu, Silluluak and finally crossed the Siang river at Tayek Puigo. They then proceeded to Ngling and settled in a place half-way between Damroh and Adi Pasi. They settled at Adi Pasi for sometime and then due to increase in population ; they came down near about Pasighat and settled in Ramkang and Monku. At present, Adi Pasi is the only Pasi settlement and a solitary village in the upper region of Siang. Most of their villages are now in the foothills and known as Balek group of villages. Here the Pasis also live in mixed villages with the Minyongs.

The Padams (4 207) are distributed along the Yamne river and the lower sections of the Siang river. Their villages are found mostly in the eastern part of the district. They are the original inhabitants of Bomic, a place near Ramsing. While migrating, they passed through Sera Pateng, Dempni, Nugong, Ringong, Kilive, Pegu, Tayak and Puigo. From here all the clans of Padams except the legos, migrated to a place called Ngling. The Lego clan went to Milan land and finally to Damroh. The Irang clan also left the main body and went to Damroh. The main body of Padams went to Antako and Kesing and finally joined the Irang and Lego clans at Damroh. Now the Padam territory starting from Sidip on the left bank of the Yamne, covers whole of this region on the eastern side and extends as far as the Sikku river in the south and Dambuk village in the south-east. The high altitude Padam villages are Damroh, Padu, Silli and Bordak. In the lower region, five Padam villages on the left bank of Siang are Ayeng, Mebo, Lukku, Dapui and Memesepo.

From the history of migration of different ethnic groups in Siang district, it may be noticed that the place of origin of the tribes lies in the higher altitudes somewhere near the India-Tibet border. The place of concentra-

tion and dispersal are invariably in the intermediate zone of the district. We have already seen that Riga and Damroh were the two great centres of concentration and subsequent dispersal to other parts of the district.

### HISTORY

The origin of the people in Siang and the length of time they have lived in this region is unknown. However, local legends and traditional history amply shows that these people originated from some place within the inner side of the great Himalayas. The occurrence of Mongoloid features among the population suggests a long residence in the district. The archaeological evidences, such as Malini temple in Siang, Brahmakund in Lohit suggest a long habitation of people in this area.

Linguistically, the people of Siang speak Adi language which is a part of the North Assam group of the Tibeto-Burman branch of Sino-Tibetan family. Further the Adi language comprises of a number of dialects such as Padam, Minyong, Pasi, Pangi and Gallong. However, in terms of the language of entire territory, the people of Siang may be placed in the Central group of languages along with the Daflas and the Apatanis of Subansiri district. Broadly the Siang district is considered to be divided into two linguistic zones namely the Gallong and the Adi proper.

### SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Adis of Siang are shifting cultivators, supplemented by collection of forest produce, hunting, fishing and trade. They live in permanent and semi-permanent villages along the main river Siang and its tributaries. As a result of the rugged terrain and difficulties in communication between the drainage areas and even individual valleys the tribal groups in Siang often occupy a drainage area or sometimes may be concentrated in small valley systems or even in a single valley. Clustering of the villages in a drainage area or in a valley invariably gives rise to neighbourhood communities called Bongo. The Bongo in Siang comprises of a cluster of villages numbering between 10 to 13. These neighbourhoods are the largest indigenous political units within the valley or in a drainage system. The villages are often homogeneous in the upper and middle Siang valley but in the lower and foothills zone there are heterogeneous villages. Besides, the villages are multi-clan. In the past there were uni-clan villages.

The residents of each neighbourhood belong to a number of dispersed, exogamous, patrilineal clans (*ali* among the Gallongs and *opin* among the Minyongs) of which 22 clans are found in the vicinity of Kabu village alone. Formerly, the villages were mostly uni-clan but gradually due to the division of land for Jhum cultivation some members of the clan went and settled



elsewhere and thus adopted different clan names. The sub-clans are groups of families which may be considered to be the smallest unit. The density of cohesion thins out gradually from the core of the family towards sub-clan, clan and tribe and thence to the feeling of unity for an Adi people.

Within each village, people live in hamlets which in turn are composed of households comprising of nuclear families. A typical small homestead would consist of husband, wife and their children, their hut and granary and a small kitchen garden. Larger homesteads with over five adult males are rare in a village. Hamlets are formed within a village which are situated at some distance from each other depending upon the nature of topography. The Pangin village, for example, comprises of 59 households distributed into four hamlets. Within the hamlet the nuclear families live in separate huts. The married son may make a new hut adjacent to his parent's hut and thus a contiguous block of huts of close kins grow up within the hamlet. The family is the smallest economic unit but the members of a particular hamlet are consulted when some new area of Jhum land is required to be opened or the villagers want to go for some hunting and fishing expeditions. The other details of the social organization has been discussed in the subsequent chapters.

## CULTURAL ECOLOGICAL ZONES

On the basis of ecological factors like location, relief and drainage, geological structure, altitude, natural vegetation, soil, temperature and rainfall and cultural factors such as distribution and density of tribal population, settlement patterns house-types, social organisation, economy, and other aspects of social and religious life, the Siang district may be divided into two broad culture ecological zones as follows :

### 1 Upper Siang 2 Lower Siang

The 1 200 metres contour is roughly the dividing line between the two zones. This contour is also the upper limit for shifting cultivation in this region.

Upper Siang is characterized by low temperature mostly below the freezing point, mixed coniferous and deciduous forests, precipitous slopes and thin soil cover. The people living in this zone are Bokar, Boris, Ashing, Shimong, Tagins and Membas who are influenced by Buddhism. Villages are small and highly dispersed. Maize and millets are the predominant crops. Production is sparse and supplemented by hunting Takin deer by the people.

The Lower Siang is characterized by hills of moderate elevation, ever-green vegetation, thick soil cover, moderate rainfall, cool and temperate

climate. The zone is inhabited by Gallongs, Minyongs, Padams and Pangis, etc. Their economy is based mainly on shifting cultivation supplemented by permanent cultivation of wet-rice wherever possible. Chief crops are paddy and maize. They also domesticate mithun and cows. People produce enough to feed themselves throughout the year.

Investigations were carried out in the selected villages in lower Siang inhabited by the Gallong, Minyong and Pasi. These villages are situated at different altitudes and ecological settings. We shall now see how adaptations of the people to the environment take place through the distribution of population, settlement pattern, house-types, economy and landuse, which in turn guide their social, political and religious life.

## CHAPTER II

### TRIBAL VILLAGES

#### DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The data pertaining to the Gallong, Minyong and Pasi groups of the Adis of Siang district was collected between 1968-69 from five villages. Altogether 281 households of the above groups were surveyed out of which Gallong households were 97. The Minyong and Pasi households surveyed were 59 and 125 respectively. Information on census forms were collected on sex, age, place of birth, clan marital status, migration etc. The age of the persons has been estimated by asking certain questions which happened in the region. The parents do not remember the age of their children.

#### AGE AND SEX

All the individuals of the surveyed villages have been broadly classified in the broad age categories of 0-4 years ; 5-15 years ; 16-44 years ; and 45 years and above. The table on the age structure relates to the Gallong, Minyong and Pasi groups in the villages of Kabu, Lika, Pangin, Balek, Monku and Rasam. The table shows a vigorous population capable of multiplying and has enough potentialities for the supply of labour. The number of children and young persons is more than the old men in the villages. The following table shows the age structure of the villages under study :

*Age Structure*

Villages	0-4 yrs.	5-15 yrs.	16-44 yrs.	45 & above	Total Population
Lika	18	31	56	7	112
Kabu	99	131	219	113	562
Pangin	21	66	102	64	253
Balek	26	33	81	57	198
Monku	41	63	88	53	245
Rasam	27	53	90	54	224

The sex composition of the villages under study has been shown in the above table. The females have outnumbered the males in Kabu, Monku and Rasam villages. The females are prized in their society. They supply the main labour in Jhum cultivation hence they are nurtured with great care and affection. Among the Gallongs they fetch bride's price.

*Sex Ratio*

Villages	Total Population	Percentage of Males to Total Population	Percentage of Females to Total Population	Tribes
Lika	112	50.0	50.0	Tai
Kabu	562	47.9	52.1	
Pangin	253	50.2	49.8	Gallong
Balek	198	52.3	47.7	Minyong
Monku	245	46.2	53.8	
Rasam	224	46.7	53.3	

**MARITAL STATUS**

Adis are polygamous but this system of marriage is gradually dwindling due to the spread of education and contact with plain's people. The spread of education is also responsible for the decay of the polyandry like union. Still we have come across a few cases of polygamy in the villages under study. In Kabu village, out of 97 married Gallong couples 12 have more than one living wife. In Pangin village, out of 67 Minyong couples 3 are having more than one living wife. Among the Pasis also there are a few polygamous marriages. For example, in Balek village, out of 33 married couples 2 are having more than one wife. There are two reasons for polygamy as given by the Minyong informants. First, it is due to the frailty of the women. Etra-marital relations are said to be more among the Gallong than among the Minyongs. The other reason is that the women are a great help in the cultivation and other domestic work. Sometimes due to the shortage of hands in a household for cultivation, the head of the family takes more than one wife.

**HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND TYPES**

The household size of the villages under study is given in the following table. The smallest household size consisting of 1 member has been noticed in the Pasi village. The largest size consisting of 26 persons has been found in the Gallong village.

*Size of Households*

Tribe	Total No. of Household	No. of households having Members 1-5	No. of Households with 6-10 Members	Households above 10 Members.
Gallong	97	38	48	11
Minyong	59	44	15	—
Pasi	125	71	53	1

The average household size among the Gallong is 5.7 while among the Minyong and Pasis it is 4 and 5 respectively.

The following types of households are prevalent among the Gallong, Minyong and Pasi groups of lower part of Siang district :

Type 1 Wife, husband and children.

Type 2 Two wives, one husband and children.

Type 3 Wife, husband, husband's brother and his wife.

Type 4 Widow mother, married sons and grandchildren.

Type 5 Widower father and unmarried children.

Type 6 Wife, husband, children and sister of husband.

Type 7 Wife, husband, children and husband of married daughter.

Type 8 Wife, husband, children and wife's sister.

Type 9 Wife, husband, widow daughter and her married sons.

Type 10 Single member.

In the lower Siang district, the nuclear type of household is prevalent in larger proportions than in the upper Siang. Out of 282 households surveyed in the lower Siang 54% households are nuclear and 46% are joint families. Data for the upper Siang was not available but on the basis of local enquiries it was known that joint families were mostly found among the tribes of the upper Siang. Opening of new avenues of earning in the townships of Arunachal and or the propensity of the new couples to live separately may be contributing for the disintegration of the joint families.

The joint families in which a married woman lives with her mother or sister is quite absent among the Gallong and the Minyongs, but some cases have been noticed in the Pasi villages. The tradition among the Pasi is that the girl after marriage stays with her mother till a child is born which may be one of the responsible factors for such family type. A joint family in which a married man lives with his parents or brothers is quite common in all the groups.

#### POPULATION IN RELATION TO BIRTH PLACE

The following table shows the percentage of persons born in the villages and out side the villages of our Survey :

Villages	Total Population	Persons born in the village %	Persons born outside the village %
Lika	112	35	65
Balek	119	63	37
Monku	246	66	34
Rasam	224	60	40
Pangin	253	63	37
Kabu	554	44	51

Except Lika and Kabu villages, in the rest of the villages the inborn population is comparatively higher than those born outside the village. In Lika, out of 19 households, 18 are immigrants to this village. The places from where they have come are Yabee, Bordam, Tapoli, Batch, Barojang, Magee, Elisiro, Doke, Tatamori and Tirbin. The approximate period of migration ranges from one to two generations. Most of the migrants to Lika village have come with their families. They came to this village for agriculture, contract work of timber and other services. In Kabu village, the people migrated from old Basti at a distance of about two miles upstream along the Kabu nala. This migration took place around 1960. Availability of wet rice land in the fertile valley of Siyum and Sippe rivers caused this movement. In old Kabu, the Gallongs were practising mostly jhum cultivation. The old site was on the slope of the hills. The new site is in the flat valley. In Pangin village there were 59 households out of which 34 households were immigrants to this village. They came from the villages in the upper region of Siang for agriculture. The period of migration is mostly between 25 to 30 years. The villages from where these migrants came were Komsing, Koreng, Yaksi, Kebang, Pareng, Mollen, Sitang, Tarak, Begging, Jorsing and Riu. In the Pasi villages of Balek, Rason and Monku, situated in the foothills of the Siang district near Pasighat, most of the migrations took place after the earthquake of 1950. These migrants came from the villages in the upper Siang. In Balek village most of the people came from Siruk and Adi Pasi villages of upper Siang. In Monku the migrants came from the villages of Pankang, Sisen, Riga, Komsing, Dosing, Riu, Jorsing, and Pangin. They were mostly Minyongs. In Rasom village the migrants came from Siku, Riga, Sibuk and Jorsing, villages of upper Siang. They were also Minyongs. It appears that the natural hazards in the upper regions and the search for cultivable land were the chief motives for the migration of the people from the upper to the lower areas in Siang district.

#### OCCUPATIONS

In the villages surveyed, agriculture is the main occupational category. It has been returned as the primary occupation of the people. Other occupations are connected with agricultural labour and share cropping. All the persons of a household are not engaged in cultivation. Only the young and the able-bodied men and women are actively engaged in agriculture. The old and the infirm persons and also the boys and girls below 10 years of age do not work in the fields. Agricultural labour and share cropping as primary occupation have been reported in the Pasi

villages of the Balek group such as Balek, Monku and Rasam. Due to shortage of arable land in the upper regions the people migrated to lower regions. As a result there was heavy pressure of population on the available land for wet rice cultivation. Most of the migrants got land but those who could not get land became agricultural labour and share croppers. It is why the village population is divided into two strata namely Mibuk and Miku. The Mibuk are the refugees or the migrants to these villages while the Miku are the old residents and possess the major part of the cultivable land. There is no apparent discrimination or segregation among these two segments of people. In the old villages of the Gallong and the Minyongs, viz., Kabu, Lika and Pangin, the occupational category of agricultural labour and share croppers are non-existent.

The secondary occupations in the villages surveyed are spinning and weaving, contractor, I.T.B.P. (India—Tibet border Police), boatman, service and business. Spinning and weaving is done by the girls who weave cloth for their personal use and for sale in the market. The contractor's work for the construction of house, roads, etc. is undertaken by some persons of the village. Among the services the persons are employed as peon, political interpreters and forest guards. The C.P. W.D. Forest department and the India-Tibet border police organisation gives employment to the local people. There are also some road building organisations who give employment to the local population. Apart from the local people these organisations have substantial number of people from Nepal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madras. Business as an occupation is not dominant. Out of the six villages surveyed we could get one Gallong man in Kabu and one Minyong man in Pangin village owning a shop. They sell grocery stores, tea, and betel nuts. The shop owner at Kabu village has closed his shop due to the paucity of funds.

## CHAPTER III

### SETTLEMENT PATTERN AND HOUSE-TYPES

The complexities of the various physical features, *viz.*, geology, relief, drainage, climate, soil and natural vegetation have profound impact, both attractive and restrictive, on the selection of sites and morphological plans of the villages, while cultural factors as the type of agriculture, *i.e.*, shifting and sedentary, population density, accessibility, social customs, traditions and taboos have guided the orientation and arrangement of clusters of different sizes belonging to different tribes and sub-tribes.

The distribution of the villages are mainly along the courses of rivers and their tributaries. They keep close to the river courses but avoid the low lands. Generally the hill-tops are preferred as it ensures security against inter-village feuds which was rampant in the past.

Selection of the site for a new village is usually done in December after the harvest. After selecting a site, the group settles down in the new site and start clearing the forest. Thus a new Adi village grows out of a small nucleus. The village looks from a distance to be an assemblage of haphazardly scattered huts due to the topographical conditions. The nucleus of the village is first formed on the hill-top and the village grows downwards as the population increases. Granaries are found away from the main village for protection against fire.

Villages in lower Siang can be discussed under the following types.

#### VILLAGES ON THE FOOTHILLS

The foothills of Siang are characterised by hills of moderate elevations overlooking the Assam plains. In this zone, the river and its tributaries cut across the hills and enter the plains. The villages are found along the river valleys and are situated on the elevated banks where flat land is available.

The Gallongs, Pasis, Padams and plain Miri villages are distributed along the foothill zone of the Siang district. Except the plain Miris the other groups live in villages situated on elevated river terraces.

Lika, a typical village of the foothill, is situated at a distance of 5 Kms from the circle headquarter. The site of the village is at an elevated terrace of the Sijji river. The approximate height of the village is 250 metres from the sea level. The approach to the village is possible



after wading through the Sijji river which becomes turbulent during the rainy season. In the dry season the water in the river dwindles to waist deep with vast stretches of dry and boulder filled beds. During our visit to the village in the month of December, 1968 we found a number of labourers from Bihar collecting boulders from the dry bed of the river near village. These stones are required for road construction in the plains. Near the village the width of the river decreases to 20 metres, therefore, it is easy to cross. During rainy season the people cross this river by a cane suspension bridge situated 2 kms upstream.

Even from the bank of the Sijji river we could not see the Lika village as it was hidden from sight by a high and steep river terrace. A forest road (unmetalled) starting from the river bank passes by the village. From the road 3 or 4 paths radiate to the village. The paths lead through bushes and gradually going up the slope to the high terrace. The different paths lead to different parts of the same village. One of the four paths leads to the house of the Head Gam. (village headman) and the other three lead to the northern, central and southern parts of the village. The village has assumed a linear pattern due to the site on the high bank of the river.

After reaching the top of the terrace we could see the whole village. The barking of dogs was the first sound we heard while entering the village. The houses are made on the stilts of bamboo, 5 to 10 feet high from the ground. The roof is made of grass and leaves. The roof is so slopy that it protects the walls and the interior of the house is not visible. When we passed by the side of the houses we could hear the jingling sound of the people at work inside the house. The noise of the playing boys and girls and the heavy sound of the pestle and mortar were some of the familiar sounds in the village.

The village Lika has 17 households. The houses and the granaries are arranged in a linear pattern on the elevated parts of the river terrace. On the terrace itself the houses form four clusters. Each cluster has residential huts, kitchengardens in between the huts and working sheds. The village granaries are situated at some distance from the residential huts. The working sheds are used for weaving, husking and doing other pieces of work. The clustering of the houses is not due to the affiliations of kinship, clan or any other social considerations but due to the nature of the terrain. The village site itself is divided into minor elevations and depressions. The depressions are poorly drained during the rainy season. The houses are therefore clustered on the elevations.

The village Lika is multi-clan and the people are divided into Nije and Nira groups. Both the groups marry with each others. The important

clans found in this village are Tai, Taju, Rumdo, Kamchan, Dinni and Boyer. There is no clan-wise segregation of the houses as Tai, Ada and Taju houses may be seen in the same cluster. The people of the Tai clan are the old residents of this village and are in majority but the Rumdo and Bojir clans have migrated to this village from interior of Siang some 2—3 years back for wet-rice cultivation.

The houses are made from the local materials, viz., bamboo, wood and leaves of trees or paddy straw depending upon the availability. The house of Mr. X a Tai of this village is made on a raised platform of wooden planks at the height of 3 metres from the ground. The wall is made of wooden planks and the roof is made of paddy straw. There are no windows in the walls. There is a sliding door in the front. The house may be divided into three parts *i.e.*, *namra* (inner part of the house), the *nilokada* or the verandah for males and *nimekoda* or the verandah for females.

The inner part of the house is a square shaped big hall. It has a *mippum* or fireplace in the centre. On the left hand side of the fireplace married brother with his wife and unmarried brothers sleep on the floor. There is no restriction on the unmarried brothers to have sexual relations with the wife of the elder brother but the educated people are objecting to this practice. The right hand side of the fireplace is usually reserved for the parents and their unmarried sons. The back side of the fireplace is used by young unmarried sisters. Pigsty is on the other side of the house. On the fireplace a rack of trays made of bamboo and cane is kept and arranged one over the other. The tray right over the fire is called *Kameh* which is blackened by the smoke. It is used for smoking the fish. Above *Kameh* is another tray called *Rapka* which is used for drying the paddy before it is husked. Only that quantity of paddy is kept in *rapka* which is husked for daily consumption. Above *Rapka* there is a big platform of wood (*Kyik*) where household things are kept, such as mats, cane baskets, *etc.* The inner room is quite dark and smoky. Even in the day the inmates sitting inside the room are not visible from outside. A Kerosene oil lamp is burnt at night.

The outer part of the house consists of a covered verandah facing the main entrance. The out side verandah has an uncovered portico which is used for drying paddy. The covered part of the verandah is used for receiving the guests. Inside, the house the family sit and gossip. Usually the womenfolk are seen with the loom weaving cloth, *etc.*, in the verandah.

The house has two entrances. One in the front and the other at the back portion of the house. The entrance is made by a long piece of wood in which notches have been carved out. The front ladder is used by men

and the rear ladder by the womenfolk. The space below the plinth of the house is used for storing fuel wood. The pigs also loiter and sleep under the plinth.

#### VILLAGES ON THE HILLTOPS

Villages perched on the top of the hills are another noticeable settlement types in the Siang district. Such villages may be seen along the Likabali—Along—Sangam road as we leave the foothill zone and reach in the interior or in the zone of moderate hills and valleys. The hilltop villages are highly dispersed due to the nature of topography and are situated near river and its tributaries. The villages are situated on varying altitudes, ranging from 300 metres (Magi) to 1000 metres (YAKSI) in the lower Siang district. The gentle and sunny slopes of hills overlooking some river or stream are the favourable sites. The houses are arranged on the hill slopes in such a way that they may not hinder the natural flow of rain water and the air circulation. The village thus assumes different patterns depending on the site. The houses are arranged more or less in rows ranging round the hillside from the top-downwards. This is because the village starts from the top and extends downwards as the population increases. The pioneers to the village occupy the top of the hill-side and subsequent migrants occupy the lower slopes. Usually there is a central path with steps from the top to bottom of the village with houses on either side facing each other. "There are also paths between the rows leading away from the central path in the form of ribs radiating from the back bone"<sup>1</sup> ;

The houses of the hill villages are made of bamboo, wood and leaves but their shape differs from those mentioned earlier. The house on the hilltop is made on the slight declivities of the hill sides. A platform of the split bamboo is made on the declivity of the site. The front portion of the platform is about 3 metres high from the ground but the back portion is only 1 metre above the ground. As the back portion of the house is on the upper slope of the declivity and the front on the lower slopes, hence small supporting bamboos are used at the back and long bamboo pieces are used at the front. There is no change in the plan of the hill-top house as compared with the houses on the foothills. The paddy stalks are not used as roof and wall material in the hill top houses. Timber and wooden planks are not used also.

The village Pangin, a Minyong village, offers a typical example of the hill-top villages in the area. Located at an altitude of about 1000 metres, the built-up area of village is divided into four parts as a result of the

1. Roy—Sachin pp. 55, 1960.

dissected village site by the Ruteh and Urbung streams. Each part of the village is named separately as Moli, Kumruk, Mobuk and Rusing and comprises of a number of hutments. These four hamlets comprise the village Pangin. The village has 56 households and the members are related to one another by blood or affinity. The arrangement of hutments and their spatial distance depend on the nature of the site and the availability of permanent sources of water. In Moli hamlet, the hutments are arranged in a semi-circle with two rows of huts arranged around an open space where community festival takes place. The village dormitory, the house of the village Gam (chief) and other village elites lie in the inner circle. Besides, the residents also of this inner circle belong to that group of clans who are old migrants to this village. The clans found within the inner circle are Mesar, Gao, Tamo, Tarang, Taki and Tateh. The houses are well-built and spacious. In the outer ring of Moli hamlet, the hutments are poorly built and belong to those clans who are the subsequent migrants to this village. The clans found here are Uodang, Tamo, Panor, Dupak. In other hamlets of Pangin village the huts are arranged in a haphazard manner due to the nature of the village site. Rusing and Mobuk hamlets are oldest parts of the village while Kumruk and Moli are the recent extensions.

#### HOUSE TYPE

Invariably a residential hut in Pangin village has some subsidiary structures like pigsty, fowl shed, granary, *etc.* As we have already seen, the Gallongs make the pigsty as part of the residential hut. Among the Minyongs, pigsty is made away from the main hut. Other subsidiary structures are Porok ekkum (Shed for fowls) and *Kumsum* (husking or shed) which are made a little away from the residential huts.

The Ekkum (residential hut) is made on a platform of bamboo and contains a big rectangular room. Around the main room there are tungo or covered porticos. The portico in the front of the house is wider than on the sides. In the front part of the portico the women weave Galle and do other domestic work. The guests are also received here. In the open portico they keep paddy and raw cotton for drying. In the *Kogrukian* (side portico) a number of *Pettir* (Cane baskets) may be seen hanging from the inner side of the roof in which they keep fowls for laying eggs, *etc.*

The inner side of the big room has *Jullung* (fireplace) in the centre. On one side of the fireplace an enclosure, by straight wooden sticks, is made in which the family sleeps. This place is known as *errang*. The other members of the family sleep on any three sides of the fireplace. On entrance in a Minyong house, the left side of the fireplace is *rising*. Here male members of the family sleep. On the right side of the fireplace is *Kodang*.

Here the *miri* or the village priest is consulted. The household utensils, pestle and mortar, are also kept in *kodang*. *Opong*, a favourite drink, is prepared in *kodang*. The side of the fireplace facing the entrance is called, *satak-guding* where guests are received. The place on the opposite side of the fireplace is *errang* where short enclosure is made. Here the head of the household sleeps with his wife and minor children. *Errang* is also used as a place for child birth.

The pigsty is made either at the side or at the back of the residential hut. It is a bamboo platform enclosed by bamboo walls and covered by roof made of the leaves of areca palm. The upper part of the pigsty is used as latrine. In the lower part pigs are kept at night.

The fowl shed (*Porok-ekum*) is a small rectangular shed made of bamboo and leaves. It is made near the residential hut. The fowls are kept here at night.

The husking shed is either made in front of the house or at any suitable place near the residential hut. Formerly paddy was husked with pestle and mortar, now it is done by a husking implement operated by legs. The husking implement is known as *Keeper*. It consists of a big piece of log (yessing) laid horizontally on four straight sticks (*Dibang*). At one end of the log, a big stone is tied to make the end heavy. Below it, a pointed wooden stick of 12" is fixed. This stick is called *yeggi*. Below *yeggi* a wood container (*Kiar*) is kept in which paddy is husked. When this end of the log is pressed by legs, the other end rises and falls with sound in the *Kiar* and paddy is husked. In the early morning the village resounds with the sound of husking paddy. One resident of Pangin village has purchased a husking machine operated by Kerosene oil. He informed that it saves time and is easy to operate. Other village people also take their paddy for husking on payment either in terms of rice or money.

A few families of Pangin village make farm houses near the field of wet rice cultivation. These are rudimentary bamboo structures mainly used for keeping farm implements, like plough (*Nangor*), leveller (*Moyi*) and a pair of bullocks. They also make granaries (*Kumsum*) near the streamlets and away from the main village.

Pangin village has four aqueducts, each in the four hamlets. They are bamboo water pipes connected with perennial streams on the hilltops. The water is used for drinking, and the excess water is drained off to irrigate the fields.

The village Pangin has shifted its site from time to time. According to the old residents the village was situated on a hill near the confluence of Siyum and Siang rivers, some one hundred years back. At the old site the village was known as Lippo. From here the village shifted down the river Siang to

different sites both on the left and right banks of the Siang river. Now the village is situated on the Ruteh and urbung tributaries of the Siang river. The present site was occupied some 50 years back. It started as a small hamlet known as Kumko or Mobuk. As the population grew up, the hamlet Kumko was sub-divided into Rusing, later on Kumko and Rusing were again divided into Kumruk and Moli hamlets. The old hamlets namely Kumko and Rusing are on the higher elevation of the terrace and the other two namely Kumruk and Moli are on the lower slopes of the terrace. We were informed that the old settlements had water difficulties during the months of March and April. Therefore, the people shifted to lower areas. Other informants told that the shifting was mainly due to the availability of the wet-rice fields in the valleys. The opening of the Pangin—Pasihat jeepable road near the Pangin village was another factor which attracted the people to come down to the lower heights. But the shift had already taken place to lower areas before the road was opened. Some informants told that the shift of families from higher parts of Pangin started around 1950. The wet-rice cultivation was also introduced in the Pangin village around 1950. Therefore, the introduction of wet-rice cultivation may be the chief consideration for the village to shift.

#### VILLAGES IN THE FLAT ALLUVIAL VALLEYS

The villages in the flat valley assume a rectangular or square pattern depending on the site. Such villages are permanent and shift their sites less frequently than the hilltop villages. Kabu, a Gallong village, is a typical example of the valley settlement. It is situated in a wide valley formed by the confluence of the Siyum and Sippe rivers. The altitude of the valley is 1000 metres from mean sea level. In the lower part of the valley there are fields of wet-rice cultivation of Kabu village. In the slightly higher alluvial terraces of the valley the habitations are clustered. The Kabu stream passes by the village site and meets the Siyum river. Thus the village site is limited by Siyum river in the north and the Kabu stream in the east of the village. Before 1962, the Kabu village was situated on the hilltop at a distance of about 2 Kms from the present site in the upper region of Kabu stream. High death rate and shortage of land were the main causes for shifting of the village to the new site. The entire village at old Kabu did not shift at the same time. In the beginning some 20 households mostly belonging to Loyi clan moved to the new site. They occupied a vast stretch of flat alluvial valley and started permanent cultivation of paddy by plough. At the old site Loya another clan was doing shifting cultivation. Gradually they came to know the advantages of the new site and slowly other households came and occupied the land in the flat valley. In the year 1969 there were 78 households with 569 members in Kabu village. The village may be

divided into two segments, one occupied by Loyi clan and the other by Loya clans. The derre or the village dormitory is in the central portion of the village. Both the clans intermarry among themselves. Other clans who migrated to this village were through marriage and also to get wet-rice land in this area. Some of the important clans who settled down in Kabu village are Yete, Darkang, Yesi, Jinning, Bagra, Lomi, *etc.* All these clans belong to Gallong tribe and came from villages of the same name as those of the clans. The village has four water taps connected with perennial streams. The lower primary school is situated towards the western part of the village. It had two teachers one of which hailed from Uttar Pradesh and the other from Assam. There was a playground near the school. The games played by tribal students were football and volleyball. A cane suspension bridge made across Siyum river in the year 1965 connects the village by path to the hills for shifting cultivation. The village granaries were mostly concentrated in the lower slopes near the Kabu stream. It was observed that the granaries were mostly located near water points in order to protect it from fire. The grave-yard is away from the settled area of the village. There was one grocer's shop owned by a person of Loyi clan of this village who caters in items of daily use like salt, kerosene oil, bidi, *etc.*

The people of Kabu also make temporary houses in the wet-rice fields in the valley and in the Jhum fields on the hills. In the wet-rice field the houses are more elaborate and commodious than those in the Jhum fields. During sowing and harvesting the whole family stay in the farm houses. The farm house contains nakum or the hut for storing seeds, a hut for keeping farming implements, a cattle shed and a living hut. All these structures are enclosed in a courtyard and the boundary is made by bamboo. The huts in the Jhum fields are rudimentary shelters where the men and women stay during sowing and clearing.

A typical Gallong house of Kabu village is made on a rectangular platform of the size 25' × 30'. The platform is made of split bamboo and stands on wooden poles 5 to 10 feet above the ground. Leaves of areca palm, locally called Tokpat, is used in the construction of the roof. The inner part of the house is a big hall. It has a fireplace in the centre. The other part of the hall is divided into sleeping places (Lago), Husking place (Mimar), place of marriage rituals (Niyode), birth place (Pime nyod). The fireplace is known as *maram* where the firewood is kept burning. It is the centre of all indoor activities. The fire keeps them warm. On the firewood a three legged iron stand is kept. The aluminum pot is kept over the stand for preparing rice. Just above the fireplace a platform is made of straight sticks. These sticks are supported on the side pillars. The platform of the stick is known as kam. It is used for smoking the fish, pork

and mutton, *etc.* Above the *kam* is another platform of cane mat (*rapko*) where paddy of daily use is kept for drying. Above it is the third platform *tumik* where baskets and household artifacts are kept. On the fourth platform known as *matum*, they keep other heavy things of domestic use. The place around the fireplace is called *niyosi*. The inmates of the house sit near *niyosi* and guests are given a piece of wood to sit near the fireplace. Two entrances are provided in the house. The entrance in the front has a small partition wall of bamboo just near the door. It secludes the inmates from outsiders. The other entrance is towards one side of the house. Water containers of bamboo are kept near the side entrance.

### HOUSE CONSTRUCTION

The construction of the house is initiated in the form of a proposal to be discussed and passed by the village community sitting in *kebang* meeting. After the proposal is passed, then the work starts. A new house is constructed under the circumstances as. (1) a young man after marriage wants to have a separate house for himself, (2) sometimes a new-comer from another village wants to live among them as he could get land, so a new house is constructed for him, (3) the house has become dilapidated beyond all repairs and has to be replaced by a new one and, (4) a joint family sometimes breaks due to quarrel, *etc.*, hence the nuclear family desires to live separately.

The proposal for house construction being accepted and approved, a suitable site has to be selected. In Kabu village the auspicious site is selected by the *nibo* or village priest. He will put the onion under the soil on a particular day and the next day he will take it out and decide whether the selected site is auspicious or not. After the site is selected, the man whose house is to be constructed, goes to the houses of his clan men with the request to participate in the house construction.

The house of Kardo Loya, a resident of Kabu village, was very old. He gave a proposal to the village *Kebang* for the construction of a new house on a new site. He invited the village *nibo* to select the site. The work started on 10th January 1969 during our stay in this village. On the first day men and women assembled on the site and a proper division of labour was chalked out. The men in groups of 6 and 8 went to the forest to bring bamboos. The women formed another group and brought leaves of areca palm. Another group of women brought dried pieces of bamboo. In all there were 70 men and women engaged for the collection of materials for house construction on the first day. Kardo Loya fed all of them rice, pork and a *pong* (drink). It took 4-5 days to complete the house and the owner of the house has to feed them every day.



House construction is quite expensive affair. The man intending to get a house constructed should have enough stock of rice. If the owner of the house is rich he will distribute cow or Mithun meat and feed the participants, but as Kardo Loya was poor he distributed pork on this occasion.

#### DAILY LIFE

The daily life of the Gallong and the Minyongs are very much regulated by the weather conditions. Even their mood and stamina to work is influenced by the weather conditions. In a cloudy, cold and muggy day, the Gallong and Minyong look morose and lazy and prefer to stay within the house than to go out in the jhum field. Few boys and girls are seen playing out side the huts. A clear sunny day brings cheers and activities in the village.

Life in a Gallong village begins with the cocks crow. Although it is dark yet the women get up and start husking the paddy. The village resounds with the sound of the pestle and mortar. The young girls go to the aqueduct with bamboo containers to bring drinking water. The men take out the pigs from the pigsty and feed them on the discarded *opong*, broken rice and millets. They also feed the fowls and chickens. Inside the huts the women prepare food consisting of rice and vegetables. By 6 a. m. food is ready and the men and women take the morning food. They take their lunch packets of the same food items and go to the jhum fields. The old men, women and small girls and boys are left in the village. The old women and girls go to their village orchards and collect oranges in *Igne* (cane baskets). The vegetables growing in the kitchen gardens are also collected. Some of the popular vegetables are *bayom* (brinjal), *belong* (jackfruit), *papum* (sweet gourd), *ou tenga* (lemon) *omrih* (papaya), *warhi* (chilly) and *pettu* (lai-sag); a baby vegetable. The old women and girls take these items to the market at Along and Pangin and sell them. In the afternoon they return to the village after purchasing kerosene oil, bidi, cigarette, cotton thread, tobacco leaves, *etc.* Some of the young girls who do not go to the market or to the jhum field sit outside their hut and weaves galle. The old woman sit near the loom and teach the new entrant. The girls weave the *galle* with great interest and attention. Timely they take rest by loosening the fold of the loom. Some of the girls, we observed, were smoking. While weaving some of them recite Hindi film songs. The old women sitting near them take a lot of betle nuts and lime. The small boys and girls play in the village. The small children are left to the care of their elder brothers and sisters when the parents are away to the field or market. Sometimes the young child is left to the care of the old women. When a child cries he is immediately attended to by any member of the household.

## LIFE IN A MINYONG VILLAGE

In Pangin village, we were informed that the old men and women have formed two parties. The old men's party known as *Mije Dolung* will sit together in a comfortable part of the village and make cane baskets, *igne*, and some repairs of the hut. During work they gossip quite often. The topics discussed are about *kebang* decisions, Jhum parties, contract work, behaviour of some boys and girls in the village, etc. One man starts the discussion on a particular topic and continues it for some time then stop. The other man then takes up the topic, goes on speaking, and stops. While replying they do not see face to face. They will do the work and discuss at the same time. The party of old women (*mine dolung*), mostly help in weaving *galle*, going to the market and doing odd jobs of the household. In the afternoon, the girls prepare *apong* or rice-beer for the men who have gone to the fields. Shortly before sunset the party returns from the jhum fields to the village. Women bring firewood collected in the *igne* or cane baskets from the jhum fields. The husband takes the little baby on his back. Both men and women come in a line. The women are kept in the front of the husband while walking through the forest. Some men at Kabu and Pangin villages take guns with them in the forest. Guns have been issued to them by the Government for hunting as it is more effective than the spear, bow and arrow. Some of the men who do not go to the jhum fields on a particular day spend their day in fishing and hunting.

In the evening, the village once again assumes a lively appearance. The men and women return from their work. The girls go to the aqueduct to collect water. Fire is lit in the huts and preparation of food starts. After returning from the fields, as the men are tired, they take *apong* and relax for a while. Then they feed the pigs, fowls, etc. The supper is taken early and the whole family sit around the fire inside the hut and gossip. Visits among the village people are often exchanged at this time. Often a visitor from some distant village bring *apong* which is prepared in his home and gives it to his host. The Gallongs and Minyong are very particular in reciprocal relationships.

By 8 P.M. the whole village goes to sleep. They sleep by the side of the fire and use pieces of wood as pillows. They cover themselves with *gadu* (cotton quilt) while sleeping.

The small boys and girls between 3—6 years age group, spend their day time in play and amusements. The Games commonly played are climbing hills, running down the slopes, etc. They make carts fitted with small wheels and run swiftly down the slopes.

*Ponung* or Community dances are observed in the village in which both the men and women participate. It relieves them of the fatigue and monotony

of the daily life. *Ponung* is observed on a small scale daily at night in a particular hut or in the village dormitory in which both boys and girls participate. *Ponung* is also observed on a large scale in honour of some guest in the village. In Kabu village the Gallongs celebrated the farewell of a retired major of Army who was posted in that area for a very long time. The major was very popular with the people as he used to give substantial help in the welfare of the vilage. *Ponung* was also observed to celebrate our stay in the village. In the *Ponung* a bonfire is prepared around which the boys and girls, men and women dance in a circle. Among the Gallongs, men and women dance together in a circle by keeping both hands around the waist of the partner. The initiator of the dance stands in the centre of the circle and sings while brandishing a sword in his hand. The dance is led either by a male or a female. The partners are often changed during the dance.

Among the Minyongs this dance takes place in a different way. Hence the men and women stand in two files facing each other and dance in a rhythmic way. The man who leads the dance is called *ponung*. It is said that the art of *ponung* dance is traditional among the Minyongs, while the Gallongs have imitated it. The Minyong dance is marked with slow rhythms of the legs. By both hands they form beautiful nexus at the back of each other. On the occasion of *Solung puja*, after the harvest, the Minyong dance continues for four days without any break. A Minyong *ponung* dance may be divided into three parts according to the movements of the body. In the first stage the women dance with their hands folded at the back. In the second stage they dance and move while clapping and swinging sideways. In the third stage they lift their legs in a systematic way making a good sound by rubbing the legs on the ground.

## CHAPTER IV

### MATERIAL ARTIFACTS AND FOOD HABITS

#### DRESS AND ORNAMENT

The usual dress of a Gallong male is a short dhoti, a shirt and a waistcoat (*gasuk*). The *gasuk* is woven locally but the dhoti and shirt are purchased from the market at Along. During the summer, mostly they go bare bodied. But whenever they go out they must put a *dumlup* and carry a *yok*. *Dumlup* is a cane hat; its base form cones at the anterior and posterior ends. It is made with cane strips and cane splits in such a fashion that it can protect the head from rains or from the blow of any heavy implement. The base of the Minyong *dumlup* does not form sharp cones at the ends. Whenever and wherever they go, whether in the forests or to attend the market, they carry one *yok* (cutter) introduced into a scabbard, (*hobuk*). The *hobuk* with the *yok* is left hanging on one side, from the neck by means of a string. *Yok* is a multipurpose implement and a variety of jobs, viz., cutting, felling of trees on the jhum field, hunting wild animals, sacrificing animals in rituals, slicing timber for the construction of house, etc. are done with this. *Yok* is quite heavy and is made by the local blacksmiths. A mini-*yok*, known as *yoksik* is used for making bamboo strips for making baskets or other types of basketry. When the Gallong men attend to agricultural pursuits, they wear *languti*, a piece of loin cloth, the two ends are passed through *peka* and let hanging. *Peka* is a cane strip 5 to 8 cubits in length, and is worn round the waist. *Ituk*, a cap made out of hide skin was very much used earlier, but now a days *ituk* is going out of fashion. Another type of headgear, *gillitalep*, fitted with feathers, was used by *nib* at the time of marriage. *Situmkebang*, haversack made of cane and bark fibres, is also a constant companion of the Gallong. *Situmkebang* is kept fixed at the back. Whenever, they will leave the village for outdoor work, scarf, food, drinking water and such other essential items are carried in it. Gallong men do not shave; they pluck out the facial hair with the help of pincers, *remchak*. Haircutting is done with two *yok* held in the form of a pair of scissors. The family members help each other to have their hair cut.

Earlier, the Gallong women used to wear *Jese* (L 2½ ft B 2 ft), skirt with black border. But they tell that the modern *gale* and *gamucha*, skirt and sheet, have been borrowed by them from the plains. Common ornaments used by them are *yokke* (anklet), *koje* (bangle), *barpo* (cane wristlet), *tatek* (ear plug), *rayi* (ear ornament).

*Tadok* is a very precious bead necklace common to both the Gallong and the Minyong. No one knows when and where from these *tadoks* were

purchased. But they believe that these were procured by their forefathers. The *tadoks* may be of grey or yellow or blue beads, knotted with thread. There may be two to fourteen rows of beads. The Gallong have different names for each, such as *domne* (of ash coloured beads), *dokso* (of blue beads), *tagum* (of grey beads). The Minyong too have a variety of *tadoks* such as *tage* (of blue and white beads), *shelling*, *ponkam* (of blue and black beads) and *teksing* (worn tight round the throat). The Gallong suggest some fantastic prices and tell that a *domne* costs 4,000 rupees, a *dokso* or a *tagum* costs 2,000 rupees. The prices quoted are sentimental because we are sure, if these beads or bead necklace are sold outside the Arunachal region, in the plains, these would not have this much of face value. Brides coming into a family bring *tadoks* from their parental home and these become the property of the husbands family. Possession of *tadok* elevates the family status. The Minyong have the idea that their forefathers used to get these *tadoks* by barter from the Bokers and the Membas who in their turn got them from the Tibetans. Even now they can evaluate these *tadoks* in terms of the barter rate, viz., *tage*, *shelling* or *teksing* used to be exchanged for one boar. Sometimes even two boars were given for one *tage*. *Dudak* is used by the men round the neck and it was exchanged for one mithun. *Dudak* is even now used by the elderly persons and it adds to his prestige. Young girls, specially those having school education, do not use *tadok* save and except for any occasion of festivity.

In the Minyong house, on the *gullung* (fireplace) there is a two-tier platform hanging from the ceiling. The base tier is called *perap* and the second tier is *boram*. *Perap* is mostly used for keeping paddy for drying and on the *boram* salt and spices are kept. Cooking is done in aluminium pots and *medap* or bamboo pincers serve as ladle. In every house, in one corner *Kipar* (mortar) is fitted to husk paddy or to pound rice. Rice powder is used for preparing rice cake, *etting*, which is a delicacy. *Petok*, bamboo vessel for bringing water or keeping water; *paying*, sieve; *jarang*, basket for keeping vegetables; *bilen*, haversack; *byorjung*, apparatus for preparing *apong*; *eggin*, carrying basket; *kurpiack*, mat made of wild leaves are some of the common articles found in an average Minyong house. Inside the house there is very little furnitures, in one corner there may be one or two bedsteads made of splited bamboos. In another corner of the apartment *borjee*, apparatus for preparing *apong* is installed. On the walls the *hookat*, basket for keeping fish, *Jepe*, square based cane basket with cane straps *agen*, *Kare* (haversack), *eggin* (carrying basket) are all kept hanging. Besides, they have the common winnowing fan *opo*, four legged winnowing fan (*Pakker*), *assi* (small basket) inside the house. All these different types of baskets are made of cane strips and bamboo and are made by the men during leisure hours. The Gallong and the Minyong are fairly clean in their habit. At present, the villagers living in

the vicinity of the township or having frequent contact with Along, have learnt the use of soap for washing clothes or for cleaning body. Taking bath is not their regular habit, but it all depends upon convenience and leisure. They take bath either in the mid day or in the evening on any spring side or in the main water source of the village. Taking of bath and cleaning of clothes go simultaneously. The children do it along with their parents. Young boys and young girls bath separately.

According to the health department in Arunachal Pradesh, scabbies, trachoma, goitre, T.B. and venereal diseases are some of the common medical problems. Most of these health hazards are also to be met in lower Siang. These days a few small-pox cases are also there. According to the health department, it is suspected that the germs of small-pox have been carried by outsiders entering Arunachal or by the Arunachal people returning from plains-towns. Malaria is absolutely unknown. About three miles from Along, there is a leprosy centre with patients from different villages of lower Siang. They are not so much hospital minded and in the village of Kabu, situated only about 5 miles from Along, Sick people have been seen to be sacrificing pig, cat, chicken for quick recovery. Only when they are seriously sick, on the point of death, they go to hospitals, that too on the insistence of the village elders.

The people of lower Siang know the use of salt for quite a long time. The Bori would procure salt from Tibet and salt was bartered, *pesikore* or *bipeng* to the Minyong @ one boar for approximately five kg. of salt. Now salt is procured from markets or C.P.O. stores at Along, Pangin, Bolen and Pasighat. Boris also bartered to the Minyong slab of iron, *eggim* @ 1 small boar=1 *eggim*; *Nambi*, black waist coat with high collar @ 1 small boar for 1 *Nambi*. The *eggins* were shaped into desired implement by the *yongmo*, blacksmiths of the Minyong and Gallong. The Padam used to get 20 to 25 *galuk* (waistcoat) from the mishmis in lieu of one mithun. Earlier the Minyong used to make *lupsing*, white long coat or *gapcnggaluk*, white warm coat for the ladies. But now these articles have gone out of fashion. Skirts used by the Minyong ladies are of two types-*gaseng* that is red in colour used by the girls of well-to-do families and *sebar*, green or black in colour, used by *opan* (poor) girls. Even some 20/25 years back these *gaseng* and *sebar* were bartered to the Gallong @ 1 *gaseng* or 1 *sebra* for 5 beads of *Tadok*. Gallongs still visit the Minyong villages with *imp* (bamboo soots) and approximately 6 or 7 kgs. of *imp* are bartered for one dog. The Gallong *imps* are considered to be tastier than those made by others. In this whole area even now 1 cow or 1 bull is exchanged for 1 *arem* (big brass dish) or 1 *tadok*. Both the Gallong and Minyong boil their foodstuff and add a pinch of salt to it. But now, due to contact with outsiders, they have learnt the use of mustard oil which they procure from the shops or C.P.O. stores.

## FOOD HABITS

Apart from collecting their day to day requirements of fuelwood from the neighbouring jungles, the Gallong also procure some available timbers. In the Gallong area a number of wild medicinal plants are collected by the local people ; these are taksap, oyin, joko and rari. For preparing curry, they carry leaves of wild *Knoye* (banana), *oyik*, *jojo*, *yegro*, *taka*, *ogen* ; wild edible roots such as *ninggom*, *nyamcha*, *koka*, *nying*, *hesa* ; and wild edible fruits such as *buri*, *darike*, *belam*, *liba*, *takuk*, *sibem*, *korra*, *siu* and *tatar*, are also collected almost regularly. The wild animals frequently hunted are *sochar* (deer), *sora* (pig), *sobe* (monkey), *kobu* (rat). Flesh of *sochar* and *sora* are also sold by them in the market of Along.

In the Minyong area, the wild edible items collected from the forest are *wild leaves* (*rowri*, *okum*, *kakitekden*, *oyik*, *ogen*, *osut*, *oparam*, *oji*, *obyap*, *ogik*, *opopemo*, *aksap*, *turan*, *kochipinyo*, *agjor* and *byongke*) and *wildfruits* (*tagum*, *belong*, *lapuk*, *taktir*, *anke bibang* and *bime*). Besides, *sidung* (wild deer), *situng* (bear), *sira* (boar), *sibeng* (wild monkey with big hair), *sikat* (wild squirrel) are the common animals found in the forests. *Pesik*, *pegang*, *killum*, *peki* and *kiying* are the common wild birds that are hunted by the people with bows and arrows.

The wild leaves mentioned above are boiled and taken with rice. Edible fruits except *lapuk* are taken as it is. The skin of the wild animals are peeled off, then roasted or boiled and the meat is taken just by adding little salt. Monkey is a delicacy. If during *dorong kiruk* (community hunting) any monkey is hunted, the head of the animals is taken by the seniormost member. If a monkey is hunted, it is kept on the *perap* or *boram* (hanging platform over the fireplace) and it is fireburnt for 2/3 days ; and then it is taken with chillies or salt. But the monkey with big hair (*sibeng besor*) should be taken by men, while the other variety, monkey with short hair, (*sibeng bedong*) is to be taken by the women only. Earlier, the Minyong used to extract fast colours from some wild plants.

They take the flesh of almost all the animals that are domesticated or are to be seen in the area. Cattle, Mithun, chicken pig, deer, squirrel, rat are much liked. Now and then, this animal or that is offered to some spirit ; and the animal being slaughtered the meat is shared by all. They do not take tiger, elephant or snake. The Gallong are fond of dog's meat and dog thus becomes a major item of barter.

They take fish but never purchase it. During their leisure hours or off days, they catch fish by traps or with the help of rafts. Fish when caught through collective effort is shared equally. Fish is grilled and then the scales are cleaned to take it with a bit of salt. Often fishes are kept over the fireplace, on the hanging tiers for days together to get it smoked. Smoked fish

or roasted fish is served to the guests with a pot of apong. This is a great honour for the guests. In the Along market, a few Gallongs have been seen selling fishes. Selling of fish or meat is not regarded as derogatory occupation.

The locally made beer, *opo* (of Gallong) and *opong* (of Minyong) is much in use as a drink for daily use, for offering to the different spirits to appease them, for entertaining guests, as an elixir for the sick and the weak. Ritual without the offering of apong is no ritual at all, feasting without turning tipsy with apong is no feasting at all. Any guest at any house will receive a cup of apong at least. They feel much if the cup is refused. Every house, that of rich or poor, is furnished with beer preparing apparatus. They do not keep prepared apong for a long time. Good apong is sweet to taste and it is an art to prepare sweet apong. In a village not all the boys or girls are adept in this art. It is a common talk in a village 'you can know the heart by tasting the apong made by her', apong is generally made by the women, and whenever they are to entertain honoured guests, the young girls are vested with this duty. Men and women, boys and girls, all drink apong.

Apong is a beer brewed from rice or other cereals. Regarding the process of brewing, we are quoting from Sen Gupta (1952), "opong is an extract in hot water and sometimes in hot and cold water, made with slightly fermented millet *ragi*, locally called *mirung* (*Eleusine coracana*), or with a mixture of *mirung* and other cereal or with red variety of rice locally called *amkel*. The millet after boiling with water is slightly cooled and then mixed intimately with sufficient quantity of paddy husk, charcoal and the required quantity of powdered medicinal cake *sea* and kept in a basket (bamboo) tightly covered with banana leaf. After two days the contents are mixed and again kept in the same way. After two more days the mixture is ready for extracting apong and it is extracted in boiled water from the fermented millet in a funnel shaped vessel made of bamboo strips and lined with banana leaves. Sometimes this is extracted first with hot water and then with cold water and the two extracts are mixed together before consumption. The fermented mixture can be preserved in a tightly covered basket for months but apong after its preparation cannot be preserved even for 24 hours. Besides disintegrated cereals, apong contains a quantity of charcoal dust. When apong is made from *amkhel* rice alone, charcoal is not added and extracts are obtained by pressing the mixture with water through a small bag made of cane stripe." Roy (1960) finds apong satisfactory from the point of health and body build of the people. "The main difficulty lies", he writes, "not in the quality but in the quantity". But it has been our impression that they never get drunk with the beer.

From the above discussion, we can get an idea of the wide range of food habits as prevalent among the Gallong and the Minyong. But, needless to say, rice remains their staple food.



## CHAPTER V

### AGRICULTURE

#### LAND-USE TYPES

The Adis of Siang classify the land into three categories according to their uses. The first is the land use for residential purposes. The second is the land reserved for hunting, locally called *Motum*, as it remains under thick forest cover. The third type is agricultural land both on the hills and in the valleys. The cultivated land on the hills is called *adi arick* (jhum cultivation) and that in the valley is called *assi-arick* (permanent cultivation). The organisation of work tools and technologies differs in both the systems of land uses due to different ecological conditions. Shifting cultivation is largely practised in the areas of *adi arick* and wet-rice, plough cultivation of permanent nature in the *asi arick* areas.

#### SHIFTING CULTIVATION :

In the *adi-arick* (jhum or shifting cultivation) system of land use, the entire agricultural land of a village is divided into a number of blocks, which are ear-marked for tillage after a definite number of years of fallow. Such blocks are known as *patats* among the Minyongs. A village may have several hills which are taken up, one by one, for cultivation in their turn. One such hill is divided into a number of smaller plots which are individually owned by the families. It is also possible that one family may have agricultural plots on several hills of the village. To take an ideal case, a village has eleven such blocks. In the starting year block, 'A' is brought under cultivation. Next year 'B' is opened newly and 'A' continues to be tilled. In the third year 'C' is opened and A and B continue under cultivation. Supposing this to be a three year tillage period area, in the fourth year 'A' is left fallow and 'D' is taken up. In this way the cycle continues till after 10th year 'A' is taken up again. The cycle is commonly called *jhum* cycle, and ensures against the exhaustion of soil. The period of *jhum* cycle depends upon two factors : the fertility of the land and the density of population in that *jhum* area. If the land is fertile enough, it can be cultivated for two or three years consecutively with rotation of crops, and then left fallow and again taken up after a period of eight or ten years. If the density of population is higher in relation to the available land, the cycle has to be rotated after every six to eight years as the scarcity of land forces the people to take up even those lands, which are not fully covered with trees and plants and where the fertility has not been fully restored. The *jhum* cycle depends upon the number of *jhum* blocks available in the village.

Years of cultivation of jhum fields (kabu village)

Year and name of jhum blocks :—

Year	Name of jhum blocks	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
1959	Tubluk	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow
	Lakchi	Lakchi	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow
	Jatu	Jatu	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow
	Keru	Keru	Keru	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow
	Likeh	Likeh	Likeh	Likeh	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow
		Liteh	Liteh	Liteh	Liteh	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow
		Tusi	Tusi	Tusi	Tusi	Tusi	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow
				Hodi	Hodi	Hodi	Hodi	Fallow	Fallow	Fallow
					Dakpeh	Dakpeh	Dakpeh	Dakpeh	Fallow	Fallow
						Gareh	Gareh	Gareh	Gareh	Gareh
							Homan	Homan	Homan	Homan
								Lakchi	Lakchi	Lakchi
								Gillu	Gillu	Newly opened
								Tirbum	Tirbum	Tirbum
								Lamchir	Lamchir	Lamchir

In the village *Kabu*, a Gallong village, there were 32 blocks available for jhum cultivation. These blocks were distributed on nine hill ranges falling within the *Kabu* village. The hills are *lakshi*, *gare*, *hukshi*, *yole*, *tublung*, *rakshi*, *hirshi* and *menli*. Each jhum block is owned by a number of families. The village has 78 households comprising of 569 individuals as enumerated by us in January, 1969. Each of the *jhum* block is under cultivation for 3 years consecutively. Then it is left fallow. Every year the block of the previous year remains under cultivation and simultaneously a few new blocks are opened. By opening a jhum block is meant that the trees are cut and left for drying and burning before it is taken up for cultivation. The following table shows the jhum cycle of the village *kabu*.

The jhum cycle of the village *Kabu* as given in the above table may be explained as follows :—In the year 1959, *Tubluk* block of jhum land was under cultivation. In 1960, *Tubluk* continue to be under cultivation and two new blocks named *Lakchi* and *Jatu* were opened. In 1961, *Tubluk*, *Lakchi* and *jatu* remain under cultivation and *keru* was opened newly. Thus a block of jhum land remains under cultivation for 3 consecutive years then it is left under fallow for regeneration of vegetation. It is after the expiry of 10—12 years, the same block of jhum land is taken up for cultivation. As for example, the *lakchi* block was under cultivation during 1960 to 1962. It remained under fallow from 1963 to 1968 and again taken up for cultivation in 1969. It appears, therefore, that the Gallongs of *Kabu* village maintain 7—8 years jhum cycle due to high density of population.

The jhum fields of the village *kabu* are situated on the slopes of the surrounding hills at varying distances from the settled area. Out of the nine jhum fields of *Dukbin Loya*, a resident of the *Kabu* village, five fields are within 1 km from the 'Abadi' and the rest are between 2 to 5 kms, from the village. The jhum fields are situated on different altitudes in the village. The settled area of the village was situated at a height of 1000 metre from the sea level. The jhum fields are to be found between 1000 to 1200 metres from the settled area of the village. Thus the jhum fields are distributed upto 3 thousand feet from the mean sea level.

A typical jhum field has three distinguishing features as observed in lower Siang district. First, jhum fields which are ready for sowing. Such fields are cleared of all the forest growth except a few tree trunks left here and there in the jhum field. One or two rudimentary farm huts are noticed in the jhum fields. The number of huts shows the number of households owning the particular block of jhum land. Individual field boundaries within the jhum block is made by stones, bamboo and the unburnt tree trunks. The second distinguishing feature of a jhum field is

the fallow land left for regeneration of vegetation. They lie mostly adjacent to the jhum field, under cultivation. Such fallow land is full of grasses, bushes, thin and small trees. The tree trunks have not attained full girth. The third type is the fully regenerated Jhum fields. They have tall and thick trees, under growth is thick and due to huge accumulation of humus the colour of the soil has turned black. Such fields are likely to be opened for cultivation. There may be a number of regenerated plots in the village out of which a few are opened. Sometimes the second year Jhum and the first year Jhum are found adjacent to each other in the form of mosaic on the slope of the hills.

#### CYCLE OF ACTIVITIES IN JHUM CULTIVATION

*Selection of site* : Selection of the site is the first operation in the cycle of activities in the jhum cultivation. The adult persons of the village assemble to decide about the hill to be opened. The meeting is attended by the village *gam* (village headman), leaders and other village officials. One man will initiate the discussion on the selection of the jhum field. He will tell the advantages and disadvantages of different sites and at the end he will put up his proposal for a particular site. Sometimes the entire village agrees to his proposal and select the sites in the same direction as proposed by the initiator. But often there is a division on the choice of the site selected and consequently 2 or 3 alternative sites are proposed.

*Formation of groups* : It leads to the formation of groups when some households combine together and give their choice for a particular site. In 1969, *Pangin*.—a Minyong village, was divided into 3 groups for 3 different blocks of the jhum fields. Although the jhum blocks were in the same direction from the village still they were situated on different hills. The jhum blocks under cultivation in *Pangin* were named *Galing*, *Kardong* and *Giing*. In the *Galing* block 6 households combined together to form one group. In *Kardang* five households combined to form the second group and *Giing* was taken up by five households of the village. It may be noted here that the village *Pangin* consisted of 59 households out of which 16 households participated in the jhum cultivation, and the rest of the households took up only the cultivation of wet-rice lands. The reason, for not participating in the cultivation of the jhum land, as given by the informants, was the shortage of adult and energetic man power in the village. *Tomo Loyi* of the village *Kabu* informed that he had 15 plots of jhum land but none of them were taken up for cultivation for the last 3—4 years. He was old enough to go to the jhum field. His sons were small and the eldest son who was 25 years old, lived separately. He was thinking to give a particular jhum plot to some body of the village on rent but so far none did turn up for the deal.

*Wage Labour and Share Cropping* : A particular household having less number of adult members to work on the land employ other adults of the village. Workers are paid in cash or in kind. The rate of wages varies according to the age and efficiency of the worker. A boy of 12 years was paid @ Rs. 2/- per day for the work in the jhum field in *Kabu* village. An old man is paid the same amount. An adult worker is paid @ Rs. 3/- per day. Paid workers are mostly employed for cutting the trees and clearing the jhum fields.

Sometimes the adult members of two households combine themselves and work in the jhum fields of each other on reciprocal basis. If the household is big enough then all the able bodied persons will work in the field.

The jhum field is also given on rent. The land is given on rent under the following conditions. If the head of the household is ill or old and unable to do work, he gives a portion of his jhum land to other belonging to the same village. He will charge Rs. 20 to 25/- as rent for one acre of land and Rs. 50-60/- for 2 acres of land per year. The owner of the land will have no right or share on the produce of the land but the ownership of the land will always remain with him. The man who takes the land on rent has no right to sell it.

The acreage of the jhum land under cultivation, depends on the size of the family. If the family is big and has a number of adult members then it can cultivate a bigger area than that of a small family. The rest of the jhum land will remain under fallow. Sometimes the owner gives a portion of his jhum land to others on rent. The example of *galing* plot of *Pangin* village may be cited here. The owner of the *galing* plot of jhum field is Talu Messar. The area of the jhum plot is 3 acres. In the month of January 1969, he gave 1/2 of his land to Tapiam Panor on rent. The division of the land was made by erecting poles across the plot of the land.

*Fencing* : After the selection of the sites and the formation of the jhum parties, the people get themselves busy in making fences around the jhum fields. Here also the different households combine themselves to make fences. The fencing is essential as the fields are often damaged by the mithuns a domesticated animal and other wild animals.

*Cutting clearing* : The cutting of trees and clearing of bushes is the next operation. It starts in the month of December and continues upto the middle of February. All the adult men and women will go in their jhum fields for cutting the trees. The big trees are cut by axe (*agging*) and the small trees and bushes are cleared by *dao* or *ayok*. The big trees are felled after the small trees and bushes are cleared. The cut trees are then left in

the field for drying in the sun. The thin and dry branches of the trees are collected in the conical baskets (*igin*) every day by the girls. During the month of February the cut trees are left in the field for drying. In this month there is the maximum number of sunny days in the lower Siang district.

*Drying and Burning* : After the trees are dried they are burnt. This activity is locally called *amerinum* by the Minyongs. All the villagers go to the site and see the firing operations. The firing is done by bamboo torches. Five or six persons will go with the torches and ignite the twigs from the lower slopes of the hill. The fire gradually spreads upward. The direction of the wind is examined by the smoke and thereby the men deputed for firing start the ignition from such sites where the fire may spread towards the dried trees. Firing operation is generally done during the later half of February and the first half of March.

*Cleaning Arik Romnam* : When the trees are thoroughly burnt and reduced to ashes then *arik romnam* operation starts. Here the field is thoroughly cleared of the unburnt or half burnt tree turnks. All the men, women, boys and girls participate in their respective fields. Big logs of wood are collected and stored at one place in the field. It is fired second time. The place of collection is called *sippeng*. Small twigs are also collected. The big stones found here and there in the field are removed. The logs of wood are sometimes arranged latitudinally across the slopes of the land to check the soil erosion.

After the jhum field are thoroughly cleared, a field hut is made inside them. All the close kins help each other in the construction of field huts. It is completed on the same day. The owner of the hut will feed them after completion.

*Sowing of seeds Ammosinnam*: It is the operation of sowing the seeds in the jhum fields. It is generally done in the months of April/May by the young girls. The owner's wife whose field is to be sown, invites the unmarried girls of the village for sowing the seeds. One acre plot of land requires 10 girls for sowing the seeds. Each of the girls take a small basket of cane on one side and a digging stick in the right hand. In the first year seeds of paddy, maize, millets, cucumber, jam, ginger, chillies, tapioca are mixed and sown in the same field. Paddy seeds are sown by digging stick. Other seeds are broadcasted. In the second year small millets, arum and ginger are sown. The girls stand in a line and gradually move up the hill while doing their work. One man follows them from behind with a bamboo leveller or *bopek* and cover the holes with soil. The owner of the plot will bring meat, rice and *apong* (rice beer) and distribute them to the girls. Sometimes the

girls are given feast in the house of the owner. After a week of the sowing operation the owner goes to the field to see the condition of seedlings. After two years of cultivation the particular jhum field is left for regeneration for a period of 10-12 years.

*Weeding Amsurumonam* : This is the operation of weeding in the jhum fields. It takes place after a fortnight of the sowing of the seeds. The useless grass and plants growing around the seedling are cleared with the help of a weeder made of split bamboo. It is known as *iyk*. The *iyk* scratches the soil for half an inch and thereby the grasses are uprooted. As it is made of split bamboo, the edges becomes blunt after sometime. Therefore a number of *iyks* are prepared for weeding. It is done by the members of the owners family. Normally the weeding is done twice.

When the paddy plants attain a height of 2-3 feet and tender seeds are visible then they are largely attacked by wild pigs, wild bear and monkeys. One man therefore sleeps in the field-hut to scare away the wild animals. He makes noise by hitting a split bamboo against the hard wood in the hut and the wild animals are scared away.

*Harvesting Ammoinnam* : The harvesting of paddy, maize, millets, etc., is known as *ammoinnam* among the Minyongs. The paddy ripe in October/November. It is then attacked by small birds who come in large groups. The Gallongs and the Minyongs know by seeing these birds that the harvesting season for paddy has come. A man will go again to stay in the field hut and will scare away the birds. Harvesting is done by the owner and his family. Before the actual harvesting starts, the wife of the owner will go to the field and bring some paddy. It is then kept on the fire to dry. Then it is husked and cooked and thereby the members of the family know the quality of rice produced in their field. After 2-3 days of cooking the new rice, all the members of the owners family will go to the field for harvesting. They go to the field with the *igin* or conical basket and pluck the paddy by hand and keep them in the basket. The stalks are left in the field. The plucked paddy is collected on a dry spot in the field. The paddy is separated from the stalk by the legs. The women keep bunches of paddy stalks under their feet and trample them. The paddy brought from the field is stored in the village granary.

## SETTLED CULTIVATION

### WET-RICE CULTIVATION

The wet-rice cultivation, locally known as *assi-Arick* was introduced to this region after 1950. It is a permanent cultivation and the fields are prepared in the flat valleys or along the gentle slopes of the river courses. Paddy is the main crop and raised by flooding the fields by means of

irrigation channels. As the fields are made on the level land therefore the plough drawn by a pair of bullocks are mainly used. On the gentle slopes of the valleys the wet-rice fields are made by making terraces which stand in the form of stairs along the slope of the valleys. The field terraces along the upper slopes of the valley are narrower than those on the lower slopes. Typical field terrace in *Pangin* village situated on the slopes are 5-6 feet wide and 30-40 feet long. In a wide valley, the field terraces are mostly square shaped. On the rectangular and narrow terraces, cultivation is done by *pakur* or *Kudali*. On the wide terraces in the valley, the plough is used. Water channel is cut along the side of the terraces which helps in flooding the fields. When the upper terrace is full of water, it spills over the terraces at lower slopes.

The total area of the wet-rice fields of the village *Kabu* is 127 acres distributed into 112 plots of varying sizes belonging to different individuals of the village. The smallest plot is 2 acres and the biggest is  $9\frac{1}{4}$  acres. All these fields lie on the left side of the *Siyom* river in a flat alluvial valley. The *Kabu Nala* running through this valley has been taped near the *Kabu* village by throwing a bund across it from where the irrigation channel is cut and diverted towards the wet-rice fields of the village. The main irrigation channel passes through the central part of the fields and many subsidiary channels have been cut to irrigate other fields. Bunds of 1 to 2 feet high have been raised around the fields to check the water from flowing away. A hole is made in the bund to allow the irrigation water of the channel to enter the field and after it is flooded with water the surplus water flows over the bund to the adjacent fields.

The wet-rice cultivation was introduced in this village in the year 1950 by the Agriculture department of the Arunachal Pradesh administration. A portion of the land adjacent to *Sippe* river was reclaimed and developed for the wet-rice cultivation. The village people of *Kabu* who were living on the hill were demonstrated the operations of this system. The relative advantages of this system over the *jhum* cultivation was explained. The people were induced to take up this cultivation by means of subsidy and grants by the government. This type of cultivation gave them double crops in a year while in *jhum* cultivation they used to get single crop in a year. Secondly, wet-rice cultivation required less man power for the preparation of the fields. This system also gave them sufficient time to take up subsidiary occupations. Thus from 1950 to 1956 about 27 acres of land in *Kabu* village was developed and brought under plough cultivation. The *Gallong* of *Kabu* who were living up the hills started migration to the present site near the wet-rice fields. The progress of acreage of wet-rice fields in *Kabu* village from 1957 to 1968 was about 100 acres. Other details of landuse have been described later on.



*Nature of holding* : The ownership pattern of wet-rice field among 10 individuals of *Kabu* village selected at random is as follows :

<i>Name of the cultivator</i>	<i>Land under permanent cultivation. WRC/TRC</i>
Mikar Loya	3 acres
Bojar Galim	4 acres
Hogmar Loya	4½ acres
Lika Loyi	4¾ acres
Boken Etta	9¼ acres
Eki	3½ acres
Toka Toyi	2¾ acres
Pagmo Loyi	4 acres
Ebin Loyi	3½ acres
Sikom Loyi	8 acres

(Source, B.D.O. Office, Along.)

The wet-rice fields of an individual is not consolidated at one place. It is found at different places in plots of different sizes. For example, the fields of Mikir Loya in the above table has 3 acres of wet-rice fields. It is found at two places in the plots of 2 acres and one acre.

Share cropping is also practised in the wet-rice cultivation. It is given to any member either belonging to the clan of the owner, or any member who has come from some other village for the purpose of settling down in the new village. Himmar Loya, a Gallong of *Kabu* village gave a portion of his wet-rice land to a Nepalese family for the last 10 years on the basis of share cropping. The Nepalese man cultivates the land and gets 50 mds of paddy after harvesting. The rest of the produce is given to the owner of the plot.

#### CYCLE OF ACTIVITIES IN WET-RICE FIELDS

Agricultural operations in the wet-rice fields start in the month of April. The fields are already flooded by the rain. The flooded fields are first ploughed. The paddy seeds are sown in the seed beds prepared carefully. Transplanting takes place in the month of May and the first crop of paddy is harvested in the month of August. By this time the transplanting of the second crop of paddy is done. This crop is ready for harvesting in the month of December. Besides paddy the other crops sown in the wet-rice fields are millets, maize and *mirung* and mustard seeds. Mustard is harvested in the months of February and March.

*Bunding* : The construction and maintenance of bunds is an important activity in the wet-rice cultivation. The bunds are often damaged by the flow of water. They are also used as paths to go to the fields. The bunds

are constructed and maintained by the owner of the fields. They also employ persons on daily wages for the bunding. In *Lika* village a labour is paid @ Rs. 3/-per day for this work.

The Gallongs measure their wet-rice fields in terms of *Pura*. One *pura* of land is equal to 20 *Mari* long and 20 *Mari* broad. One *Mari* is equal to 10 feet. Thus one *pura* land measures about 40,000 sq feet land. It is slightly smaller than one acre of land which approximately comes to 43,000 sq. feet.

*Sowing* : Women generally do the sowing of seeds in the wet-rice fields. One woman can sow seeds in one *Puraland* in a day while 4 women will be required to do the same job in one *pura* of *jhum* land. Transplanting and harvesting often takes more number of hands. Ten women are usually required to harvest one *pura* of wet-rice field.

The wet-rice fields in the foot hills are often damaged by the wild elephants. They attack the standing crops during the harvesting season. In *Lika* village the people have made huts on the high poles in the central part of the fields to scare away the wild elephants.

*Harvesting* : Harvesting of paddy is done by the women. Sickle is used in the operation. The harvested paddy with the stalks are collected in the enclosures, especially erected inside the field. It remains there for a fortnight when it completely dries.

After a fortnight, the women and unmarried girls go to the field with a cane mat, stick and basket and separate the paddy from the stalks. A bunch of paddy with stalks is taken and kept on the mat. It is trampled under the legs. The paddy is thus separated from the stalks. It is then collected in the baskets and given to men who carry them to the granaries of the village.

#### TERRACED RICE CULTIVATION

Rice cultivation was introduced in the Siang district in 1950-51 by the government. It proved highly successful particularly in those villages which covered by the Block development programme. The Block gives monetary help, implements and guidance to the local people in the construction of terraces and induces them to adopt terraced rice cultivation. The example may be cited here of the *Pangin* block and the nature of help it has given to the people of *Pangin* village in the construction of terraces, etc. The *Pangin* Development Block was established in the year 1959-60 and there were 30 villages under its jurisdiction belong mostly to the *Minyongs*. The development block during the second five-year plan phase had a budget sanction of Rs. 15 lakhs. For making terraces the *Pangin* block pay Rs. 75/- per head per

acre in the first stage but in the subsequent stages it pays less. The field terraces are made by the individual households. Sometimes they also engage persons on daily wages @ Rs. 3/- per day.

The block supplies them agricultural implements like spade, filling axe, pick axe, jampar, hammer and shovel. It also supplies them free manure but we were informed that the people are not much interested in the manure as the land is fertile enough. From the inauguration of the Pangin Block in 1959-60 upto 1968 it has brought 52 acres of land under terraced rice cultivation in Pangin village. Before the establishment of the block the agriculture department of the Arunachal Administration helped in the development of terraced rice cultivation in this village. Due to its efforts, from 1951 to 1958 about 81 acres of land was already brought under this system of cultivation. In 1969, during our visit to Pangin village, the land under terraced cultivation was 133 acres.

In Pangin village the fields of terraced rice cultivation are distributed in three areas namely *Yaying*, *Puling* and *Murang*. *Yaying* area is situated on both sides of *Yarbung* and *Lambung* rivulets. *Puling* and *Murang* areas are found by the side of *Rutch* and *Urmung* rivulets. The rivulets mentioned above are perennial in nature and form tributaries of the Siang river. Irrigation channels have been cut from these rivulets and water is carried to the terraced fields. The field terraces on the lower slopes are automatically filled by the surplus water of the upper terraces. At some places the water of the channel is taken by bamboo pipes to distant terraced fields.

Out of 159 individuals in Pangin village only 62 have terraced fields. The size of the individual fields vary from  $\frac{1}{4}$ th acre to 2 acres. Most of the fields are below one acre.

The cycle of activities involved in the terraced rice cultivation may briefly be described here. It begins from cutting of field terraces locally known as *Asi Arick pekkc*. First the alignment is made by the rope along the slope of the valley and the terraces are cut by *Kudali*. In cutting the terraces the village people's help is extended on payment of Rs. 2-3/- per man per day. The field terraces are then ploughed twice during the month of March. Bunding by the earth is made around the fields. This operation is locally called *dapih*. The fields are then flooded with water. One portion of the field terraces is selected to sow paddy seeds in the month of March. When the seedlings attain a height of 5-6 inches, it is transplanted in the flooded wet-rice fields by the girls. For transplanting, the girls get Rs. 1.50 per head per day in Pangin village. For one acre of land for transplanting, 5-6 girls are engaged who complete the work in 2-3 days. Before transplanting, the field is ploughed by men. If the terraced field is wide enough

for the bullocks to move around then the plough is used. On the narrow and small terraces cultivation is done by *Kudali*. As, much of the day is spent working in the field, the individual household make a temporary field house or *Arick Poyu* in the field to take rest during the tiring work. It also protects them against rain, etc.

By the month of April *Arick Budum* (weeding) is done by *Khurpi* and hand. The unevenness of the field is also removed by levelling the soil so that the water level spreads uniformly throughout the field. By the month of August the paddy is ready for harvesting. This season is characterised by alternating cloudiness and sunshine. The men who go to the field for harvesting wait in the farm houses for the sunshine to come out as it is not good to harvest paddy in the cloudy weather. If it is sunny day they will start the harvesting. It is done by *Yoksik* or small knife, with iron blade of 6" and a wooden handle. The stalk is left in the field. The harvested paddy is first accumulated in the farm houses. From there it is taken to the granaries in the village.

#### KITCHEN GARDENS (MOPI ARICK)

Kitchen gardening is an important land-use type among the Gallong, and the Minyongs in the lower Siang district. We were informed that it is also popular among the tribes living in the upper Siang district. A variety of vegetables are produced in the Kitchen garden. The vegetables commonly grown in Kabu and Pangin villages are cauliflower, potato, green chilli, white gourd, peas, mustard seeds, raddish, turnip, brinjal, yam, ginger, carrots, leafy vegetables, locally called *lai sag*, etc. Bamboo fences are made around the kitchen garden. The vegetable is normally consumed by the owner and the surplus is sold in the market. Kitchen gardens are mostly found within the settled areas of the village.

#### LAND USE PATTERN OF GALLONG VILLAGE

The Kabu village with a population of 562 persons distributed among 97 households has about 249 acres of land under cultivation. Of the total land under cultivation ; 127 acres are under wet-rice cultivation and about 122 acres under jhum cultivation. The village is situated on the right bank of the Siyom river on an elevated terrace. The terrace is girdled by a hill range in the south and the Siyom river in the north. The eastern and the western boundry of the village is demarcated by Sipi rivulet and the Kabu nala that meet the Siyom river from the south. By the drainage it appears that the land of Kabu village slopes from south and west towards north and east.

The terraces are covered by a top layer of alluvial soil, 2 to 3 feet thick, which gradually thins down in the direction of the river and the gullies.

The nature of terrain determines the field patterns. It is observed that the wet-rice fields often formed a rectangle or a square in the eastern part of the village where no undulations are found. The shapes change from a perfect rectangle with increase in slope and irregularity of terrain.

Most irregular field pattern is found in the slopes of the hillocks, and the areas close to the river and streams. Here small field patches of peculiar shape emerge to utilize flat land and thin soil cover at different levels.

The wet-rice cultivation areas have many patches of undeveloped and swampy land. Besides some portion of the land near the bank of Siyom and Sipi rivers is undeveloped and without any owner. A portion of the water logged area in the midst of the wet-rice areas has been reclaimed for fish rearing. Irrigation channels have been cut from the Kabu nala to flood the paddy fields.

About 75% of the cultivated land is under paddy cultivation. Two crops of paddy are grown in a year *i.e.*, winter season crop and the summer season crop. The millets are sown on the bunds around the paddy fields. The plots, with slight undulations and sandy alluvial soil, are used for the cultivation of maize. Mustard is sown in the plots within the settled area of the village.

The production of paddy has been estimated separately for the wet-rice fields and jhum fields for the Kabu village. In the wet-rice fields the estimated production of paddy both for winter and summer season crops. The Jhum fields produce a single paddy crop in a year. The estimated production is about 10 maunds per acre.

The consumption pattern of the village has also been estimated. According to official estimates the requirement for food has been taken @ 9 maunds per head per year for all the people. Besides, the village people feed the cattle, pigs and fowls and also prepare 'apong'. This consumption of rice has been estimated @ 4 maunds per household per year.

The following table shows the relation of food production and food consumption in the villages surveyed. It shows that all the villages are having surplus production of rice by introduction of wet-rice cultivation. As the rate of production of paddy in the wet-rice fields is higher and two crops are possible hence the people are taking to settled cultivation more than the shifting cultivation.

**Relation of food production and food consumption**

Table

Village	No of households	Population	Acreage under W.R. C/T. R.C.	Acreage under Jhum	Total production of rice in mds.	Total consumption in mds.
Kabu	97	562	127	122	9130	5446
Pangin	59	253	133	80	7810	2513
Balek	49	197	140	40	6600	1969
Roing	28	163	92	42	4914	1579
Rasam	34	188	100	30	4767	1828
Tigra	39	179	122	45	6124	1767
Kalek	36	172	120	40	5900	1692
Monku	42	211	105	44	5464	2067

- (1) Ratio of paddy-husk and rice has been taken as 1/3 : 2/3.
- (2) Requirement of food has been taken @ 9 maunds per head per year for all the people except those who use maize, millet, joistear as their staple food and have their requirement of rice as 75% rice and 25% rest food articles.
- (3) Rice for feeding cattle, poultry, pigs and various festivals and making 'apong', etc., is estimated @ 4 maunds per family per year.
- (4) Production of paddy per acre :—

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{W.R.C/T.R.C} = 25 \text{ maunds per acre in winter} \\ \quad \quad \quad = 20 \text{ maunds per acre in summer} \end{array} \right\} \text{—double crops.}$$

Jhum land = 10 maunds per acre single crop.

*Man and land ratio* : The following table shows the per capita share of the cultivated land in the villages surveyed. From the table it is obvious that per capita land is less than one acre.

Table

Village	Total Population	Acreage under W.R.C/T.R.C	Acreage under Jhum (dry)	Total Acreage	Per capita share
Kabu	562	127	122	249	0.44
Pangin	253	133	80	213	0.84
Balek	197	140	40	180	0.91
Roing	163	92	42	134	0.82
Rasom	188	100	30	130	0.69
Tigra	179	122	45	167	0.93
Kalek	172	120	40	160	0.93
Monku	211	105	44	149	0.71

Let us now calculate how much land is sufficient to supply food for one man throughout the year. We have already seen that the people of lower Siang use combined shifting and settled cultivation for food crops. The ratio of these combinations is 25: 75 percents respectively depending on the nature of soil, slope and rainfall. Besides, due to the impetus received from the Government more and more people are taking to sedentary cultivation.

In the foregoing table, the per capita land both in the sedentary and shifting cultivation of the sample villages have been shown. The estimated rate of food consumption for all the villages has also been shown. On that basis the land requirement for an individual to sustain himself throughout the year is one acre of dry terraced land or 0.33 acre of wet-rice land. It also shows that more number of people can be fed on wet-rice land than on the jhum land.

### CROPS AND THEIR REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION

The crops commonly grown in the lower Siang may be divided into the following categories. They are cereal crops, oil seeds, starchy roots, vegetables, fruits, fibres and various other crops. The bulk of the agricultural products is cereal crops. A great part of the cultivated land is given to the cultivation of subsistence crops like paddy, maize and millets. The other crops only minor attention from the cultivators. The cultivated land devoted to other crops is not substantial. Again, they are given the marginal land for cultivation. The marginal land is that portion of the land which is not suitable for raising the cereal crops either due to poor drainage, unfertile soil conditions or being within easy reach of wild animals. Another noticeable feature is the complete absence of pulses in the list of crops grown. Pulses do not form part of their daily menu also. Their protein deficiency is supplemented by large intake of fish and meat.

#### PADDY

Paddy is a rabi crop and belongs to *Oryza sativa*. Most of the paddy grown is of the upland variety. It requires good and evenly distributed soil with a good water holding capacity. As these conditions are fulfilled in the jhum fields, and in the wet-rice fields it becomes a reliable crop. Paddy is, therefore, cultivated in small and big patches where the soil is fertile with a high content of organic matter. The Gallong recognise such soil by observing the vegetation above them. The black soil is rich in organic content and the jhum fields, invariably, are located in those areas of the hills. The cultivation cycle is also regulated by changing the colour of the soil. After one cycle of cultivation in a particular jhum field, the Minyong will wait till the soil regains its dark black colour by the regeneration of trees. In such

patches of land, paddy seeds are sown in holes made by the dibble. On the other hand in wet-rice fields where plough is used, paddy is sown by transplantation.

The sowing and harvesting periods of paddy in the Gallong and the Minyong is influenced by the moisture conditions, variety of the paddy sown, and the fertility of the soil. In *Lika*, a Tai village in the foothills, the following varieties of paddy is sown. Their sowing and harvesting periods are different and also they require different types of land. The most popular varieties of paddy, sown in *Lika*, are *johra*, *haldaram*, *wagmoni*, *ahomali*, *baodabli*, *borah* and *memali*. *Johra* is the finest variety. It is sown in August and harvested in December, *memali* is the coarsest variety. It is sown in October and harvested in December. *Borah* is sown in July and harvested in November. The other varieties namely *haldaram*, *wagmoni*, *ahomali* and *baodabli* are sown during November and December and harvested in March and April. In the jhum fields only the coarse varieties of paddy are sown while the better varieties are sown in the wet-rice fields or *Pani Kheti* areas of the village. In the jhum fields, production per acre varies from 12 to 15 mds. while in the *Pani-kheli* it is 20—30 mds. In the jhum fields of *Lika* village paddy is sown mixed with chilli, *Kochu* (Arum), maize and black til. Paddy is sown by a dibble but other seeds are broadcasted in the same field.

In *Kabu* village, at an altitude of 1000 metres the varieties of paddy grown in the jhum fields are *bally*, *kimin*, *yamuk*, *tami*. *Bally* is a white variety while the others are red and fit only for the preparation of *apong* (Rice beer) a favourite drink. Single crop is grown in jhum fields. It is sown in April and harvested in August. Sowing is done by the digging stick locally known as *amchik hingi*. The per acre production of the above varieties of paddy in the jhum fields varies from 20 to 30 mds. In the wet-rice fields of *Kabu* village, double cropping of paddy is practised. Some of the common varieties are *tarti*, *ankar* and *nami*. *Tarti* is the finest and *ankar* is coarsest variety. The per acre production of paddy in the wet-rice fields varies from 40 to 60 mds. Thus the production of paddy in this village is better than the *Lika* village. Of the three varieties mentioned above, *tarti* variety gives the maximum return. One maund of *tarti* seeds, sown in the wet-rice fields, gives 25 mds. of paddy. The production of *nami* and *ankar* is 20 and 17 mds respectively. As there is double cropping in the wet-rice fields, the first sowing of kernds in the nurseries starts in the month of October. When seedlings attain some height, they are transplanted in the wet-rice fields in February and March. Before transplanting the seedling, the wet-rice fields are flooded with water from *nala* or streams. The first crop is harvested in July. The second crop is sown in August and harvested in December. So far neither serious insect pests nor serious diseases have been found, affecting



paddy in Siang district. Stem pests attack husked rice but paddy can be kept in good condition for at least two seasons. Birds attack paddy in the field when it is ripe. Rats often attack the paddy kept in the *Kumsung* (granary). The Gallongs and Minyongs make special type of rat proof granaries. They tie a saucer like round wooden board on the supporting pillars of the granary. Somewhere they tie a hollowed tin of kerosene oil in an upside down position on the supporting pillars. These tins act as barriers for the rats to enter the granary. Again the floor of the granary is fully covered by cane mats. Rat traps are also used by the people. Paddy is first boiled and then dried in the sun or fried on fire before it is husked by a mortar. It is also reduced to flour for making *etting*, rice paste cake. Rice is also brewed for the preparation of *apong* or rice beer. Rice is the staple diet of the people.

In *Pangin*, a Minyong village, the most common varieties of paddy grown are *pelu*, *payum*, *jorang* and *badak*. *Jorang* is the finest variety and its per acre production is 20 to 30 mds.

The Minyongs have also developed two varieties of paddy, namely, *ringne* or cold season paddy and *rigo*, a hot season paddy, which suits the local weather conditions.

#### MILLETS

Millets are also considered as cereal crop of the people.

Millets comprises of Jowar (*Sorghum vulgare*) and bajra (*Pennisetum typhoides*) is another important crop of lower Siang. It is grown as a mixed crop with paddy and maize in the Gallong and Minyong villages. Generally, the jhum fields are utilised for raising this crop, as it is quick maturing and draught resistant. The millets are harvested while the paddy is still in the field. It grows to a height of 6 to 8 feet in the sandy loam soil. In the jhum fields, after the paddy seeds are sown with dibble, the millets are broadcasted around the field by hand. It is also sown in the wet-rice fields along with paddy. In the wet-rice fields of Kabu village, the millets are sown on the bunds (*damdoh*) around the paddy fields. The stalks of millets form valuable fodder for the Mithuns. After the paddy and millets are harvested, the mithuns, cows, etc. are driven in the fields for consuming the stalks. Millets are used for the preparation of *apong*.

#### MAIZE

Maize is sown as a mixed crop with paddy and millets. It is also sown in separate fields. It grows best in the sandy loam soil and near the river bank. In *Kabu* village, maize is sown in three different ways. First, it is

sown separately in the month of January and February ; Secondly it is also sown in the same field with paddy or a little after the paddy has been sown ; and finally, it is sown in an altogether separate field depending upon the condition and the quality of the soil, in the month of June and July. The soil suitable for maize cultivation is called *peru* by the Gallongs. A typical *peru* land in *Kabu* village is undulating and comprises of soft sandy alluvial soil. The rain-water does not remain in the field. After the maize seeds are sown in January, the people get themselves busy, in the preparation of small protective bamboo covers. The bamboo covers are knitted from the bamboo strips and it is kept around the maize seedling which have attained a height of about three inches. The village people help one another in the preparation of the bamboo covers. These covers are prepared usually during the leisure time. A group of 5 to 6 persons sit together by the fire side and prepare them. Thus they protect the tender seedlings from damage by the birds. Maize can reach a height of 6 to 8 feet. In most of the Gallong and Minyong areas, maize looks stunted and grows to a height of 3 to 4½ feet. Maize has a good average nutrient content. It is not used exclusively as food among the Gallongs. It is consumed in the form of boiled maize or roasted over the fire. It is rarely used for preparing beer. Ripe maize can be attacked in the field by monkeys. At the time of harvesting the people keep a night watch. Maize is, therefore, sown in the land near the homesteads so that they may be properly watched. The cultivation of maize has increased due to the introduction of 'Pani-kheti' or wet-rice cultivation.

#### MUSTARD

Mustard has been introduced in the Gallong and Minyong areas of Siang district since 1950. They are seen to have been growing well in the villages of Lika, Kabu, Pangin, etc. The fields lie mostly near the settled area of the villages so that it may be watched properly. The *Tais* of *Lika* village make bamboo enclosures around the field of mustard. These enclosures are locally known as *ettor*. It is not sown on a large scale. The mustard seeds are now sold in the market at *Along* and *Pangin* by the Gallong and the Minyongs. Formerly the Gallongs were not knowing the use of edible oil but by the introduction of mustard they use the oil for the preparation of fish, meat, etc. Sometimes back the *Marwaris* from Dibrugarh used to cross the Brahmaputra river by steamers and go to *Adi* villages for the purchase and collection of mustard seeds at cheap rates. Now this practice is checked. The *Adis* now-a-days sell the mustard seeds to the cooperative stores run by the administration. Mustard is thus an important cash crop. There is no oil press in the area but the *Adis* apply indigenous method to extract oil from mustard. The mustard seeds are

first fried and then pressed with stones on a bamboo container. The fields near the homestead is given to the cultivation of mustard.

#### SUGARCANE

Sugarcane was introduced in Siang district quite recently. It has now become an important item of merchandise among the Gallongs and the Minyongs of Siang. We have observed thick red variety of sugarcane growing in Minyong villages. It is cultivated in the wet-rice fields where facilities for irrigation exist. It is grown mainly for the preparation of mollasses. Preparation of mollasses is a recent introduction. Cane crushers have been supplied to the villages from the administration. On our way to Pangin village, we have observed a cane crusher drawn by 6 Minyong men and women. One man was feeding the crusher with sugarcane. The juice was collected in cans and boiled in a big iron cauldron. The Minyong and Gallong women carry the mollasses to distant markets. We were informed that the Minyongs of *Riga* village go to Tuting market involving 7 days march and sell mollasses. Tuting is a circle headquarter in the interior of Siang district near the northern border. These fetch good prices and are also bartered in exchange of beads, coat, etc. The indigenous variety of sugarcane remains for chewing purposes.

#### COTTON

Gallongs, Minyongs and Pasis raise a few fibre crops also. The most important is cotton grown in the jhum fields. The preparation of field for the cultivation of cotton requires the forest to be cleared first. It is then burnt and the ashes are spread around the field. The seeds are then sown by broadcasting them. The Minyongs of Pangin village sow the cotton seeds in the month of March and by November and December the plants are ready for cotton picking. To protect the crop from heavy rain and storms, fields are generally found protected within the forest cover in the Gallong, Minyong and Pasi areas. The cotton produced are of short staple. After the cotton is picked by the women it is kept for drying for a few days. In *Pangin* village, we observed the raw cotton kept for drying in baskets. The basket is kept on the open porch of the huts. The cotton is then cleared of the seeds by a wooden machine operated by hand. It is then spinned into thick thread by a spinner. This thread is used for the preparation of *gadu* by the Minyong women. The Gollongs do not prepare *gadu* but purchase or barter them with the Minyongs.

According to the Minyongs, proper land for cotton cultivation is determined by the suitability of the site. It should be near to some stream or river and on moderate slope. In Pangin village *mirdang* and *mekko* are suitable sites for the cultivation of cotton. Cotton grows well around

*Pasighat*. Therefore, the Pasi-Minyongs are known to produce white variety of cotton. The cotton produced in Pangin village is not very white due to slanting nature of sun rays falling on the plants. The Minyongs learnt the art of the cotton ginning from the Padams luring in the eastern part of the district. Formerly the cotton was kept on the stone and pressed by wood to take out the cotton seeds. This method was time consuming. The Minyong girls used to visit the Padam villages and learnt the use of the ginning machine locally known as *dokkep*. The ginner is indigenous and made of bamboo and wood. It is operated by hand.

The ginned cotton is used for the preparation of *gadu* by the Minyongs. *Gaddu* is used as a shawl by the local people. It is made from two types of thread. One is the thick thread of the size of half inch. It is called *taput*. It is prepared by hand. The thin thread or *yenno* is purchased from the market. Both are woven on a loom. It takes 4 to 6 days to prepare one *gadu*. The Minyong women spin the cotton thread while going to the jhum field or to the market or during their leisure time. While walking the women keep raw cotton in small containers made from gourd. It is fixed near their left part of waist. The cotton thread for the preparation of *gadu* is put in hot water mixed with rice paste. It is then made stiff and rolled in balls.

## FRUITS

*Oranges* : Orange gardens have been seen in the Gallong and Minyong villages. They grow in large number during the months of December to February. It is also a good cash crop. Due to exorbitant cost of transport the oranges, produced in Siang, cannot be sent to big cities like Dibrugarh, Gauhati, etc.

In *Pangin* village, the seedlings of Orange were brought from *Pasighat* during the British period. The seedling grew well and gradually the orange trees were planted in large number. The *Rusing* and *Mobuk* hamlets of *Pangin* village is full of orange orchards. The trees generally grow near the settled area of the villages so that the fruits may be watched properly. The oranges are plucked by a bamboo notched stairs known as *lebang*. Usually, the girls pluck the oranges by hand and keep them in *igne* or cane baskets hanging over their back. While plucking the oranges some fall on the ground and are eaten away by the pigs. The oranges are sold in the market

*Jack-fruits* : It is planted near the settled part of the village. They are also found in the forest areas of the village. Each jackfruit trees are owned individually. They are eaten by people when it is ripe. In *Pangin* village, the largest number of trees owned by a man is *Talam Dupak*. He has 60 jackfruit trees. It is regarded as one of the symbol of richness in their society.

Other fruits, cultivated by the people are banana, papaya and guava.

## TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES OF CULTIVATION

On a subsistence level there is no hard and fast line to be drawn between agriculture and all other economic functions. Agriculture, animal husbandry and kitchen work are one uninterrupted and interlocked chain of functions<sup>1</sup> (Schipple 1956, 78). Among the Gallongs and the Minyongs, the crops are processed at home in the courtyard. They are stored in the *kumsung* or granaries. For the successive stages of harvesting and processing of crops and of food preparation similar tools and containers are used. Some household utensils are made partly from agricultural products. A certain amount of cultivation is performed in and around the courtyard. Therefore, a dividing line between agricultural tools and the household tools cannot be drawn.

### IRON TOOLS

The Adis of Siang always use iron *Dao* (Sword) as the main weapon of agriculture, hunting and fishing. It is also displayed in their traditional dances. Bows and arrows are also used for hunting birds, wild pigs, deer, etc. Single-barrel guns have now been introduced among the tribes by the administration. They also use *yoksik* (Small knife) in their day-to-day activities. Every Gallong and Minyong man of *kabu* and *pangin* villages was seen having *dao* and *yoksik* when going to their field or forest. Bis saws, or *korot* have been introduced for cutting the trees for making planks, used in the house construction. They are purchased from *Pasighat* and *Along* markets by the tribes. *Kudali* or *pakur* is used for cutting the earth in the field. *Kudali* has long wooden handle and broad iron blade. It is purchased from the market. During cutting the land for making terraces, the people requisitioned for the work, divide themselves into groups and take a particular patch of land for cutting. In contract work where people from more than one villages are participating, the groups are made according to the village or hamlets. It is necessary for the evaluation of work done and for the distribution of wages. The village leader, *gam* will lead the work groups under him. He is responsible for the completion of work and receives remuneration on behalf of the group working under him.

While cutting the earth for terracing the men divide themselves into two batches. One batch stands in a file and cut the earth leaving big slods in the field. The other batch consisting of two men work as levellers. They break the soil and level it. During the work they take lot of tea without milk and sugar. The tea leaves are boiled in the aluminium kettle and the men drink it in bamboo *chonga* or glasses, readily prepared in the

field. A fire place is prepared and the firewood is kept burning in the winter season. During the work, two or three men come to the fire place and warm themselves and then go to their work.

Axe is used for cutting big trees in the jhum fields. The branches are then cut by the *Dao*. After they are dried, the trees are burned. They also use plough with iron blades in the wet-rice fields.

The use of iron tools on large scale by the Gallong and the Minyongs requires the services of ironsmiths in the villages. In *Kabu* village, ironsmithy is done by a man, named Pangmo Loya. He has learnt this occupation by dint of his labour and experience and not by birth. His bellow is at work, when he is free from his agricultural pursuits. The bellows are made of two thick bamboo stems fixed in the ground. The air is passed in the furnace by feather handles which are pumped through the bamboo pipes. The ironsmith is paid in cash and also in kind.

#### WOODEN TOOLS

*Dibble* is a pointed wooden stick largely used for sowing the seeds. It is mostly used among the Gallongs. The Minyongs use the pointed handle of *Dao* or sword for making holes in the ground. Though it is very easy to operate a dibble, yet it is very difficult to sow a big plot of land with its help. Holes are made in the ground with the dibble, held in one hand, and seeds are thrown into the holes by the other. To ensure doubly and to cover all those seeds which could not go into the holes, another person, following the sower, covers up all the holes smoothly with a broomstick, locally known as *bopek*.

*Yeek* is a weeder, made of bamboo strip of 12 to 16 inches long. It is sharpened in the middle like blade and folded in such a way that one end crosses over the other and a loop is made at the head. The two ends are to be gripped in hand while weeding. A number of such *yeeks* are necessary to weed a small patch of land as their blade edges become blunt after some use. The *yeek* scratches the ground, hardly to the extent of half inch and grass and unwanted plants are uprooted. But it is not very effective as a weeder. Therefore, two weeding are generally required for one plot of land.

*Yoksik* is a small knife with iron blade of 6 inch and a wooden handle. It is used for harvesting, and stripping the bamboo and cane, etc.

Plough or *Nangor* was introduced among the people of Siang after 1950. It is the same as we see in the plains. The personnels of the agriculture department and the block development office, demonstrated them about the use of plough. Every part of the plough has Adi names. The handle

is known as *Alokako*. The iron blade is *Nangor*. The wood which is kept on the neck of the ox while ploughing is called *juali*.

New agricultural implements, supplied by the block development office in the Gallong and Minyong villages, are spade, filling axe, pick axe, jampar, hammer and shovel. Rice haulers and wheel barrows have also been given. Manure is supplied free but the people are not interested in artificial manure. According to them, land is very fertile and requires no artificial manures.

#### DIVISION OF LABOUR AND PROCESSING

When one speaks of a human group as being at the subsistence level, this does not mean that every individual fends completely for himself. A certain division of labour takes place and leads to a certain amount of goods and services being exchanged. Professional classes with a full-time specialisation are absent, but part-time specialisation of individuals and groups, as well as differentiation between sex age and classes, can easily be observed among the Gallongs and the Minyong of lower Siang district. This appears in agriculture as much as in other activities, *viz.*, in the contract work, house construction, etc.

The distribution of agricultural work amongst sex classes in Kabu and Pangin villages on the basis of personal observations and oral statements of the local people is given below.

As a rule, women generally work on the land which are near the homestead. Men partially help them in the preparation of the land, making fences, etc. This may be explained by the nature of this work. In the midst of their busy domestic work, the woman will go to her vegetable garden and pluck leaves of *lai sag*, green chillies for preparing vegetable curry. She will pluck pumpkins, brinjals, gourd, etc., for selling them in the market. The old woman with young daughter will go to the orange garden with cane basket and *lebang* (wooden notched stairs) to pluck the oranges. They will then go to the market. If the orange garden is away from the village as it was observed in *Kabu* village, then the men in groups of 5—6 persons will go and bring them in the cane baskets. The women then take them to the market for sale.

In the jhum fields, men will cut trees burn the dried trees, throw away stones and stumps of trees and the women will do most of the sowing of seeds by the digging sticks. Men, women and boys work together in weeding and scrapping of the paddy fields. In the jhum fields which are newly opened, both men and women work together. The men cut the big trees by axe and women cut the bushes by *dao*. The dried sticks are

collected by the women for use as fire wood. The men drag down the big trees and cut its branches. Field hut and fences around the fields are made by men. They also burn the trees. The women do sowing and harvesting of paddy. The women separate the paddy from the stalks by trampling them under feet. From the field the paddy is carried by men in the basket and stored in the village granneries.

In the wet-rice fields, the work of the women becomes quite less. The field terraces are made by men. It is ploughed, levelled, etc., by men. Irrigation channels are made by the men. Transplanting is done by the women in the knee deep water. Mostly men will go for the harvest. The *jaul* (farmshed) is made by men. The bullocks, plough and other farm implements are kept and maintained by men. In the *peru* fields, where maize is sown, the men prepare the land by burning the grasses and the unnecessary bushes. The women sow the seeds with the digging sticks. The men prepare bamboo nets to cover the small seedlings to protect them against birds, rats, etc. The men and women make fences around the maize fields. The women harvest maize by plucking. The maize is processed and kept for drying by the women.

In the cotton fields the men clear the land and prepare fields for sowing. The cotton is picked, dried and ginned by the women. The cotton spinning and weaving of cloth is done by women.

The manioc, particularly the cultivated varieties, are left to the care of the women. Some of the important manioc, locally known as *INCHEK*, are named as *rakbinngin*, *ngingchir*, *nginteh*, *ngintek*, *ngintubalum*, *tabbom*, *nginkeh*, *ngne* (Kochu), *tarmalu* (Sweet potato), *allih* and *allek*. They are grown in the fields near the village and the women in the course of their domestic duties dig a bunch of Kochu or sweet potato. They sell them in the market.

Division of labour is noticed in the contract work given to the village people by the Government or by the private agencies. The Gallongs of *Kabu* village get the contract for the construction of houses and road from the Government. When such contract is received by one or a few individuals of the village it is put to the village council for consideration. The village *gam* and the secretary call a meeting of the village elders and distribute the work in such a way that all the households may work by rotation. The remuneration is shared by all the individuals of the village who participate in the work. No individual is free to undertake a contract work without the sanction of the village council. Infringement of this system, leads to the village dispute and the matter is put to the *Kebang* for decision.



During our stay in the *Kabu* village in the month of December/January 1969, we could observe the division of labour in a contract work. The *TASKAR*, a Military agency for the construction of border roads, acquired some 10 acres of the wet-rice land of *Kabu* village for its establishments. The land was given to them temporarily and the owners of the land were getting monthly rent for the land from the *TASKAR*. The *TASKAR* further gave a contract of constructing a few staff quarters on a plot of land of about 15,000 square feet belonging to *Ratte Loya*, *Kabu Loya*, *Pomiloya* and *Hittum Loya* of *Kabu* village, at a total cost of Rs. 5000/-. *Hittum Loya* took the contract and started work without the consent of the village Council. A *Kebang* was then called and the matter was discussed. It was decided that all the able bodied persons of the village will work in rotation and the remuneration will be shared by all the participants. It was further agreed that each household of the village will contribute 3 bundles of *Taik* leaves, 4 pieces of thick logs of wood, 15 pieces of small logs, 15 bamboos, one bundle of cane-stip, for the construction of the quarters.

In the collection of materials and the final completion of the houses, some division of labour between the sex is maintained. Everyday members of five or six households will go to collect the materials from the forest and assemble them on the site of the house construction. Men will cut the logs of wood and bamboo and drag them down from the forest to the site of work. The women will bring the *taik* leaves on their heads. The other households of the village will go to their routine work. After one or two days another batch is sent to collect the materials. After the materials are assembled, the men will construct the house.

Division of labour is maintained in the construction of house of an individual in the village. The house construction of *Kardo Loya*, a resident of *Kabu* village started on 10th January 1969. On the first day, the men and women of the village assembled. On the site, and a division of work was chalked out. On the second day, the men in groups of 6 to 8 persons went to the forest and brought bamboos from their private groves. The women formed another group and go to the forest to collect *taik* leaves. Another group of women brought small pieces of dried bamboo. The house owner fed all of them on rice, pork and rice beer or *apong*. After the material was collected, another group of 8—10 men of the village work in rotation everyday till the house was completed. The owner fed them everyday. It took 4 days to complete the house.

Outside agriculture and contract work, the distribution of work between men and women is as follows. The gathering of wild produce whether leaves, roots, fruits which requires climbing on tree is performed by men and

young boys. Collection of oranges is done mainly by women and children. Hunting rats and other wild games are done by men and boys. Fishing in the river or streamlets is done by men.

All household work from crop processing to food preparation, including *apong* preparation, as well as cleaning, sweeping, carrying water and fire wood is women's work. The men feed the pigs and fowls. Basketry is done both by men and women.

In the local markets, women sell rice, oranges, rice-beer, vegetables, banana chillies, beans, etc. The men sell pork and other variety of mutton and fish etc. But in the market, the number of women selling the things is larger than the men. They communicate in their own dialect but some of them also know broken Assamese and Hindi. The things are priced in terms of twentyfive, fifty paise coins and in one rupee. The money thus received is spent in the purchase of items of daily use as kerosene oil, salt, tobacco leaves, *bidi*, cigarettes, coloured yarn, etc. In the Along market there are goldsmiths from Bihar and eastern U.P. who repair and prepare ornaments for the local people. Cooperative stores have been opened for the purchase of things prepared by the local people and to sell things of their daily use.

Crop processing and food preparations are mostly done by the women in and around the homstead. From the field, where the crop is harvested, to the kitchen where it is cooked, a variety of work is done by the women. A number of household utensils and tools are used in the processing of the crops. Crop processing is done in the husking shed made adjacent to the residential hut.

The *himar* or the husking place is provided within the residential hut in one corner. It has only the mortar and the pestle. It is also found outside the main hut and termed *hippar* or *dheki*. Because it is large in size, therefore, it is kept outside the hut. It is operated by legs. The women do this job. The mortar and the pestle is made of wood. A thick and round tree trunk is erected on the ground under the plinth of the residential hut. Its upper portion is made hollow and is known as the mortar. The pestle is made of thick wood. Husking of paddy by mortar and pestle is done by 2 or 3 women. The paddy for husking is brought in *ossi* (Cane basket) and kept near the husking place. The women of the house will call another women to help her in husking the paddy. If there are no women in her household then she will call from the neighbour's hut. Before the husking starts, 3 or 4 winnower (*opo*) are kept around the mortar so that the paddy may not fall outside. One of the three women will put some paddy from the *assi* in the mortar. The two women will take two pestle in their hands

and start husking the paddy in quick succession. They split invariably in their palms to stiffen the grip on the pestle. While the two women strike briskly in the mortar the third woman puts additional paddy in the mortar at regular intervals. Paddy with husk is taken out from the mortar in a winnower. The other winnower is kept in a slanting position against the walls. The husk is thus separated and cleaned rice is collected in a third winnower. Husking is done everyday.

Husking of paddy by *dheki* is a recent innovation. It saves much time and manpower. It is usually operated by the legs. The young girls operate it by the legs and the old women sit near the *hipper* and puts paddy inside it. The husk is used in the preparation of *apong* and the broken rice is fed to the fowls. In the early morning the village resounds with the sound of the *dheki*. Rice is consumed as food and in the preparation of *apong*.

Rice is eaten after boiling. *Etting* (rice-cake) is prepared after the rice is fermented. Women generally perform all this work. Rice is cooked in aluminium kettle. The kettle is covered with leaves and kept on fire. When the rice is cooked the kettle is taken out from the oven and kept near the fire. The water of the rice is not separated. *Etting* is prepared from the rice paste. The rice paste is made from the broken rice which is sieved out from the pounded rice. The paste is spread over the *ekkam* leaves. It is then rolled in two folds and kept in the boiling water in the aluminium kettle for sometime. When cooked it is taken out by *medap* or a bamboo fork from the kettle. *Etting* is not a regular food item but taken occasionally. It is very popular among the children. In Pangin village, in one of the houses, we observed that as soon as *etting* is prepared, the children sat around the pot and their mother served them with hot *etting*.

It is possible to classify all the food crops into those requiring processing and those eaten fresh. The latter, with a few exceptions, are not stored at all. The former are generally stored at one stage or another so that some processing takes place between harvesting and storage, some between storage and consumption or marketing.

All leafy vegetables are collected in small quantities as part of the house wife's work according to the requirements of the kitchen, and they are prepared fresh. Sweet potato, ginger, arum and pumpkin are kept for a few days when it is sent to the market. *Iku* or the tender shoots of bamboo are stored, dried for a few days and preserved. It is consumed along with the daily food as curry. Sugarcanes are chewed for their sugary juice. Mollasses are also prepared from them. Oranges and banana are plucked from the garden and sent to the market. They are not stored.

Maize is plucked by hand. It is dried in the sun if plucked early. After

it is dried, three or four women will sit together and peel them by hand. The peeled maize is kept in cane baskets. Maize is powdered and eaten after boiling.

Millet is plucked by hand or cut by small knife. The cylindrical ears are kept for drying for some time. It is then thrashed and the small seeds are collected. It is powdered and eaten after boiling. The boiled millet is known as *Patti* among the Gallong. Millet is also used in the preparation of beer.

## ANNUAL CYCLE OF AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Equipped with the knowledge of crops, of their traditional arrangement into land-use types and of the parts played by the various members of the Gallong and the Minyong households in their cultivation, the attempt can now be made to make a complete reconstruction of the agricultural life of the people of lower Siang district throughout its yearly rhythm. The primary object of doing this is to analyse the dependence of agricultural activity on season and weather and the resulting customary distribution of labour. In order to make the picture complete, other seasonal activities will have to be mentioned in the narrative, besides agricultural work. The opportunity will be further used for mentioning certain emotional situations recurring during the agricultural calendar of the Gallong and Minyong, and for giving brief descriptions of ceremonials, evolved from these situations. The narrative is based on the zonal account of the people in Lika, Kabu and Pangin villages.

The Gallong and the Minyong divide the year into winter and summer. As the rain persists in all the months of the year, hence there is no specific rainy season. The change of the seasons are identified by the fruiting, flowering of trees, appearance of birds and animals and the observation of the moon and stars. The winter or *dogin* lasts from October to March and the summer or *lobo* from April to September. The correct sowing and harvesting season of various crops are known to the people not according to months and dates but according to their observation of stars, wild life, birds, vegetation, insects, etc. The appearance of *pemi* bird announces to the Minyongs, the ripening of the late variety of paddy in the month of December.

The month of January has three names among the Gallongs and the Minyongs. They are *Luki* or *Rateh* among the Gallongs and *Junmur* among the Minyongs. It is characterised by cold, windy and dry weather but showers also take place very frequently. The average monthly rainfall recorded at Along market is 55.7 mm.

A typical feature of the month of January, in lower Siang district, is the sudden burst of rainfall. Sometimes the rainfall lasts for five days continuously. Such rainfall is called *dinchi* by the Gallongs. There is no work in the wet-rice fields as it is already harvested in December. Men and women go to their jhum fields for cutting the trees and also to work on their old jhum fields. The men cut the big trees, the women clear the small bushes and also collect the fire wood. Some men go for fishing in the river. A few of them also go for hunting with gun and dogs. Rats are also caught in the forest. Construction and repair of houses in the village takes place during this month. The men who have taken up some contract work in the construction of road or Government Quarters, do not go to their jhum fields. The unmarried girls spend the day in weaving *galle* under the guidance of elderly women. The old men stay in their huts and do basketry and cane work. Suddenly a *Kebang* meeting is announced and all elderly persons of the village attend the meeting. The work in the jhum field is suspended. One *Kebang* meeting announced during our stay in Kabu village lasted for 3 days. Work in the jhum field is also suspended when there is much rainfall. At night when the people return, the men and women and young boys and girls participate in *Ponum* dance. If the weather is good then the dance takes place in the open ground around bonfire, otherwise it is held in anybody's hut. Throughout the day, small boys and girls who are left in the village by their parents, play various kinds of games and amusements in the village. They make holes on some slopy ground and climb on them. They also make rudimentary wooden carts with wheels and slide down the slopes with great amusements. In the kitchen garden they sow *Lai Sag*, a leafy vegetable. In the jhum field, already under cultivation from the previous year, they sow the seeds of *Sapa* or *makai* or small millets.

In the Gallong households *padim palle* worship takes place in which *Pekka*, the God of prosperity is worshipped. It is believed that by propitiating God, the fowls will lay the eggs properly, there will be safe child birth for women, and the cows and pigs and Mithuns will not suffer from any disease. Only the men participate in this worship and offerings are distributed to every body including the *nibo* or the village priest. The man who makes the sacrifice of the pig is called *Yougna*. He takes only rice with salt for the whole year and does not cut his hair. As snake bite often occurs during this season while cutting trees in the forest, hence the Gallong worship God *Yapum* and Goddess *Rinne* to protect themselves against snake bite. Among the Minyongs no special worship takes place during the month of January.

The month of February is equivalent to the Gallong months of *Desi*

or *Lucher*. The Minyongs call it as *Kombong*. The day grows warmer. Sometimes gusty and cold wind blows in the morning but grows warm in the noon. In the afternoon there may be a few showers. Sometimes it rains continuously for 10 days. Such rainy days are locally known as *dongu* and *dinteh* among the Gallong and the Minyong. The maximum temperature recorded is 18.2 °C and the minimum is 10.2 °C. The mean temperature comes to 14.2 °C. The daily range of temperature is 8.0 °C. The rainfall recorded during this month is 113.6 mm.

As the day grows warmer it helps in drying the trees cut in the new jhum fields. Along the slopes of the hills the patches of forests may be seen where the trees have been cut and the leaves have become brown. The wet-rice fields are being filled by the water of the streams brought by artificial channels. The newly opened jhum fields where the leaves are dry are being burnt simultaneously. At night a number of burning hills may be seen here and there. After these fields are thoroughly burnt women collect *oing* leaves from the forest. These leaves are used as vegetable. The men go to the orange gardens of the distant fields while the old women and girls collect the oranges from the gardens near the village. The women also collect vegetables from the kitchen gardens. They go to the market with oranges, vegetables, etc. There is enough food in the village from the harvest of the previous year. It is a season of festivals and marriages. Large quantities of *apong* is prepared by the girls in the village. People observe *uying* festival in the the villages. It continues for one month.

With the coming of March the days grow warmer. The Gallong call this month as *Illa* or *Lumi* while the Minyong use the term *Garling*. There may be occasional rainfall. The agricultural activities of February continues in this month. Firing of the new jhum fields continue. Paddy seeds are sown in the wet-rice fields for their transplantation. In the old jhum fields paddy, mirung, etc. are sown. *Mopin* festival is observed for the good harvest and general prosperity.

The month of April (*Lukki*) bring some rainfall. The soil of the old and newly opened jhum fields become soft and sticky. The vegetation becomes lush green. Minyongs make fences *Eitor*, around their jhum fields. It continues for 5-6 days. The entire village participates in raising common fences around the jhum blocks of the village. They drive away the Mithuns and cows from the jhum fields. The jhum fields are sown in this month. The crops sown are paddy, til (*Sesamum*) and maize. In the foothill villages, e.g., Lika, some varieties of paddy, sown in December in the wet-rice fields are harvested.

The month of May is called *Lusir* by the Gallong and *Lobome* by the Minyong. It is a season of heavy rainfall. The maximum temperature of this month is 30.2 °C and the minimum falls to 22.3 °C. The average rainfall of this month is 361.7 mm. Weeds grow in the cultivated fields. The rain water does not accumulate on the jhum fields, therefore, weeding is done by the women. The wet-rice fields are full of water, hence the men and women go to the fields in ankle deep water and clear the places of water stagnation. They plough the wet-rice fields and sow *rigo* variety of paddy, if the rain-water is sufficient. If the rainfall is not sufficient, then the *ringne* variety of paddy is sown. As there is scarcity of food in the villages during this season, therefore, the festivals are also less in number. The dependence on the forest products increases during this season. From the forest *tuggam* and *kochu-pineo* leaves are collected. The fruits collected by men and women by climbing on the trees are *Taktir* and *Bebang*.

The month of June is called by the Gallong as *Luyou* and the Minyong term for this month is *Yielo*. The maximum and minimum temperature during this month is 32.9 °C and 24.7 °C respectively. The rainfall for this month is 420.4 mm. It experiences heavier rainfall over the month of May. Men and women go to the jhum fields for occasional weeding. Their dependence on the forest products increases. *Oyik* leaves are collected from the forest. There is no festival in the village as there is scarcity of food. Protein food declines sufficiently as the animal sacrifice diminishes considerably.

The month of July, *Tinlo* experiences the heaviest rainfall of the year. The rainfall during this month is 429.5 mm. The maximum and minimum temperature is 33.3 °C and 25.5 °C respectively. It is not raining all the day but there are fair weather and rainy days follow each other in quick succession. In the wet-rice fields the paddy, sown in the month of March, nearly matures. The men go in their jhum field huts and wait for the sunny day for harvesting the paddy. No festival takes place as the people are busy in harvesting their paddy crop.

The month of August, *Shiyo* is again interesting from the point of view of the agricultural and other activities. The crops in the jhum fields are ready for harvest. Men and women go to the fields for harvesting. The collection of forest leaves and fruits declines. The protein food in the average household diet increases due to the animal sacrifice for the festivals during this season. The village granaries are full of the harvested crops of the jhum fields and the wet-rice fields. Preparations are made for the *Solung* festival, characterised by dance, songs and merry-making. Every household gets itself busy in the preparation of *Neogrin*, a variety of rice beer. After it is ready in all the houses, all will cry for *Solung* festival. Young girls will distribute and exchange *Neogrin* in *tuplas* or containers made of dried

gourd to the village people. Mithun, cows and pigs are sacrificed by the individual households and the meat is distributed. Unmarried girls are invited from other villages to participate in the *Solung* festival. Dance continues for five nights and no other work is done. *Solung* festival meat is also sold to others in the village who do not have cattle for the sacrifice. In Pangin village, One Kg. of meat is sold for Rs. 2.00. Every body must eat the *Solung* meat otherwise he will have dysentery. The second crop of paddy is sown in the wet-rice fields in this month.

The month of September, *Shite* is observed at the end of summer season and the beginning of winter season. The rainfall increases due to the penetration of the north-east monsoon winds. But the rainfall is not distributed throughout the month. It is localised during the first and second week of the month. The maximum and minimum temperature remain 32.3 °C and 22.7 °C respectively. The rainfall is 458.0 mm. It is the second maximum rainfall of the year, the first being in July. Tender shoots come out in the bamboo groves. Men and women go to collect the tender bamboo shoots, *ikku*. It is then dried in the sun and preserved. It is known as *Ippenh* and is largely consumed as vegetable. It has sour taste. The Gallong and the Minyongs make curry from *ippenh* and eat with rice. According to one old resident of Pangin village, some 20 years back the people used to prepare poison for their arrows, which was used for hunting wild animals during the month of September, but now it is stopped. It is now being done in the month of December.

In the month of October the temperature comes down. Cold winds start blowing. The maximum and minimum temperature remain 29.1 °C and 17.2 °C respectively. The average rainfall of the month is 68.0 mm. There are less number of rainy days, hence the sunny days are more during this month. There is not much work in the jhum and the wet-rice fields. In the village, men and women dry the tender shoots of bamboo or *ippenh* for the preparation of *ikku*. There are no festivals. People go for fishing to supplement their daily food.

The month of November, *Lubo* is a busy month for the people. The rainfall diminishes considerably and the outdoor work of the people increases. The average rainfall of this month is 12.3 mm. The maximum and minimum temperature is 27.2 °C and 14.4 °C respectively. The mean temperature of the month is 20.8 °C. The daily range of temperature is 12.8 °C which shows that the nights are comparatively cooler than the days. In the jhum fields, the *Mirung* (Jobstear) is ready for harvesting. In the wet-rice fields the *borah* variety of paddy is ready for harvesting. The women harvest the paddy and clear it by legs. The paddy is first dried in the sun. The men go for fishing.



The month of December, *Rale* is considerably cool and dry. It is quite foggy in the early morning. The fog clears away as the sun becomes warm. The maximum and minimum temperature of the month is 22.9 °C. and 8.9 °C respectively. The mean temperature of the month is 15.9 °C. The range of temperature is 14.0 °C. The opening of the new jhum fields starts during this month. The village *Kebang* meets to decide the area to be opened by the people. The jhum parties are formed. Paddy is harvested from the wet-rice fields by the women. *Johra*, the finest variety of paddy and *Memali*, the coarsest variety are harvested from the wet-rice fields. Women also go for the cotton picking. They collect *sojjore* and *bayonkot* leaves from the forest which are eaten as vegetable. They also go to the gardens to collect oranges, for selling them in the market. In the wet-rice fields, the women harvest the paddy, clear them by legs, and the men carry the paddy in *igin* (cane baskets) and collect them in *kumsung* (granaries). After the first harvest, individual households observe some worship of God of the Granaries. Pigs and fowls are sacrificed near the granaries by the owner. The meat is distributed to the relatives. The men also form parties for hunting in the forest. The men and young boys bring poisonous leaves and roots from the forest and prepare poisons in the dormitories. The arrows are then dipped in the poison. *Apong* is prepared in large quantities.

## TYPES OF LAND-OWNERSHIP

### VILLAGE LAND

The village land is commonly held by all the persons of the village. It is termed *Moli* by the Minyongs. The Gallong call it *Rizo* land. By *rizo* they mean the people of the village. The village land includes the forest land or *Motum*. It is used for the community hunting and includes the crest of the hills, and the bank of the rivers. People from the other villages have no right to hunt animals, cut trees and to catch fish in the rivers of another village land. The encroachment of the village land is brought to the notice of the *Bango* secretary who calls a *Kebang* meeting of the village in dispute. A fine of Rs. 50.00 is imposed on the persons if the party is found guilty by the *Bango*.

### INDIVIDUAL LAND

The land owned by the individual or the family is termed *Motoh* by the Minyongs. It includes the granary, the hut, the bamboo groves, jhum land, wet-rice land, vegetable gardens, fruit gardens, forest land, where traps have been laid by the individual, and sector of the river near the cultivated fields of the individual. The bamboo groves are kept with great care. Enclosures are made around them for protection against theft or the destruction of the

tender bamboo shoots by the wild animals. Unnecessary bushes and trees are cut down to clear the land around them. It helps the bamboo to grow thick and long. This is a cultivated variety of bamboo. The bamboo trees growing as natural vegetation in the forest, belong to the village community, but the bamboo growing in the jhum land belong to the owner of the jhum land. Sometimes the private bamboo of a person 'A' lies on the private forest land of 'B', then 'B' will be held responsible for any damage to the bamboo trees. The bamboo trees are protected against fire when the jhum forests are burnt. A fine of Rs. 20.00/- to 50.00/- is imposed on the individual held responsible for the damage by fire to the bamboo trees of other individual. Bamboo trees are sold to the village people and to outsiders for the construction of houses. In Kabu village the Gallongs charge Rs. 30.00/- for cutting 300 bamboos. Four varieties of bamboo are commonly found in the lower Siang region. According to the Gallongs they are *aiving* (thick), (*asso*), (thin), *aggo* (medium) and *aggir* (forest variety). Bamboo is used in many ways. From the tender shoots *iku* is prepared and it is used as vegetable. It's other uses are in the house construction, making mats, basketry, fishing baskets and traps, etc. The cultivated variety of bamboo groves are found inside the village and also in the cultivated fields adjacent to the village. In Pangin village a number of bamboo groves may be seen in the *Kardang* area of the terraced rice fields. Seedlings for the bamboo are sown during February and March and it becomes usable after 4-5 years.

Areca palm, *taik* trees are individually owned. The leaves are used for the house construction. Every family of the village owns a number of *taik* trees. A new comer to the village for the purpose of permanent settlement does not own any *taik* trees. But his house is constructed by the village community and each family contributes *taik* leaves and bamboos for the house construction.

Jackfruit, *betang* trees are individually owned. These are mostly planted in the village. The seedlings are sown during August and September. In the Pangin village, Tapiam Panor has 8 jackfruit trees. The maximum number of trees in the village is owned by Talom Dupak. He has 60 jackfruit trees.

The residential hut, *Akkum* belongs to the individual. After the father's death *Obing*, the eldest son inherits it. The youngest son gets the *kumsung* or the granary. The younger brother may stay with his elder brother or get a new hut constructed for himself. All the brothers may share the same *kumsung* or get a separate one.

The jhum fields are individually owned. Husband and wife do not possess separate fields. The jhum fields of an individual are marked by putting

stones, bamboo sticks or by keeping stumps of big trees. The field boundary is known as *rike are rinam* among the Gallongs. Sometimes the field boundary is trespassed leading to disputes. The boundary disputes are settled by the village *Kebang*. The village priest *Nibo* is also consulted to decide the disputed boundary. In the year 1967, in the Kabu village a dispute over the field boundary arose between the father and his married son. The boundary between their fields was made by inserting bamboo sticks which were worn away and there was no visible sign of the boundary. The father by force put the bamboo sticks according to his own wish to demarcate the boundary of his field. The son did not agree with this and he uprooted them and threw away. The father was enraged and gave a blow by his *dao* (Sword) to his son. The matter was reported to the police at Along and the father was arrested. A *Kebang* was called by the village *gam* and the *Nibo* or the village priest was consulted to determine the field boundary. He sacrificed a hen and examined the liver. He decided that the boundary should be maintained in the middle of the disputed fields. The *Kebang* imposed a fine of Rs. 25.00 on each member of the dispute.

The *Rikke rissem* (field boundary) was thus kept in the middle of the disputed plots of land.

#### SALE OF LAND

The sale of the landed property is done within the clan members. A *Panor* clan will sell his land only to a *Panor* either residing in the same village or in any other village. In case no such clan member is readily available for the sale deed, then the members of the *Komdang* or relatives in the father's line are approached for the transactions. The girls after marriage adopt the clan names of their husbands. It shows the perpetuity of the clan's right over the land. The clan is thus a wide term and it owns land in many villages. There is no written record for the clan land but it has the sanction of the people.

## CHAPTER VI

### OTHER ASPECTS OF SUBSISTENCE ECONOMY

#### ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

Domestication of cattle in the lower Siang district, particularly among the Gallong, Minyong, Pasi and Padam groups of Adi tribe is done for the supply of mutton ; to use them for sacrifice in the rituals and for other social needs as in marriage, etc. Before Independence the cattle was hardly used for plough and as milch cattle. The animal husbandry is highly neglected by the people. No proper cattle shed is maintained in the villages. The cattle roam about in the forest and at night they assemble near the villages. The cattle may also be seen squatting on the road near the villages and block the traffic. No systematic fodder crops are grown for them. After the paddy is harvested the cattle are driven in the fields. They suffer from various diseases and often fall a prey to the wild animals. There is high incidence of inbreeding among them and they look sickly and thin. The domesticated cattle are cows, oxes and mithuns. Buffaloes are conspicuous by their absence.

The Mithun (*Bos Frontalis*) is only found in the north eastern India and northern Burma. In the Mishmi hills of Lohit district E. R. Gee has seen herd of "semi-wild" mithun containing bulls, cows and calves all of the same colour and conformation. The mithuns in the lower Siang are domesticated. They wander about in the mountain forest by themselves for grazing, but always return to village at night. They are very fond of salt and this is possibly the reason why they return to the village regularly. Along the river there are particular spots where the water is saline and the mithuns return to such places very often. Such saline spots in the river are called *hoyi* by the Gallongs. Mithuns are traced by their owners from the footprints in the forest. The broken trees and the scratched ground indicate the direction in which the mithun has gone. When the Gallong owner encounters his mithun in the forest he calls him by name and cries A Ho, Ho. He allures the mithun by salt in the hand. When the mithun comes near, a rope is thrown in his neck and fastened. He is brought in the village. The mithun look very ferocious and often give violent jerks. Mithun is considered as a property. His value is estimated in terms of money, and other forms of property as *arem* (bell metal dish) and *tadaks* (bead necklaces). One average sized mithun costs one thousand rupees. The man owning a few mithuns is considered *mirem* or rich person in the

village. In Kabu village only four persons own mithuns. Every mithun has a name as *takibo*, *taporbo*, *tajabo*, etc., which denotes the colour, size and some peculiar shape of the mithun. The ears of mithuns are also punched or cut in a particular shape to indicate individual ownership. Sometimes, the mithuns of an individual are kept with a custodian in another village. It is done for the proper care in the domestication of the mithun. If the mithun gives two issues then one of them is given to the custodian as remuneration.

Dispute over the loss of mithuns is quite frequent. Most of the *bango* cases relate to the loss of the mithun. The loss is reported to the *bango* secretary who sends a *parwana* or message to all the villages within the *bango* stating the particulars of the lost mithun. Sometimes the same mithun is claimed by two persons of different villages. A *Kebang* of the two villages is called at Along or in any one of the disputed villages. The mithun is also brought on the spot. The disputed parties give evidences in support of their respective claims. The *Kebang*'s decision is final. In case it is not agreed by the disputed parties, then *nibo* (village priest) of a third village is called to decide the matter. He will examine the liver of the hen and decide the matter. A specific case of the loss of mithun may be cited here. The *parwana* or the message issued by the Bango secretary is given below. It is in the Gallong dialect written in Roman script :

“PAYA HOBBOB KABU LOG ATO. NIRUA KIRE LOYI GAM LIKICHITO  
OKLE GABA KIRE LOYI PAYA HOBHAM MOKEMTO HUNU GAM  
LEDER TAKKAME KEBA AYE. PURUK ROKSING HONG NAME  
KIRE LOYI ROKCHINGEN KOKPAKTO OKE PAYA DALVAM  
SEBBAM JITOKU”

The English translation of the above message is as follows :

A mithun of Paya village is found in the Kabu village. The symbol of the mithun's ear is similar to *Kire loyi* of Kabu village. That is why Kire loyi has claimed that the mithun belongs to him. The *gams* of Paya and Kabu villages met together and the liver of the hen was examined by the *nibo* (Priest). It has been decided that the mithun belongs to the Paya village. The owner may take his mithun.

Apart from the individual ownership of mithuns there are other mithuns owned by the *rizo* or the village community. The *rizo* of Kabu village has some mithuns but now all died due to some disease. During the harvesting season the mithuns in the forest are kept in *Lura Ragla* (enclosures) so that they may not damage the crops.

Tomo loyi, the village priest of Kabu was invited at Along during our stay in the village to decide the case of a lost mithun. The mithun was

claimed by *Yomsa* and *Galim* villages. The *Kebang* discussed the matter for a few days and gave a decision. But the parties did not agree to it. The village priest, on examination of the hen liver, gave his verdict which was agreed by the parties.

As already remarked, mithuns are a sign of richness and social prestige. Mithuns are given as bride's price. Gallong girls demand high bride prices in terms of mithuns, than among the Minyongs. On an average a Gallong girl demands 5 to 10 mithuns as the bride's price. The girls in the Gallong society are regarded as an item of property as she fetches mithuns.

Cows are domesticated in large number by the Gallong, Minyong and Pasis of lower Siang. Cows in general look lean and thin and are not good as milch animal. No cattle shed for the cows are maintained in the village. The cows roam about in the field, forests and along the river banks and graze grass, dried stalks of paddy and leaves, etc. The Daflas do trade in cows and calves. They purchase cows and calves from Miris and Kacharis in the Assam plains and sell them to the tribes in Siang district and also in other parts of Arunachal. In the Likabuli camp we observed a group of 10 Dafla men with about 50 cows going in the interior of Siang district by the Likabali-Along road. The cows were purchased by them from Silapathar and Sonaighat from Miris and Kacharis. They will go upto Riga and sell the cows on the way-side villages for cash and kind.

In the Kabu village, the cows are owned by the individuals and the *rizo* (village community) also. The cows in milch are often given to some custodian on monthly tax by the Gallong. The cows individually owned by a few selected persons in Kabu village is given below :

Table 1 : Ownership Pattern of Cows in a Gallong village

<i>Name of Persons owning cows.</i>	<i>No. of cows including calves</i>	<i>No. of cows in milch</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
1 Hirkam Loya	100	10	Milched by two Bihari men. They sell the milk in Along market. The owner of the cows gets monthly tax of Rs. 100·00 from them.
2 Pagge Lomi	80	Nil	
3 Ronny Loya	30	Nil	
4 Hotum Loya	100	15	The milched cows are given to different individuals in Along town on some monthly tax.

<i>Name of persons owning cows</i>	<i>No. of cows including calves</i>	<i>No. of cows in milch</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
5 Mardo Loyi	50	Nil	
6 Pommi Loyi	60	Nil	
7 Hongmer Loyi	30	Nil	
8 Modo Loyi	19	6	Milch-cows kept in Along on monthly tax of Rs. 10·00, 15·00 and 20·00 according to their milk capacity.
9 Malli Loya	10	Nil	
10 Marge Loyi	5	3	One cow is given to a person in Along on monthly tax.

Table 2 : Ownership Pattern of Cows in a Minyong village

<i>Name of persons owning cows</i>	<i>No. of cows including calves</i>	<i>No. of cows in milch</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
1 Tapiam Panor	1	Nil	
2 Talom Dupak	2	Nil	
3 Tapian Taki	40	10	The cows are milched by a Nepalese man who sells the milk in Pangin market. He gives Rs. 100·00 per month to the owner of the cows.
4 Tamang Jamo	4	Nil	
5 Tali Tamo	1	1	He milches the cow and sells milk in Pangin.

A comparative analysis of the two tables shows the following facts. There is preponderance of dry cows. The cows and calves are more useful to man for the mutton than for the milk. The Gallongs and the Minyongs do not take milk. As there is no proper cattle shed for breeding, the cows breed in the forest and the milk is fed to the calves. The climatic condition is also responsible for the paucity of milk among the cows. On an average, a cow gives half litre of milk everyday. The Gallongs own more cows than the Minyongs. The reason may be that the Gallongs require more cows for marriage and for sacrifice. The introduction of plough cultivation has increased the need for oxes. The male calves are nurtured to become oxes which are sold for Rs. 400·00 by the Gallongs. The Gallongs of Kabu village sell their cows and calves to the Boris and the Minyongs. The milch cows are sold for Rs 300 and small cows for Rs. 100·00 to 150·00.

The *rizo* (village community) of Kabu village owned 500 cows but most of them died during 1964 as a result of some epidemic. At present the *Rizo* owns 60 cows out of which 9 are milched. They have been given away to individuals market at Along on monthly tax varying from Rs. 10·00 to 20·00. The custodians of the *rizo* cows are four persons of Kabu village. They keep an account of the cows distributed on tax to individuals. They also collect the taxes from them. They have a share on tax collected. Out of Rs. 15·00 collected as tax from one cow owner Rs. 5·00 will go to the custodian and Rs. 10·00 will be deposited for *rizo* fund. The custodian will also take away every fifth calf from the man who has taken the *rizo* cow on tax. The Gallong term for the custodian of the cow is *Yttinkana*. The *rizo* gets the cows from the individuals who barter their cows for paddy. An individual may require additional paddy for marriage, or house construction, etc. He will go with a cow to the custodian of the *rizo* cows and demand paddy in exchange for his cow. An average sized cow is exchanged for 20 baskets of paddy, which is equal to about 10 mds. The *rizo* gets the paddy stock from the individual household of the village. At the time of the harvesting every household take out one basket of paddy for the *rizo*. The *rizo* keeps its paddy stock in the *deyere* (village Dormitory).

Pigs are domesticated in large number by the Gallongs and the Minyongs for the supply of mutton. They are sacrificed so propitiate the spirits when some inmate of the house falls ill. They are also sacrificed during festival and other rituals. The Gallongs sell the pigs to Boris, for cash or bartered for Dao. With the Minyongs the pigs are bartered for *gadu* (cotton quilt). A big pig is sold for Rs. 175·00 and the small one for Rs. 20·00 to 25·00.

The Gallongs, Minyongs and Pasis also domesticate dogs and fowls in large number. A large number of domesticated animals are sacrificed to propitiate the spirits during illness. In Kabu village a child fell ill and a worship was done for his recovery. The mother of the child sacrificed 4 hens, 4 pigs and 1 calf and the mutton was distributed to 10 persons. During the construction of a new house a cow is sacrificed and its head is hanged on a pole near the new house to drive away the evil spirits.

## FISHING

Fishing among the Adis of lower Siang is done to supplement their daily food. There is no large scale fishing for supply to the markets. Fishes are caught by individuals and by groups of men. The river and its tributaries falling within the village land are exploited for fishing. The fishing methods and the implements used, depend on the ecological conditions of the fishing places. The people know the nature of the river banks where hook and line are required and also other places where poisoning and other devices will be suitable. Fishing also depends on the seasons.



The Minyong term for the fish is *ango* and for fishing activity it is called *angolala*. Fishing in the big river is called *bottenasi* and in the streams it is *ameasi*. The fishing devices observed in the Gallong and Minyong villages of lower Siang are given in the following table :

Table		
<i>Fishing Devices</i>	<i>Local term</i>	<i>Locations where used</i>
1 Barriers.	Sibbok Penam.	Narrow parts of the streams are checked by barriers.
2 Pocket Sieves or Fish Traps.	Porang	Where the stream makes sharp bends.
3 Fish baskets (i) Iddir Gala  (ii) Sibok Lok mene  (iii) Nene lanam.  (iv) Sikumala  (v) Pakula  (vi) Orsilla	Rapak	Embankments are made of Tappih leaves, stones across the river or of a section of the river and baskets are fixed over them. The baskets are of various shapes to suit the locality and the flow of water.
4 Barriers by bamboo sticks.	Hito Ponam.	Narrow banks of river.
5 Bamboo wraft.	Hippeh.	Main river
6 Hook and line.	Ngokar.	Main river.
7 Fixed bamboo poles—	Purang.	Main river
8 Fishing by wood and bamboo torches.	Tao.	Shallow water in the main river.
9 Tangle Nets.	Assap.	Main river.
10 Poisoning	Tamu	Small sections of streams.

The barriers are thrown across the river during the winter season when the water drops considerably. The river then flows in braided channels and a number of sand beds are formed between the water channels. The river banks are full of boulders. The Gallongs first select a narrow channel of the river where the flow of water is considerably large but the channel is not deep enough. They put the boulders across the channels and check the flow of the water. They also erect bamboo sticks against the boulders to make

the bund strong. The river water jumps over the bund but its force is considerably diminished. They put fishing baskets of different shapes on the bund. The fishes are caught in the baskets. Small varieties of fishes are caught by this method.

At some places where the river makes a sharp bend, the people make pocket sieves. A small barrier is made across the flow of the river and the water is diverted towards the pocket sieve where a *rapak* (fishbasket) is kept. The big fish is arrested in the basket and the water flows away. The Minyongs catch *Tagam* and *Ngoque* varieties of fish by this method.

Both the Gallongs and the Minyongs erect hooks and line along the bank of the river. The hooks and lines are erected in the evening and the fishes, if caught, are collected in the morning. The hook is made of straight and thin bamboo. A heavy stone piece is tied at the thick end of the bamboo rod. From thin end of the bamboo rod a long thread is tied. Half of the portion of thread is made of nylon purchased from the market. The lower half of the thread is made from the bark of the *tamak* tree growing in plenty near the rivers. The iron hooks are not used. The fish is caught in round nooses, attached to the lower end of the line. The Gallongs erect their hooks and line in between the large boulders along the river bank. The Minyongs make *kata* (bamboo platform) along the bank of the river and erect a number of hooks and line from the platform. Common varieties of fish caught by the hook and line are *Ngorit*, *Ngoque* and *Ngobi*.

Poisoning of fish is done in small tributaries of the river. Dam is thrown along the narrow sector of the tributary and pool is formed. Poison is spread in the stagnant pool of water and the fishes are caught. To obtain poison some wild fruits and leaves are pounded together on the stone. The fruits used in the preparation of the poison are *Onger iyer* and *moyum aye*. Poison is mixed with the leaves of *Ripik*, a creeper. The fish poison trees grow near the bank of the river. The fish poisoning methods are practiced during July. On a particular day poison is prepared and mixed with the river water. In the cloudy weather the rain may fall and the poison is spoiled, thus cloudy weather is avoided. In *Kabu* village fish poison is made from the fruits of *Mukek* trees. The fruit is dried and a powder is prepared.

*Assap* (net) is recent introduction to catch fish. The net is purchased from the market. In the past the Minyongs used to prepare fishing nets from the fibre of *taki Siddi* tree. But as it takes much time and labour in the preparation, the people now prefer to purchase it from the market. The net for catching fish in small streams is prepared by men. The thread for the net is purchased from the market. Throwing of the net in the river is done from the bank but in the mid stream the net is thrown from the *Hippe*

(Bamboo raft). Three or four persons go together with the net to the river bank and examine the shoals of fish. If they are not found along the bank then they will sit in the raft and go in the midstream. The net, before throwing is kept in the left hand. The throwing of the net is known as *sabben* and drawing of the net is called *sallen* by the Minyongs.

Iron angles (*borki*) have been introduced to the people quite recently. The angles are tied in long fishing yarn end thrown in the water. The fishing implements and methods also vary with the seasons. From December to February when the water in the rivers falls low and the fishes are caught by *purang* (Pocket Sieves) and hook and line. This season is good for fishing. From February to April small fishes are caught by *adir* and *agin*. These are the fishing traps made of bamboo. *Rapak* (Fishing trap) is used in the river for catching big fishes. Fishing declines considerably during May and June. From July to September the fishes are caught by poisoning. In October and November, again the fishing declines. The people are busy in agricultural activities.

Fishing is also done at night by *tao* (torches). Embankment is made across the river by boulders and *Tappih* leaves. The men stand on the embankment with torches which attract the fishes. They strike the fish by *dao* (iron cutter) and catch it.

Fishing activities are organised in the village and in the river where the party goes for fishing. In Kabu village, *Kamo Lovi* and *Lido Lovi* are the leaders of the fishing group. There are 12 persons in this group. The leaders are selected on the basis of their long experience. They know the fishing seasons and the varieties of the fish available, They possess the fishing implements as net, fishing traps, hook and line, etc. They make programmes of fishing and allot various work relating to the fishing activities to the other persons. The distribution of work to the individuals in the fishing party comprising of twelve persons is as follows : Three of them throw the line in the water for catching the fish. Three men catch and collect the fish which is hooked in the line. One man becomes the helper. He performs miscellaneous work. The rest of the five persons drive the fish in the river towards the lines man. All these men sit on different *hippes* (rafts). The *hippe* is made of straight bamboos. Five or six thick bamboos are joined together tightly. It is paddled in the water by a long bamboo known as *rebik*.

On the day, fixed for fishing by the leader, the party goes to the river bank in the early morning. They carry cooked rice and vegetables to eat after some fishing. The fishing work starts when there is sufficient day light. If there is cloudy and foggy weather, the men wait for some time on the river bank. When there are twelve persons in the fishing party, the Gallong call it *niongo*.

At the outset the 12 persons divide into two groups of 4 and 8 persons and sit in 9 rafts. In the former group, *yugo*, one person will be on one raft and in the latter group, *dutung*, three rafts will be manned by the two persons, separately on each one and two rafts will be manned by one person, on each of the rafts. The party of 4 persons is called *yugo* and that of 8 persons will go along the left bank of the river and the *dutung* party along the right bank. They will row up the river in a line for some distance from their respective banks. In the second stage, both the parties meet in the middle of the river forming a straight line across the width of the river. The *yugo* party then separates from the line and moves ahead down the river followed by *dutung*. The *dutung* then stand in a straight line in the midstream and *yugo* proceeds towards the bank in a line. The *yugo* party members drive the fish towards the *dutung* party where two or three persons stand with the hook and line. The fishes are caught in the hook and collected by the men in the *dutung*. The fishing rod is a long piece of bamboo with a very long string. Half of the string is made from nylon and the rest half from the bark of *Tamak* tree. At the end of the string a piece of stone is tied. At the lower end of the string, there are 12 to 14 rings in which the fishes are caught. When the string is thrown in the water from the raft, the stone goes to the bottom of the river and the strings are straightened. During the month of January 1969, in Kabu villege camp, we observed this fishing method in Syom river. In half an hour of operation three medium sized fishes were caught.

The fishes caught are equally divided among the participants. The old man in the fishing party gets a little preference. He gets an extra share of the liver and intestines of the fish in addition to his usual share.

The river and tributary stream of a village is divided into sectors owned by the individuals. However, all the people of the village do fishing in the main river. But the streams falling into the main river is owned by the individuals. The individual sectors are marked by some stone, outcrop or some other natural features. The ownership of the individuals in the sector of the stream is recognised by the village. It is also considered as ancestral property. The Kabu Nala passing through the Kabu village is divided into sectors owned by individuals of the village. Similarly, the urbung stream passing by the Pangin village meets the Siang river. From the confluence upto the source of the stream, it is divided into many sectors owned by the individuals of Pangin village. The sector of the stream owned by an individual is sold to others. There is no written document for such sale deeds. *Tapang Taki*, a resident of Pangin village, purchased one sector of the urbung stream from *Dupak*. In the

past, a big sector of the stream was sold for ten mithuns or ten *arems* (utensil of bellmetal) or 10 *tadaks* (bead necklaces).

When a particular sector of the stream is poisoned for fishing then all men of the village may catch the fish. Similarly fishing by net in the main river is allowed to all men of the village. Taming of fish is also known to the Minyong, Tapiam Taki of the Pangin village has made a pond by bunding a portion of the Ruteh stream near the village. After the fishes become large, he will catch them by the net.

The varieties of fish caught by the Gallong of Kabu village are *Orsseh*, *Tingir*, *Onsaun*, *Irshu* and *Manhoman*. Except *Irshu*, all are big varieties of fish. The Minyong of Pangin village catch big sized fish from the Siang river and small sized fish from the urbung stream. The big sized fishes are *Goru*, *Ngorit*, *Ngoque* and *Taging* and *Tengri* is small sized. If the fish caught is sufficiently large sized and in large quantities, then it is sold in the market. But the Gallong and the Minyong are not keen traders in fish.

Fish is eaten as curry. It is also smoked and dried and kept for 2-3 months. The Gallong and the Minyong call such fish as *hendabai lai* and *ngosam* respectively. The big sized fishes are smoked and dried on fire, then tied into bundles of 5-6 fishes and preserved in the *billen* (cane haversack). Fish curry is prepared from the small varieties of fishes. It is kept in big bamboo containers mixed with water, salt and dried bamboo shoots (*Yup*). The bamboo is kept on the fire and the fish curry is prepared. Fish is also grilled by inserting a long stick through the mouth of the fish and kept on the fire.

*Ammong Asi Uiyi* is the God of fish. He resides between the river water and the bank. When the fish God is pleased on some body he catches a number of fish. Offerings are made of eggs, ginger and rice beer to please the fishing God.

Communal fishing is done by the village people. Among the Minyongs it is known as *tamugalanka*. The village young boys announce the day of such fishing. All men will go to the forest to bring the fish poisoning plants. The poison is prepared in large quantity in the village dormitory.

## TRADE

The Adis of Siang had, in the past, trade relations with Tibet across the border. It was mostly in terms of barter system. Their main articles of barter were raw hides, chillies and in exchange, they bring down from Tibet rock salt, woollen cloth, raw wool, Tibetan sword, Tibetan vessels, ear rings and brass bangles. The Gallongs used to do trade with the Tibetans through Bokar and Bori intermediaries. The Minyongs of the lower

region of Siang did trade with the Tibetans through the Gallongs, Bokar, Bori, etc. But after the suspension of trade with Tibet, the people of Siang, both from the upper and lower regions come down to Along, Pasighat and Pangin for the purpose of trade.

The different tribal groups of Siang maintain trade relations among themselves. The trade is done both through barter and by money. The Gallongs of Lika village used to sell betel leave (pan) and betel nuts and timber to the people from the plains of Assam and Miris. These traders used to visit Lika village in groups of 6-7 and purchase the above mentioned items from the village people. The betel nuts were sold at the rate of rupee one for 30 nuts. The betel leaves were sold at the rate of 1 *Moothe* for one rupee. One '*moothe*' contains 320 betel leaves. This trade is gradually dwindling as only 3 houses of the village sell betel leaves now. Low margin of profit is said to be the main cause for the decline of trade.

The Gallong have trade relations with Boris living in the higher regions of Siyom valley. The Boris and Gallong also do trade with the Minyongs of the lower Siang district. In the Kabu village, during our stay, two Boris came from Game village at a distance of about 60 km up the Siyom valley.

Both the Boris were father and son. They were going to Minyong village to purchase pig. They purchase pig by paying money. They get money by portorage, contract work on road, etc. It was reported that they pay whatever price they are asked by the Minyongs. The Minyongs are keen and shrewed traders. We were informed that first the Boris will go to Panke village for the pigs. If it is not available then they will go to Pessi village. Both the villages belong to the Minyongs. The Boris carry the pigs in bamboo baskets suspended on their back. The legs and mouth of the pig is thoroughly tied and kept in the basket. The Gallong of Kabu village sell their cows and calves to Boris, Minyongs and Gallongs of other villages. The cows are sold at a cost ranging from Rs. 100.00 to Rs. 300.00 per cow. The pigs are sold at a cost which varies from Rs. 20.00 to Rs. 175.00 per pig. The dogs are also sold to the above people. The price of the dog varies from Rs. 5.00 to Rs. 15.00. Among the Gallong, sometimes, paddy is bartered for cow, pigs, etc. One Gallong informant told us that the Boris purchase dogs for eating. They also sacrifice them on festivals. The Gallong do not eat dogs but our Minyong informant told that the Gallong also eat dogs. The women of Kabu village prepare coloured loin cloth (*gamcha*) and *galuk* (Minyong coat) and sell them in the Along market. The price varies from Rs. 10.00 to Rs. 20.00 per article. They purchase the coloured yarn from the market. They also prepare *Oppo* and *assi* (cane baskets) and exchange them in the village.

Market gardening is also an important item of trade of Kabu village.

Every morning women, boys and girls take the products of the kitchen garden to the Along market. The articles carried by them consist of oranges, cauliflower, cabbage, chillies, rice, gourd, kochu, ada, beans, banana, *apong* (rice beer) in bottles. At Along market, not only the Gallong of the Kabu village but also from Darkang, Kambong, Pobdi villages come and sell their things. They communicate with others in broken Assamese and Hindi. The price of most of the items sold is in terms of 25 and 50 paise. They do not do much bargaining but stick to the price they have spoken.

A typical trade relationship exists in Kabu village. The village priest of Kabu had a Tibetan coat which was kept as a valuable article. He had a son who was considered as of bad character. The priest took the coat and exchanged it with a cow at Doje village. His son one day stole the cow and kept it with one of his friends in Riga village without informing his father. At Riga the cow gave birth to a calf. The son of the priest, took the cow with calf and gave it to some body residing in Along on a monthly tax of Rs. 20.00. Now the village priest came to know the whereabouts of his cow and took his son to task for this misdeed. Both the cow and the calf became quite sickly and were likely to die. The village people took a *Kebang* (village council) decision that if the calf dies, the *Along* custodian will have to pay a fine of Rs. 60.00 and if the cow dies he will have to pay a fine of Rs 300.00. The money, thus recovered will go to the village priest who is the owner of the cow and the son will not get anything out of it.

The Minyongs are said to have trade relations with Bokar, Bori and Pailibo in the past. The Bori, Bokar and Pailibo used to bring rock salt in baskets to the Minyong villages and exchange them for Mithuns, goat and monkey skin. The skins were later on exchanged to the Tibetans in return of the rock salt. Due to the gradual decline of the supplies of rock salt from Tibet, the Minyong developed the preparation of salt from the materials available in their locality. They started making salt from the burnt ashes of *Jonkeng Lipum* stone (Quartz) and salt was prepared. Now all of their salt requirements are met from the shops opened by the Administration. From the Boris, the Minyongs used to get *agging* (axe), Tibetan coat, *Nambi* (waist coat with high neck) in exchange of pigs and mithuns. From Padams, the Minyongs used to get Mishmi coat in exchange of mithuns. The Padams used to get Mishmi coat from Idu Mishmis. In Minyong area, one mithun was exchanged for 20.00 to 25.00 Mishmi coats. The big size Mishmi coat was locally known as *lubling* and the small size coat was known as *lupjok*. Still this barter system is in operation but now they are exchanged mostly for money. The Minyongs get most of their *Yup* requirements from the Gallong. *Yup* is prepared from tender shoots of the bamboo and is used as food item. Gallongs are known for preparing good quality *Yup*. It is exchanged for

dogs or pigs from the Minyongs. When the Gallongs come with *Yup* in Minyong village they ask from house to house as to who shall accommodate them. It is a code language which means the guest wants to exchange his *Yup* for dogs or pigs. Thus the man who is in need of *Yup* gives his consent to accommodate him for the night. Thus the transactions are finalised. On 30th January 1969, during our stay in Pangin village, 2 Bori men came from Yangom village on trading trip. They had already been to *komsing* village. Both of the Bori men were carrying 6 iron pieces to barter them for dogs and pigs. It was reported to us that Boris used to bring such iron pieces in the past to the Minyong villages for the preparation of *dao* by the *yongmo* (iron smelters). The names of the smelters were Loadang Tarang and Jopiam Gao. Jopiam Gao's father was not an iron smith but Jopiam Gao learnt the art of iron-smithy from Remang, a Gallong. Toban Messar a resident of Pangin village, kidnapped and arrested Remang and asked him to teach iron smithy to Jopiam Gao. Now there is no iron-smith in Pangin village and therefore, they purchase their iron implements from Pasighat, Along, Pangin and Dibrugarh. The Minyongs also purchase cows and goats from Gallong. Sometimes, they bring it from Tinsukia (Assam plains). Cows are also bartered from neighbouring villages among the Gallongs.





## **PART II**

# **SOCIETY**



## CHAPTER VII

### SOCIAL ORGANISATION

Rivers (1926) defined tribe as "a social group of a simple kind, the members of which speak a common dialect, have a single government and act together for such common purposes as warfare". Rivers does not attach common territory as one attribute of tribe because there may be nomadic tribes without any definite territory of their own. Wissler (1926) delineates the outstanding characteristics of tribe as (1) designation by a specific name, (2) possessing unity in speech or a dialect peculiar to the group, (3) claiming possession of a definite range of habitat, and (4) constituting an inbreeding or inter carrying group. Tribe, in the words of Sinha, may be defined in the following way (Quoted : Thusu : 85) :

"A group of people, roughly occupying a territory for a considerable length of time and having a consciousness of belonging to that territory, often having the idea to be the masters of that territory. The group consciousness may be reinforced by such specific cultural symbols as a characteristic language, rule of endogamy and existence of an overall social and political organization uniting the group. Quite often we may find the members of such a group, defined as a tribe, having a special name allocated to them either by themselves or by outsiders".

The area inhabited by the Gallong has been described by Srivastava (1962) in the following words "Starts in the west with the Subansiri river and extends upto Side river, a little beyond the Siyum river in the South-eastern part of the division. A few Gallong villages are also situated in the lower Siyum valley, on the right bank of the Siyum river". Srivastava further writes, "The northern and southern boundaries of the Gallong region are demarcated by the Siyum and the Brahmaputra river..... in the north there are such people as the Minyongs, etc." Roy (1960) states, "The Minyongs now-a-days occupy an area on the right bank of the Siang and a part of the valley lying between the Siang and Yamne". In the district of Siang, a popular saying runs 'those who see Siyum are Gallong and those who see Siang are Minyong' and it, however, depicts the feeling of long-standing association, in terms of habitat, of two important groups of Siang with two important rivers of the area. Through the accounts of Srivastava and Roy we get a picture of the territories of the Gallong and Minyong. Though they have the notion that in some remote past, their ancestors migrated from 'somewhere else' yet at present they claim to be the 'masters' of the present

territories. And even after the penetration of the British administration and the introduction of the Indian administration into the farthest corners of the tract, they enjoy considerable autonomy in respect of arable land, forests, judiciary, etc., and prior to the thorough functioning of the sophisticated government machinery they were managing their things, in the whole tracts, through their village *gams*, *kebang*, *bango* and *bango-kebang*.

The Adi language is in the north-Assam group of Tibet-Burman branch of Sino-Tibetan family and it comprises within its fold the Gallong and Minyong dialects. Although, these two dialects have many things in common, each dialect is marked by some typical characteristics. Srivastava (1962) writes, '.....a detailed phonetic analysis only can reveal the environment in which 'Sh' is changed into Gallong 'H'. Another important feature of Gallong dialect lies in its dropping of final 'NG''. Thus a Minyong will tell 'ponung' and 'Kebang' while a Gallong will pronounce as 'ponu' and 'Keba'. Those who call themselves as Gallong are bound together by a common dialect and similarly there is the Minyong dialect for all those who are labelled as Minyong. Both of these dialects have no written scripts, but these are rich in oral literature. Old and conscientious persons can relate, in the form of oration, the history of their own tribe, migration, origin of land and mithun, etc.; these orations are called 'abang'. Gallong and Minyong men are good orators. Their oratory is significant during a *Kebang* when persons are seen narrating about their ancestors, about their tradition, on *moshup*, then go on citing parallel cases and finally speak about the issue in question. They speak relentlessly and even for hours together.

Among the Gallong and the Minyong the rules of clan and sub-clan exogamy dictate their marriage. Marriage of a Gallong to a non Gallong or of a Minyong to a non Minyong is not acknowledged by their societies. So far as the Gallong and Minyong tracts are concerned the rules of group-endogamy is strictly followed. But in the Pasighat area a few marriages between Pasis and Minyongs are recorded and they, in such cases, rationalise that Pasis and Minyongs belong to the same stock. In such cases, the children born are affiliated to their father's group and they are also known by their father's clan.

Both in the cases of the Gallong and the Minyong, the society operates through 'family', 'sub-clan', 'clan' and/or 'moiety' and in their socio-political life, vital institutions, viz., *Kebang*, *bango*, *moshup-rashing* and *mire-niboship* play very important roles. The details of their social organisation and village life have been depicted in later chapters. In the matter of their basic economy, they are self-sufficient because they are not to depend on other groups or on the outside world for undertaking slash and burn method of

cultivation, or for dress and other household implements. Earlier, of course, we could gather, that iron sheets, livestock, salt, *ik*, etc., were exchanged, through barter (described earlier) from various groups of the Siang district. But even this system of bartering mithun for iron sheet and (necklace), for *gale* or *gasuk* speaks of quite a primitive system of economy.

The Gallong and Minyong are conscious of their group affiliation. A Gallong is proud that he is a Gallong and speaks highly of his tradition and heritage. Same thing happens with the Minyong. Gallongs are conscious of their habitat, elites of their group and leaders and, further, they aspire for getting more autonomy for their area. The Minyongs too tell 'we are Minyongs ; the district is named after the river Siang that flows through our tract' and they feel proud of their leaders and elites. A Gallong states that this is a Gallong hat, this is a Gallong *deyeri*, this is Gallong *Kembang* or these are Gallong weapons of war and chase. Similarly, a Minyong proudly identifies a Minyong hat, Minyong cutter, Minyong style of ladies hair or Minyong moshup or *rashing*.

The features that have been apparent from above description tally partly or wholly with the tribal characteristics as enunciated by Rivers, Wissler or Sinha. We, therefore, would label both these groups as tribe.

## CLAN

The Gallong of the village of Kabu tell that the following clans, *ali*, are found among the Gallong in the vicinity of Kabu, Loya, Loyi, Lomi, Essi, Ete, Demo, Nochi, Konbong, Angum, Diyum, Jening, Nacho, Karga, Paya, Ado, Lolen, Padu, Darkang Bacha, Engu, Bagra, Doje, etc. No person can marry within his own clan. Besides, he cannot marry in two or three other clans also. The following rule of avoidance have been gathered :

Loya cannot marry Lomi, Ado ; Lomi cannot marry Loya, Ado ; Essi cannot marry Ete, Demo, Paya ; Ete cannot marry Essi, Demo, Paya ; Demo cannot marry Essi, Ete, Paya ; Nochi cannot marry Bache, Karga ; Angu cannot marry Doje, Bagra ; Diyum cannot marry Padu ; Jening cannot marry Engu ; Karga cannot marry Nochi, Bache ; Paya cannot marry Essi, Ete, Demo ; Ado cannot marry Loya, Lomi ; Bagra cannot marry Angu, Doje ; and Lolen cannot marry Loyi.

It seems, therefore, that among the Gallong, the following exogamous clan-groups, phratries can be found out ; Loya-Lomi-Ado, Lolen-Loyi, Essi-Ete-Demo-Paya, Bache-Karga-Nochi, and Angu-Doje-Bagra. At least these were available to us. The number of clan-groups may be seen to be more if a thorough survey of the whole Gallong tract is made. They do not have any specific name for such clan-groups. They feel that the number of Gallong clans have today increased enormously due to fission of some big

clans. The offshoot clans, however, retain the tradition of being one and do not marry the brother clans. *e.g.*, Loya regard Lomi and Ado as brother clans and do not intermarry. Similarly Lolen do not marry Loyi or the Essi-Ete-Demo-Paya do not intermarry. Previously, Bagra, Doje and Angu clans were grouped into one parent clan and occupied the Bagra village and later as the parent clan splited into three, the land of the Bagra village was also divided among the three clan-groups who settled in the different hamlets of the village of Bagra. Land of the village belongs to the clan as villages were earlier mostly unclan. Individual members get an allotment of a plot of land for jhuming (or now-a-days for wet-rice cultivation) which can be handed down to future generation. They have the feeling that this village belongs to Doje clan or that village to Angu clan or the like. Many of the Gallong villages have the same name as that of the dominating or occupant clan. Whether the clan got its name from the village or the village from the clan is not clear and no one come forward with an appropriate reply. But this much we can say that Darkang, Angu, Bagra, Ete, Doje, Jening are the names of some of the important Gallong villages and clans.

But the Minyong clans *opin*, of which we could make a list of 46 are grouped under two moieties, *viz.*, Kuming and Kuri. It is told that earlier Kuming and Kuri were exogamous. But we find that the exogamous character of Kuming and Kuri has become faded. In the Pangin group of village consisting of 4 hamlets, inhabited by 59 families, we have recorded, through Census, 81 marriage cases. Out of these in 16 cases we find marriage taking place between clans of the same moiety, but in the remaining 65 cases, moieties have been seen to be exogamous. Roy (1960) has given a list of 31 Minyong *opin*. He, while arranging them under two moieties, does not state whether the moieties are exogamous or not. We would, however, place the clans in the following way :

*Kuming*—Moiety

Dupak, Tamuk ←  
Pangam, Pənor  
Tatin, Talo

Tasung, Moang  
Pada, Lipui  
Tapok, Tamat  
Myije. Mink  
Muibang. Taloum  
Tatak, Taggu  
Tajvi, Jerang  
Darang, Pajing ←

←Clans→

*Kuri*—Moiety

→Tarrang, Messar  
Gao, Taki  
Tomang, Daring  
Tako, Tate  
Takuk, Tali  
Taga, Siram  
Tasing. Tapak  
Tament, Jomnom  
Taduk, Tabang  
Jongkeng, Tatan  
Yodang, Jamo  
→Sitang, Komut

Even if there is marriage within a moiety, each clan is seen to avoid the members of the same phratry or clan-group which is strictly exogamous. The clans within each phratry regard one another as brother clans with whom marriage is not permissible. The existence of clan-groups among the minyong, also leads us to assume that earlier the minyong clans were few and most of the clans that we find today is primarily the result of the fission of some parent clans. It sometimes happens that brother clans follow the rule of exogamy till they remember that they were earlier one. But gradually the brother clans break away and start marrying within themselves just as they do with any other clan. As for example, Tamut earlier did not marry Tapak as they considered each other as brother clans. But now Tamuk and Tapak come in marital tie and incidentally both of them are in the same moiety Kuri. Below we have a list of few other clan-groups which adhere to the rule of exogamy :

Panor-Pajing-Talo would not intermarry ; Gao-Jamo-Siram-Tarrang would not intermarry ; Pangam-Tatin-Tatan would not intermarry ; Darang-Jerrang-Myije-Pejik would not intermarry ; and Taki-Tali-Tasing-Talo-Komut would not intermarry.

Each of the opins is again sub divided into two or more *penmiks* that play a very important role in the matter of regulating marriage. We have the following list of *penmiks* :

<i>Opin</i>	<i>Penmik</i>	<i>Opin</i>	<i>Penmik</i>
Gao	Rije, Pajong	Pada	Datom, Komengnenam
Tali	Liduk, Karling	Tatak	Taggu, Tatak
Tapak	Libi, Lipak	Siram	Lonkot, Dankong, Derki
Moang	Daduk, Jirung	Tasung	Nil
Tamuk	Tani, Talom	Mibang	Pamin, Komdeng, Temeng
Pangam	Kenam, Sarnam	Pankeng	Nil
Taki	Karbang, Meling	Tate	Tamin, Tamat
Pejing	Jonnom, Pejik	Tarrang	Nil
Talo	Lopop, Lorang	Myije	Rimeng, Ketang
Dupak	Basjng, Bari	Panor	Donkar, Doyu
Jomang	Jomang, Jomarang	Jamo	Mobu, Morang
Tabo	Kosi, Kirbe	Messar	Sarang, Sargo

These *penmiks* are sub divisions of clans ; but not all opins have *penmiks*. Are these *penmiks* really sub clans ? We have seen when a particular clan is divided into sub clans, the exogamous character of clan is transcended to the subclans with the result that we find marriage instances within the clan but invariably outside the sub clans. Gradually we see that the sub clans, in course of time, function as independent clans.

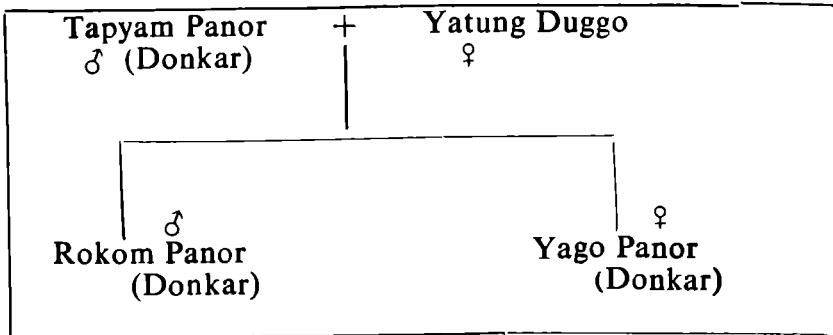


*Opin* and *penmik* together guide Minyong marriages. *Opin* and *penmik* are exogamous. The exact principle by which *opin-penmik* regulate Minyong marriages may be clear from the following example :

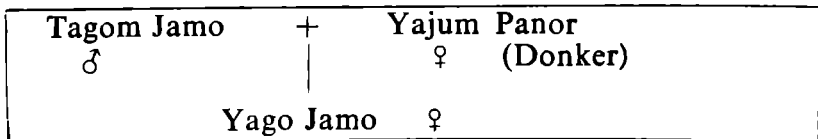
Panor and Jamo and Duggo are Opins

Donkar } two penmiks of Panor Opin.  
Doyu }

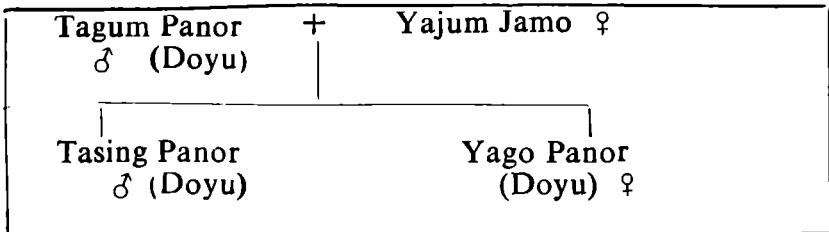
Case No. 1



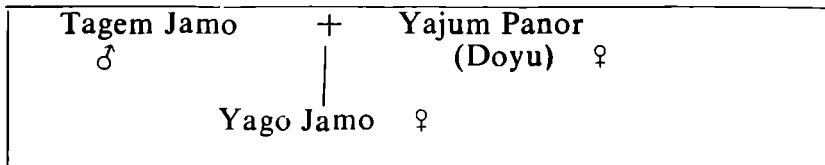
Case No. 2



Case No. 3



Case No. 4



Keeping in mind the above cases, let us see how it guides marriage :

- (a) Rokom Panor of case No. 1 can not marry Yago Jamo of case No. 2 because the father of Rokom and mother of Yago belong to the same Donkar *penmik* of Panor *opin*, though Yago has inherited Jamo *opin* from her father.
- (b) Rokom Panor of Case No. 1 cannot marry Yago Panor of case No. 3 because inspite of the two belonging to two different *penmiks*, they belong to the same *opin*.
- (c) Rokom Panor of case No. 1 can marry Yago Jamo of case No. 4 because the father of Rokom belongs to Donkar *penmik* of Panor *opin* and the mother of Yago (who is a Jamo) belongs to Doyu *penmik* of Panor *opin*.

Obviously, among the patrilineal Minyongs, not only strict exogamy is maintained in regard to *opin* and *penmik*, but the *penmik* of the mother is also taken into consideration at the time of settling marriage. The children get the *opin* and *penmik* of the father following the rule of patriliney.

We could get a list of 44 *penmiks* among the Minyong. Opins such as Tasung, Pankeng, Tarrang have no *penmik*. Opins and *penmik* are not totemic and these names cannot be explained by them also. But they feel that members of the same opins are bound together by a bondage of common heredity, having descended from a common ancestor. About *penmik* their ideas are more subtle; *penmik* members are brothers. Marriage with any person inheriting the *penmik* blood directly (through father) or indirectly (through mother) should be in any way avoided. Observance of all types of *penmik* exogamy makes the marriage cleaner. Therefore, a Panor Donkar boy will marry a girl (of other clan) whose mother may belong to Panor clan but surely not of Donkar *penmik*. Roy (1960) has not made specific analysis of Minyong clans. He mentions that the Minyong clans are further divided into sub clans in the way the Padams are. And then Roy has listed 11 Padam clans, some having 17 sub clans and some having more. We are not inclined to call *penmik*, a sub clan in the truest sense of the term because we do not see *penmik* inheriting the lost exogamous trait of *opin*. Moreover we can call *penmik* a subdivision of *opin*.

In the village of Kabu, only three clans are to be found, viz, Loya : 38 families, Loyi : 37 families, and Lomi : 3 families. Of these, as evidenced from the history of the settlement, the present site was previously inhabited by the Loyi. The Loya people later moved in and formed the Loya sector of the settlement. The three Lomi families have settled in the village recently on approval of the village elders. It is the general notion that Gallong villages were earlier uni-clan, but later they tended to be multi-clan. And therefore, marriage outside the clan necessarily seem marriage outside the village. To day, villages with more than one clan are found, marriage within the village is also seen.

We know that among the Gallong the children get the clan of their father. The girls, on marriage, adopt the clans of their husbands as they go to live with the husband in the latter's villages. Even after marriage, they are conscious of the clan to which they belonged just as they are conscious of the clans they adopt. In the village of Kabu where through household census, we could record 150 marriage cases. We did not find even a single case of clan endogamy because, they tell, that is punishable by the Kebang. People are very much particular about the clan affiliation of the co-villagers, and while the village census was being taken, even though they could not

give us the name of somebody, they could easily name the clan to which this person belonged. mostly the people know the clan of the *ni*bo (priest), *gam* (headman) of the dominant clans of the bango and the clans found in the vicinity. In the Tai village of Lika, out of 19 families, 11 belong to Tai clan, 2 belong to Taju and one family each to Ada, Dini, Gibi, Kamcha, Bojer, and Rumdo. Some of the important clans of the Tai are Tai, Karbak, Riba, Tao, Taju, Gara, Doke, Ada, Yabi, Dini, Gino, Nyori, Amo, Kamcha, Tahar, Bojer, Mucho and Ruso. It is interesting that although popularly Tais are considered akin to Gallong, they two do not share any common clan. The data on Tais available to us show that the clans are clustered into endogamous clan-groups Nije and Nire but no clan is further divided into sub clans.

Thus we can represent the Gallong, Minyong and Tai societies in the following ways :

#### Gallong

Gallong (Tribe) : endogamous  
 Divided into number of Clan-groups (phratries) exogamous  
 Each phratry consists of number of clans : exogamous  
 Each clan comprising number of Minyong families : exogamous.

#### Minyong

Minyong (Tribe) : endogamous  
 Divided into two moieties : Endogamous or Exogamous  
 Below moiety there are Clan-groups : phratries : Exogamous  
 Each phratry consists of a number of clans : Exogamous  
 Each clan is subdivided into penmik : exogamous  
 Each penmik consists of a number of families : Exogamous.

#### Tai

Tai (Tribe) : Endogamous  
 Divided into Moieties Nije+Nire : Endogamous  
 Each moiety consisting of number of clans : Exogamous  
 Each clan comprising number of families : Exogamous

### FAMILY

We will see in later chapters that polyandrous (fraternal) unions are prevalent among the Gallong. From a close look on the types of families in one Gallong village we, of course, find abundance of nuclear families with the husband, wife and children living together. In the village of Kabu, cases of younger brother living with elder brother's family are hardly 3 out of 79. It seems, therefore, that the polyandrous union takes place only when incidentally the younger brother stays with the married elder brother. Even though polyandrous unions of fraternal type, are permitted by the society, this is allowed for only one's own brothers.

From the household census data in a Gallong village, following 18 types of combinations have been noted :

<i>Combination</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
1 Father, mother and unmarried children	38
2 Father, mother and unmarried children with parents of father	3
3 Father, mother and married sons with their family	9
4 Father, mother and unmarried children and younger brother of father	3
5 Two brothers with their families	3
6-18 Twelve other miscellaneous combinations with kins of the male side	rest

In addition, we can mention a few interesting features observed and noted during our census work.

- (a) No barren couple could be found.
- (b) In no instance, the affinal kins have been seen to be members of the family.
- (c) Though sons after marriage have separated out, bigger families where 2/3 nuclear families have combined together under a common purse, common kitchen and a common head of family is also found. The occurrences of big families in the face of high frequency of nuclear family, speak of the compassionate bondage between the brothers and between the parents and the children. It has been gathered further, that as long as the parents remain alive, the sons, married or unmarried, cluster round one common hearth. The brothers start separating only on the death of the father when the immovable properties are divided following certain laid down pattern. Unmarried brother or sister is included in the family of the eldest or the next brother. Aged widow or widower is never left alone ; he or she is invariably looked after by one of the sons or daughters.
- (d) A family is always composed of siblings only. In one or two cases parallel or cross cousin or father's brother's wife or elder sister's son has been seen to be accommodated in the Gallong family. In the nuclear families we meet with members of two generations, the ego's generation and the members of the ascending or descending generation. We have, among the Gallong, also met such families where members of 4 different generations have been seen huddling together.

- (e) In spite of the polyandrous union that are permitted by the society and the high rate of bride price, there are a few cases of polygyny too, where, a man has married more than one wife during the life time of the first wife or even when the first and the second wife have not proved to be barren. Such polygamous cases are to be seen among the *mirems* (rich) because more wives will help to till more land.
- (f) The size of family among the Gallong varies from 3 to 14 approximately. Married couples with four, five children are plenty. A child begotten of a wife is always ascribed to the husband even if one of the husband's brother is responsible for the child. There is no procedure to determine the parent-hood and the actual husband never minds for that. We have not heard that there has ever been any *Kebang* on such issue.

A contrast feeling arose in our mind as we surveyed the 59 Minyong families in the Pangin group of villages, *viz.*, Komku, Kumruk, Rusing and Moli hamlets. We were taken aback to find 19 barren pairs in which the partners were apparently able bodied and youthful or they have lived without child whole of their life. Most of the families have 2, 3 or 4 members; and in spite of their barrenness the system of adopting a child is not much known to them probably because none has any to spare. These cases of barrenness depict a critical socio-medical problem. The local medical authorities could not subscribe any positive view but suspected venereal diseases as the root cause. Socially we feel that the free mixing that was in vogue amongst the young boys and girls—among the *moshup* and *rashing* goers—might have resulted in barrenness. No one knows whether this is due to any inherent physical deformity. With such paucity of data we cannot and should not jump to any definite conclusion. But we can only hint that the problem of barrenness among the Minyong need much more thorough and intensive investigation. On analysing the census data on 59 Minyong households, we could come across the following 10 different combinations with the nuclear type of family heading the list :

1	Father + mother + unmarried children	= 25
2	Father + mother	= 14
3	Father + mother and mother of father	= 4
4	Father + mother + unmarried children + kin of father	= 5
5	Two brothers families	= 2
		(one + barren couple)
6	Parents and married sons with their families	= 3
7-10	Four miscellaneous other combinations including one with daughter's family	= rest

Besides, the following points are also pertinent :

- (a) Minyong families may also be composed of unilateral kins i.e., kins of father's side or husband's side only. There is not a single case in which the members of the wife's side or the mother's side have been a component of any family.
- (b) Members of three generations i.e., ego's own, 1st ascending and 1st descending, have been found in the Minyong houses. In the Pangin group of villages, the number of widow or widower is insignificant ; and a widow or widower always stays with his/her son or brother. No desolate old person has been found. Probably, due to the judicious authority exerted by the Kebang, no one can leave his parents or near kin desolate, however, superannuated he or she may be.
- (c) There are 3 cases of joint families in which the parents are living with their married sons.
- (d) In the Pangin group of villages, there are two anomalous cases, (1) daughter's family staying in her father's house, and (2) a widow with children has taken a second husband and staying in her 1st husband's house.

The interpersonal relationship within a family, between the parents and children, husband and wife, is charged with cordiality and compassion. The children are reared up with great care. It is usual sight, in the Gallong and Minyong villages, that the babies are carried at the back of the father or the mother as they plod their way to the jhum fields or are engaged in making baskets or in weaving or even when the father is attending a Kebang. They are never tired of carrying the babies on the back. Even the little lads and lasses keep the younger ones tied at the back, with *gale* or any other scarf, while playing or moving here and there. The parents and elder ones are very cautious of the movements of the little ones. While sleeping, the younger ones are flanked by the elders.

Among the Gallong, the brother and the sister before attending puberty sleep along with their parents in their house ; they sleep side by side and play together. Little boys can play with girls. In their talk they are free they can talk about love affairs, about their private desires but they do not talk of sex and we do not know of any incestuous union. A young unmarried girl can move about in the village freely but is very much cautious of not doing anything that might arouse any bad rumour against her morality. On this regard they are not only careful of their parents, elder brothers (quite senior in age) or guardians, but also of the village elders of her own clan or of some other clan. During our field work, whenever the

village elders would be in our camp, talking and gossiping, the young girls avoided coming. Young girls generally move with their mates (of same sex) of approximately the same age group, and go to town or to the market to buy or sell horticultural or weaving products. Young damsels moving in a group look very jovial i.e., they talk, laugh, giggle and sing *ponung* verses adding tune to it. A Gallong damsel is always conscious about the prevailing system of bride price. But inspite of this apparant vigilance of the elders, there are instances, though rare, of girl fleeing away with their fiancee but again they face a Kebang and abide by its decision.

A wife is always dutiful. She takes care of her husband, husband's brothers and parents, her children ; does manual labour for the household ; aids her husband in agricultural pursuits ; cooks food for all and so on. A Gallong wife may not be chaste in the house because her husband's younger brother may also approach her. But outside the house she is absolutely chaste and any lapse on her part is severely dealt with. 'She is purchased and, therefore, her freedom is restricted', tell their neighbour, the Minyongs. The husband looks at his wife as his partner, as one who manages the household, as one who carries child and as an additional labour for all major economic pursuits. The young son, among the Gallong, helps in the jobs of the father, in herding cattle or in contacting town or buy any commodity. They respect the elders in the family as also in the village. But unlike the girls, they are less fussy about the village elders. Among their village mates (of the same sex) they talk of their likings and dislikings about some girls and often gossip, with an air of competition, 'I will give 4 mithuns for this girl', when the other will retort, 'I will give 5'. But such words are never uttered before the seniors.

Among the Minyongs, the boys and girls, before attending the age of puberty start sleeping at night in the *moshup* or *rashing*, dance and sing in the night and often sleep together. Early morning they would return to their respective houses and attend to household duties as allotted to them by the parents. The freedom of mixing between young boys and girls is allowed by the Minyong society and there is no hide and seek about that. The brother would not mind to mix with his beloved in front of his sister. Regular attendance in *moshup* and *rashing* does not lessen their attachment for their families. A girl goes on attending the *rashing* till she enters her betrothed husband's residence with the first crop and similarly the young man goes on attending the *moshup* until he finds his wife entering his house finally. A Minyong wife is chaste from the date she enters her husband's house. After that she is not permitted to have any moral lapse, not even with her husband's younger brother or the cousins. A Gallong or Minyong wife does not maintain any distance with her husband's elder brother or to her

parents-in-law. She is compassionate towards her husband's sister, younger or elder, and behaves with an air of equality. A husband respects his parents-in-law.

Relationship between wife and husband's brother, between cross cousins, between husband and wife's sister is of joking type. With one's mother's brother, father's brother, mother's sister, father's sister, father's sister's husband or mother's brother's wife the relationship is one of mutual respect and compassion. But if there is distinct disparity in age between the persons, a mother's brother is respected like a father or the mother's brother's wife receives respect as the mother does. Old parents or grand parents are never regarded as a liability but an asset because from such persons the youngsters hear a lot about their tradition and heritage.

*Pagbos* (slave) were kept earlier by almost all the *mirems* (rich). *Pagbo* is a male slave, and *pakne* is female. *Pagbo* or *pakne* may belong to any group and a *pagbo* or *pakne* was considered equivalent to  $\frac{3}{4}$  mithuns. Among the Minyong, the slaves were freed by the British and the slavery in Gallongs was removed by the Indian administration. Previously, the inclusion of slaves were adding some complicacy in the composition of family. Slaves were treated as domestic labour, shared the same hut and a slave boy (*pagbo*) could marry only a slave girl (*pakne*). Slaves were never consulted in any family matter, and could not demand any share of family property.

## GALLONG'S KINSHIP TERMS AND SALIENT FEATURES

1 Father, father's elder brother and father's younger brother are all classed together under a single term *abo* and mother, father's elder brother's wife and father's younger brother's wife are addressed by a single term *ane*.

2 In the second ascending generation (from ego), father's father and his male siblings are covered by the term *iji* whereas the female siblings of father's father are addressed by the term *pate* which is also the term for the female siblings of father (in the 1st ascending generation).

3 Though *ane* is the term for one's own mother as also the step mother, in the ego's own generation, there are separate terms for one's 1st wife and the subsequent wives. The 1st wife is addressed as *nete* and the next wives are *nyamde*, *nyamio*, *nyami*, *nyamko* respectively. The same terms *nete* and *nyami* are also used for elder brother's wife and younger brother's wife respectively.

4 In ego's own generation, one's own siblings are designated by separate terms differentiating them on the basis of relative seniority and



juniority. Parallel cousins have the same terms as one's own siblings : but the terms for cross cousins differ.

5 In the 3rd ascending generation, the son's son's son and the son's son's daughter are referred by such descriptive term as *oten* ; and here the criterion of sex of the person is not taken into consideration.

6 Ego's wife's father and wife's mother are addressed by the terms *ato* and *ayo* respectively and these terms are also applied to the wife's father and wife's mother of ego's own siblings. *Ato* would mean the father of 1st wife or of the 4th ; similarly *ayo* denotes the mother of any wife, first or the fifth.

7 Irrespective of the age of the designated, the son or the daughter are referred by the terms *oro* and *omo* respectively ; and in this respect no differentiation is made as to whether the son or daughter is from the 1st wife or from the 4th.

8 The term *abir* is applied to the younger brother as also to son's wife's mother (w.s), to daughter's husband's brother (w.s) and also to son's wife's mother (m.s).

9 The term *magbo* connotes son-in-law and is used to cover all the sons-in-law in the ascending and descending generations such as father's younger sister's daughter's husband, daughter's husband, daughter's daughter's husband, daughter's husband's younger brother. The grouping together of daughter's husband and daughter's husband's brother also indicates the existence of polyandrous union.

10 The terms of address in almost all the cases coincide with the terms of reference. Thus *assi* is the term of address as also of reference for elder brother, *magbo* for son-in-law, *moyi* for mother's sister, *abo* for father and so on. In the case of relations of descending generation, when the addressee is younger in age than the speaker, he or she is addressed by name, e.g., son, *oro*, daughter, *omo*, and son's son, *oten* are all addressed by name.

11 The terms for one's own wife and brother's wife are the same.

## MINYONG'S KINSHIP TERMS AND SALIENT FEATURES

1 The parents of ego are distinguished from their (former's) siblings by separate terms :

Father *Abu*

Mother *Anne*

Father's elder brother *Yayi abing*

Mother's elder brother *Kaki*

Father's younger brother *Payi*

Mother's younger brother *Kaki*

Father's younger sister *Nanyi*

Mother's younger sister *Moyi*

Father's elder sister *Nanyi*

Mother's elder sister *Tete*

2 It is seen that in the 1st ascending generation, the criterion of age is not taken into consideration in the case of siblings belonging to the opposite sex of the parent. But in the case of the siblings belonging to the same sex of the parent, separate denotative terms are employed for the elder and the younger.

3 In the second ascending generation, separate terms are used for kins of different sex, e.g., father's father is *yayi mijing* and father's mother is *ummo mimme*.

4 In the first descending generation, the son of ego and the sons of the siblings are referred by different terms and the terms vary according to the sex of the speaker, e.g.,

own son	<i>ko</i>
brother's son (ms)	<i>yayang</i>
brother's son (ws)	<i>birro</i>

5 Through the kinship terms, one's own father, *abu* is differentiated from wife's father, *atto* or one's own mother, *anne* is distinguished from one's wife's mother, *attoayo*. The terms for consanguinal kins and affinal kins always vary.

father's brother	<i>yayi abing</i>	mother's brother	<i>kaki</i>
	or <i>payi</i>	mother's sister	<i>tete</i> or <i>moyi</i>
father's sister	<i>nanyi</i>		
own brother	<i>anni</i>	Wife's brother	<i>yego</i>
own sister	<i>birme</i>	wife's sister	<i>yingne</i>

6 Except for the instance of brother's son when the terms *yayang* and *birro* differ according to the sex of the speaker, in most of the cases, the terms do not vary according to the sex of the speaker, e.g.,

elder sister (ms)	<i>birme</i>
elder sister (ws)	<i>birme</i>
sons wife's father (ms)	<i>ajon</i>
son's wife's father (ws)	<i>ajon</i>
daughter's husband (ms)	<i>magbo</i>
daughter's husband (ws)	<i>magbo</i>
son's wife (ms)	<i>nyameng</i>
son's wife (ws)	<i>nyameng</i>
brother (ms)	<i>anni</i>
brother (ws)	<i>anni</i>

7 Among the Minyong, the 1st wife is separated from all the subsequent wives. Thus *yedang* is the term for 1st wife and *yemyo* stands for all the subsequent wives. But the issues from them are all covered by same term.

8 In the 2nd descending generation, the son's son and son's son's wife, irrespective of the sex of the speaker, have been grouped under a common term *nyameng*.

9 In the ego's own generation, the parallel and cross cousins are distinguished from one's own siblings, *e.g.*,

brother	<i>anni</i>
father's elder brother's son	<i>babing</i>
father's elder sister's son	<i>ao</i>
father's elder brother's daughter	<i>memme</i>
father's elder sister's daughter	<i>omme</i>

Kinship terms collected from amongst the Gallong and the Minyong are as follows :

(A) GALLONG

<i>English equivalent</i>	<i>Term of reference</i>	<i>Term of address</i>
Mother	Ane	Ane
Father	Abo	Abo
Father's father	Iji	Iji
Father's mother	Ikkam	Ikkam
Father's younger brother	Abo	Abo
Father's younger brother's wife	Ane	Ane
Father's younger sister	Pate	Pate
Father's younger sister's husband	Nyobo	Nyobo
Elder brother	Assi	Assi
Elder brother's wife	Nete	Nete
First wife	Nyamte	Nyamte
2nd wife	Nyamde	Nede
3rd wife	Nyamio	Neyi
4th wife	Nyami	Nerii
5th wife	Nyamko	Neko
Younger brother	Abir	Abir
Younger brother's wife	Nyami	Nyami
Father's younger brother's son	Abir	Abir
Father's younger brother's son's wife	Nyami	Nyami
Father's younger sister's son	Yapok	Yapok
Father's younger sister's son's wife	Nyamte	Nyamte
Father's younger sister's daughter's husband	Magbo/Nyobo	Magbo/ Nyobo
Daughter	Ome	by name
Son	Oro	by name
Eldest daughter's husband	Magbo	Magbo

<i>English equivalent</i>	<i>Term of reference</i>	<i>Term of reference</i>
Youngest daughter's husband	Magbo	Magbo
2nd wife/3rd wife's son	Oro	Oro
2nd wife/3rd wife's daughter	Omo	Omo
Wife's father	Ato	Ato
Wife's mother	Ayo	Ayo
2nd wife's father	Ato	Ato
2nd wife's mother	Ayo	Ayo
Son's son	Oten	Oten
Son's son's son	Oten	Oten
Son's son's daughter	Oten	Oten
Wife's younger brother	Engo	Engo
Wife's younger brother's son	Engo	Engo
Wife's younger brother's wife	Ayo	Ayo
Wife's younger brother's daughter	Yumne	Yumne
Daughter's daughter's husband	Magbo	Magbo
Son's wife's father (ms)	Bomi	Bomi
Son's wife's mother (ms)	Abir	Abir
Son's wife's brother	Ange	Ange
Son's wife's father (ws)	Bomi	Bomi
Daughter's husband's mother (ws)	Bomi	Bomi
Sister's husband's father	Ato	Ato
Son's wife's mother (ws)	Abir	Abir
Daughter's husband's mother (ws)	Abir	Abir
Daughter's husband's younger brother (ms)	Mago	Mago
Daughter's husband's younger brother (ws)	Magbo	Magbo
Elder brother's wife's father (ms)	Ato	Ato
Elder brother's wife's mother (ms)	Ayo	Ayo
Elder brother's wife's brother	Engo	Engo
Elder brother's wife's brother's wife	Ayo	Ayo
Elder brother's wife's brother's daughter	Yengne	Yengne
Mother's sister	Moyi	Moyi
2nd mother/3rd mother	Ane	Ane
Father's father's younger brother	Iji	Iji
Father's father's younger brother's wife	Ikkam	Ikkam
Father's father's younger sister	Pate	Pate
Father's father's younger sister's husband	Nyobo	Nyobo
Mother's father	Iji	Iji
Mother's mother	Iji	Iji
Mother's brother	Kitte	Kitte
Mother's younger brother's wife	Ayo	Ayo
Mother's sister's daughter	Anyu	Anyu

<i>English equivalent</i>	<i>Term of reference</i>	<i>Term of reference</i>
Younger brother	Abir	Abir (by name)
2nd mother's son	Abir	Abir (by name)
<b>(B) MINYONG</b>		
Wife	Mimme	by name
Son	Ko	by name
Father	Abu	Yayi
Mother	Anne	Ummo
Father's elder sister	Nyani	Nyani
Father's elder sister's husband	Babi	Babi
Father's elder brother	Yayi abing	Yayi abing
Father's younger brother	Payi	Payi
Father's father	Yayi mijing	Yayi mijing
Father's mother	Ummo mime	Ummo mime
Father's elder sister's daughter (elder)	Omme	Omme
Father's elder sister's daughter (younger)	Omme	by name
Father's elder sister's son	Ao	Ao
Father's elder sister's husband	Babi	Babi
Father's elder brother's wife	Anne Abing	Anne
Father's elder brother's son	Babing	Babing
Father's elder brother's daughter	Memme	Memme
Father's elder brother's son's wife	Nyameng	by name
Father's elder brother's son's son	Ao	Ao
Father's elder brother's daughter's daughter	Omme	by name
Wife's father	Atto	Atto
Wife's mother	Atto Ayo	Atto Ayo
Wife's elder sister	Tattong Ke Memme	Tattong ke Memme
Wife's elder sister's husband	Berbo	by name/ Berbo
Wife's elder brother	Yego	Yego
Wife's elder brother's wife	Ayo	Ayo
Wife's younger sister	Yingne	by name
Wife's elder sister's daughter	Ome	by name
wife's elder brothe'rs son	Yego	by name
1st wife	Yedang	by name
2nd wife	Yemyo	by name
3rd wife	Yemyo	by name
Mother's brother (elder or younger)	Kaki	Kaki
Mother's elder sister	Tete	Tete

<i>English equivalent</i>	<i>Term of reference</i>	<i>Term of reference</i>
Mother's younger sister	Moyi	Moyi
Husband	Milo	by name
Son's son	Otten	yayang
Younger brother's son (ws)	Biroo	by name
Wife's younger brother's son	Yegoo	by name
Younger brother's son (ms)	Yayang	Yayang
Daughter's husband (ms)	Magbo	by name
Younger sister's husband (ws)	Magbo	by name
Younger sister's husband (ws)	Magbo	by name
Wife's younger sister's husband	Berbo	by name
Mother's younger sister's husband	Yayi	Yayi
Younger sister's husband	Magbo	by name
Husband's younger sister's husband	Magbo	by name
Father's younger sister's husband	Magbo	Babi
Elder sister's husband (ws)	Magbo	by name
Sons wife (ms)	Nyameng	Nyameng
Son's wife (ws)	Nyameng	Nyameng
Son's son's wife (ms)	Nyameng	Nyameng
Son's son's wife (ws)	Nyameng	Nyameng
Son's wife's father (ms)	Ajon	by name
Son's wife's mother (ms)	Ajon	by name
Son's wife's father (ws)	Aion	by name
Son's wife's mother (ws)	Ajon	by name
Elder sister (ws)	Birme	Mimme
Elder sister (ms)	Birme	by name
Husband's elder brother	Yego	Yego
Husband's elder sister	Yingne	by name
Husband's elder sister's husband	Magbo	Magbo
Husband's elder sister's daughter	Omme	Omme
Husband's elder sister's son	Ao	Ao

## CLASS HIERARCHY

Since due to existing innerline, no outside groups have been allowed to settle in Arunachal, the tribes in general and the Lower Siang people in particular are outside any direct cultural contact and are uninfluenced by the Hindu caste system. They have no idea of the outside castes and cannot arrange them in any hierarchic order nor can they assess their own position in the regional (outside NEFA) social order.

But the societies of the Gallong and the Minyong are stratified into rich and poor. Among the Minyong the rich are called *mirem* and poor *opan*.

For calling a man rich they adhere to some characteristic traits. Any person possessing all the following or some of the following is treated as *mirem* :

(a) *Esso* (mithun) (b) *Among Assi* (Land) (c) *Tadak* (Bead necklace)  
 (d) *Hoi* both, *Rune* and *Rube* (Cattle both cow and bull) (e) *Peki* and *Arem* (Brass Utensil).

In this way, the village can distinguish between the different classes and pinpoint them. Thus in the Moli hamlet of the Pangin group of villages, there are four *mirems*. Class is open ; and by dint of personal endeavour one can change his/her class status and move out from *opan* to *mirem* class. The Minyongs are well aware of this phenomenon and they gallantly relate how one TT of the Moli hamlet born as a pauper made his fortune and is regarded now as one of the richest men in the area. *Mirems* are honoured because they help the *opans* at times of necessity to perform rituals on this occasion or that, with cash or kind. No interest (*linke*) in cash is taken. But the *mirems* of one's own lineage or of the village come to help at the time of rituals performed for driving away any malevolent spirit. Sometimes the animals required to be sacrificed may not be available with the party and he has to procure it from some *mirem*. In such cases, the following system of barter is acceptable :

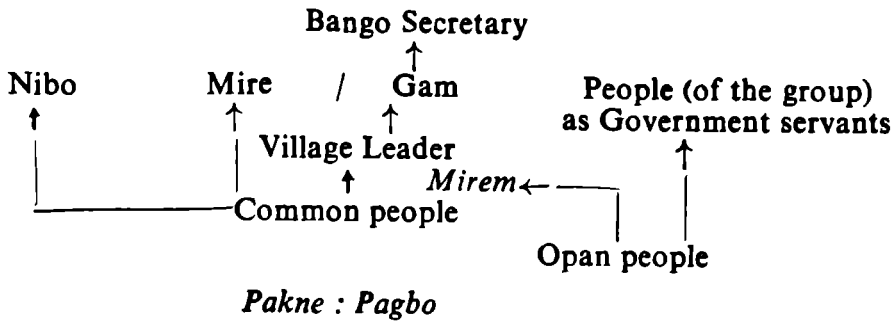
For 1 mithun, one 'abi' (small basket) full of *Tadok* or one *arem*,  
 For 1 boar, one small *arem* or  $\frac{1}{2}$  'abi' or *Tadok*.

If a man has to give fine (*ajeng*) in pursuance of any bango decision, then the victimised person often borrows the cash or the animal from any *mirem*.

It is interesting that the possession of *pakne* (female slave) or *pagbo* (male slave) is not regarded as a sign of richness. Even during the pre-independence days, the Gallong and the Minyong used to keep slave (*pakne* or *pagbo*) for doing manual labour ; and each slave (male or female) was valued equal to three or four mithuns. Some would possess more than one. The Minyong tell "the British government removed slavery from amongst us and Government of India, in post independence days, have removed the last vestiges of slavery from Gallongs".

It is not always seen that the *mirems* are only selected for the offices, of *gam*, leader, bango Secretary etc , but some of the persons holding these offices, are seen to be *mirems*. If a *mirem* is not holding any office, it is not necessary that he should exert some amount of influence in village matters.

The society of the Minyong may be represented as follows :



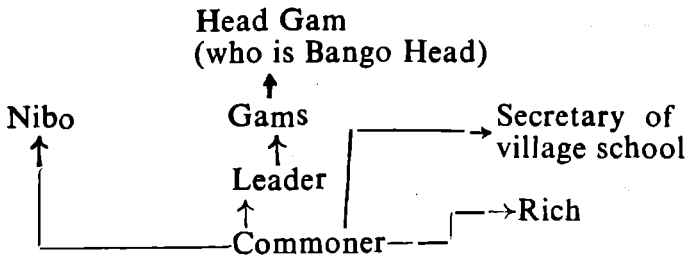
Thus the Minyong society is stratified in various ways—through the economic disparity, through secular offices, through sacred offices. The sacred offices have some special status because their services are essential for all classes of people, for driving away malevolent spirits causing diseases. Power and prestige, therefore, in the Minyong society, does not follow only the economic status. On the other hand, various offices, village level or extra village level, have their own prestige. In the matter of important decision concerning the village welfare, improvement works, judiciary functions, selection of important dates, shifting of villages, welcoming any outsider, or holding of any *Kebang*, the class consciousness becomes conspicuous because in the discussion, a village leader, or a *gam* or a *mirem* or a *nibo* may authoritatively assert themselves and suggest something. Their talks are always given patient hearing, though not always accepted. But there are certain occasions such as *ponung* or communal dancing or community feasting when people forego any class distinction. In any *ponung*, a bango secretary may be seen dancing with a daughter of an *opan* or a *mirem* girl may be seen dancing with an *opan* boy. Similarly, in the community festivals, during housewarming ceremonies or marriage ceremonies, etc., a *nibo* may sit in line with a commoner girl or a *gam* may be taking food in line with a *opan* man.

Among the Gallong, the following criteria are important to evaluate one's economic status :

(a) Possession of more land, (b) Possession of *tadok*, (c) Possession of mithun, (d) Possession of gun, and (e) Possession of daughters ; because they on marriage will fetch mithuns. And they have the notion that any contractor is rich earning a lot of cash money. In a Gallong village,



the formation of stratification is as follows :



Due to the heavy bride price and heavy expenditure during nuptial ceremony and/or during propitiatory rites, the attainment of a superior class by virtue of owning 'moni' (coloured bead necklaces) or mithun, becomes very much fluctuating. For example, a person has attained profuse economic stability through purchase of 3/4/5 mithuns, a number of cattle and pigs and/or profuse quantity of 'moni'. In the following year he is to give a son to marriage and perform some rituals and thus the *moni* and mithun and other animals are all slaughtered or given away, and he becomes poor. A commoner may be selected for any office. In a society where possession of animals and necklaces, etc., are taken as yardstick of richness and where any ritual means parting with these valuable animals and objects, richness or indigence is purely transitory ; hence selection for the offices cannot be on the basis of the economic status of the person.

## CHAPTER VIII

### POLITICAL ORGANISATION

#### BANGO

Roy (1960) writes about the Bango in the following words, "Inter village disputes are settled by the inter village councils. For this purpose villages are grouped together into what is known as Bango". Elwin (1965) has not made any reference to Bango as a judicial institution. This Bango system was introduced by the British administration as a means of imparting local autonomy so that inter village disputes could also be tried by themselves. G.D.S. Dunber in his report on Abors and Gallongs has not mentioned of such judicial superstructure. Srivastava (1962) also makes a reference of the bango system for "settling inter village disputes,..... an imposition of the British rules". Any way, this bango as a confederation of villages and as a superior judicial authority, has been quite popular among the Gallong and the Minyong and now communal ponung dances, during mopin and shulling festivals, are also organised on bango basis.

The Minyong villages have been grouped under 10 bangos and there are bangos encompassing 10/12 villages. A detailed list of the village confederation among the Minyong, is given below :

<i>Rotgong Bango</i> (with 10 villages)	Tarrak, Lokpeng, Koren, Pangin ; (headquarter of secretary), Kebang, Yemsing, Babuk, Rot-tung, Kalek and Yeksi.
<i>Bogo</i> (with 13 villages)	Bogong (headquarters of secretary), Renging, Runneh, Yagrung, Pekang, Ranih, Chhika, Bamin Teroman, Orlung, Rupsin, Debin and Depi.
<i>Legong Bango</i> (with 7 villages)	Chhidoh, Ledum ( headquarters of secretary ), Bamin, Miglun, Miren, Mikong and Lekon.
<i>Yobung Bango</i> (with 5 villages)	Yosing, Rankung, Rigong, Paksing and Yosing.
<i>Nugong Bango</i> (with 7 villages)	Komsing ( headquarters of secretary ) Chhison, Pani, Jersing, Mopit, Byegin and Ryu.
<i>Sogong Bango</i> (with 1 village)	Damda.
<i>Chirit Bango</i> (with 5 villages)	Rumgong, (headquarters of secretary), Mopum, Jomo, Molom and Yogong.

<i>Magong Bango</i> (with 4 villages)	Riga ( headquarter of secretary ) Paron, Sitan and Pangkam.
<i>Siam Bango</i> (with 5 villages)	Dobuk, Lorging, Meri, Sipeng and Jomlo (headquarter of secretary).
<i>Dogo Bango</i> (with 8 villages)	Dosing ( headquarters of secretary ), Pareng, Chupsing, Chhine, Lising, Meysing, Inku and Yubu.

It was not possible to trace any Bango clan affiliation. Because though a list of all major and minor Minyong clans was made, informants could not give us any idea that such and such Bango was affiliated to such and such clan. Moreover, below we mention this bango clan picture. Incidentally, however, the dominant clan/clans happen to be the owner of the major portion of the village land. This has been substantiated in the chapter on land ownership.

<i>Bango</i>	<i>Clans found</i>	<i>Dominant clan</i>
Bogo Bango	Ering, Dupuk, Jamo, Siram Gao, Tabin., Taki, Tamuk, Talo, Darrang, Terrang, Tako, Messar, Saro. Jomang, Tatak, Talin, Taggo, Tamut, Tali.	Tamuk.
Legon Bango	Same as above	Tamuk.
Nugong Bango	Tabin, Taki, Tamuk, Talo.	Taki, Tamak, Talo.
Sogong Bango	Tamut, Tapat, Tali, Tabi, Takuk, Darung, Tatak, Talin, Jerrang, Myiji, Jamo.	Tamut and Jamo.
Chirit Bango	Tatak, Taggo, Myije. Jerrang Jonnom, Tasing, Tali, Taga, Tapak, Tatin, Talom, Mibang.	Tatak,
Yobung Bango	Tali, Tasin, Tabo, Riang, Pade, Paro Riu, Palong, Niri, Padung, Gammi, Tabi, Tapak, Tamut.	Tali, Tasin
Dogo Bango	Joniang, Jomang, Palon, Pabin, Nitan, Nigan, Tabi, Tapak, Takuk, Tatin. Tatak, Talom, Tamut, Tasing, Tali, mibang, Myije, Jerrang.	Tamut maije.

<i>Bango</i>	<i>Clans found</i>	<i>Dominant clan</i>
Magong Bango	All Minyong clans excepting Panor and Messor are to be found.	Tasing Talin
Rotgong Bango	Messor, Dupak, Pajing, Yodang, Tamuk, Tasung, Taki, Tapak, Jamo, Gao, Pangam, Talo, Moang, Darrang, Pijik, Tabing, Padung, Tagi, Paron, Taying, Taki, Sare, Melong, Jomang, Nonang.	Dupak Tamuk
Simo Bango	Niji, Jerrang, Taggo, Talom, Tatin, Tatak, Tatuk, Darrang, Tamut, Tabi, Tatok, Tali, Tasing.	Miji Jerrang

Crowning all the above Minyong Bangos, there is one Bagum bango to settle any inter bango dispute. Bango council is formed of all the gams of the villages within the bango. Some other influential persons living in any bango village might be invited to make the bango decision sound and perfect. Bango council is headed by a bango secretary who does not get any remuneration and is the keeper of the bango fund. The sums released from the imposition of fines, from the disputing parties, go to the bango fund. The secretary retains the discretion to spend money from the bango fund on stationery and on his passage money for going to different villages within the bango or outside in connection with the bango work. The gams and the bango leaders elect the bango secretary, though honorary, yet esteemed high for the dignity and prestige he possesses. The local circle officer also sometimes attend the meeting to select the secretary.

The village of Pangin falls within the Rotgong bango. Pangin is being regarded as an enlightened village. The office of secretary has, in most of the terms, come to some Pangin man. The first bango secretary appointed in the preindependence days was Talom Dupuk (of hamlet Mobuk village Pangin and he is now the *gam* of Mubuk hamlet). He was relieved by one Tao Gao (of Kumruk hamlet ; Pangin village) in around 1951. Tao Gao was relieved of his office in 1961 by one Talu Sitang (of village Sitang) who held secretaryship upto 1963 ; and in 1964 one Tassap Tali (of Hamlet Kumruk; vill. Pangin) filled up the post. It has been gathered that Tassap Tali's name was suggested because (1) he was the village leader at that time (2) earlier he worked as assistant secretary of Rotgong bango and (3) because he received training in agriculture from Pasighat. The office of secretary has no hard and fast tenure and the incumbent if he feels to relinquish, can

place his desires in a bango sitting and get relieved if, of course, the Bango members accede to the request. Settling inter village (within the Bango) disputes relating to boundary of land, adultery, divorce and improvement of the villages in matters of road development, petty bridges, etc., are the responsibilities of the bango. Over and above, now a days, the observance of Mopin and Shullung dances are also organised on Bango basis. In settling the disputes the bango may hold its sitting in any of the disputing villages and not necessarily at the secretary's headquarters. Therefore, in 1968 the Rotgong bango had approximately 35 sittings on different issues at Tarrak 15, Yomsing 10, Koren 2, Lokpeng 1, Pangin 5 and Polung (Pagin) 2. The secretary intimates that the Bango has the power to impose fine amounting to a maximum of Rs 500 on a person.

In the Gallong area the bango as a larger unit comprising a number of villages is also found. Among the Gallong, the villages can be grouped under 3 bangos—Pakhtu bango, Pushi bango, and Ubu bango. The villages of Pakhtu bango are as follow :

- 1 Kabu primarily with Loya, Loyi, Lomi clans.
- 2 Panya Primarily with Aso, Lolen, Leyi, Lomi clans.
- 3 Dego primarily with Lolen, Loyi, Ado clans.
- 4 Pakam primarily with Loyi, Lomi, Kamduk, clans.
- 5 Kombog primarily with Lolen, Lomi, Ado, Lona clans.
- 6 Tading primarily with Lolen, Baku, Tachi clans.
- 7 Jenning primarily with Jening, Angu, Lomi, Pakam, Bacha, Nacho clans.
- 8 Kugi primarily with Ete clans.
- 9 Bene primarily with Ete clans.
- 10 Pobdi primarily with Ete clans.
- 11 Paya primarily with Ete, Nasho, Engu clans.
- 12 Wak primarily with Kuming, Nasong clans.
- 13 Darkang primarily with Ete, Padu clans.

The bango, a larger unit than village functions in a democratic way. It is already ingrained in their system and they perform the duties of the anchal panchayats working in other areas, of course with minor modifications. Even as its present state of organisation the bango leaders, with the confidence of the people of constituent villagers, have been collaborating with the Government to help themselves in improvement work.

Now under the Nefa Panchayati Raj Regulation 1967, No. 3, 1967, the district of Siang, as also other districts of Arunachal, is having gram panchyat, anchal samity and Zila parishad. It is taking part in the proceedings of the Agency council. The Agency council comprising 23 members

(including the Adviser of Arunachal and the M.P. from Arunachal) is an interdistrict forum which the Governor may consult in matters of administration involving general questions of policy relating to plan and development in Arunachal, etc. The first Agency council had its first meeting in the early part of December 1969, at the Raj Bhavan, Shillong. With the introduction of Panchayati Raj, the traditional democratic mind of the people will get impetus from this new system. It would be of Anthropological interest to see how these local institutions *viz*, *Kebang* and *bango*, are adjusting with the functioning of the new innovations, 'gram panchayat' 'anchal panchayat', etc.

## VILLAGE OFFICIALS

### SACRED AND SECULAR SUCCESSION OF POSTS

Each Gallong village has the post of gam, leader, secretary (of the school) and in some villages we meet with headgam as the head of all the villages of the bango, *i.e.*, confederation of villages. A gam or leader of one village cannot act as the gam or a leader of another village. But the headgam being the head of the bango is meant for all the villages within the bango. The duty of the gam is to do liaisoning between the Government and the people, to look after the village welfare especially its secular aspects, to allow others to settle in village or not, to arrange shifting of the village site if need be, to allot junior sites to individual households in consultation with the elders and so on. The village leader is junior in hierarchy, to the gam and he is to assist the gam in the discharge of the duties. The secretary of the school is regarded as an influential person in the village and he is to look after the upbringing of the educational institution. The Headgam of the bango is to discharge some judiciary function by settling any dispute of villagers, in connection with land, adultery, illicit incestuous ties, or dispute on money. The headgam in doing so may take the help of the gams of other villages.

For small villages, of course, one gam suffices. But in big villages more than one gam are there. In the village of Kabu (78 households : three clans) there are the following five gams :

Lido Loya	gam No. 1
Tomo Loya	gam No. 2
Kali Loyi	gam No. 3
Hitum Loya	gam No. 4
Margo Loya	ham No. 5

But in the village of Panya, with lesser population, 3 gams of 2 different clans, are there. It is not always necessary that all the clans are to be

represented in gamship. In the village of Kabu though there are Loya, Loyi and Lomi clans, yet the gams belong to two clans, Loya and Loyi.

Each village has a number of *nibos* or priests. Priests are called on not to render any service in the rituals of life cycle or during the annual cycle of festivals. But the *nibos* are mainly called to conduct rituals to drive away malevolent spirits in case of diseases and death. A Nibo learns his job through association with some experts and not that the art is descended from father to the son, and so on. Thus in the village of Kabu, Nibo Tomo Loyi used to move and work with one Marte Ete of Paya village since Tomo attained the age of 16/17 and thus Tomo learnt the jobs of nibo. But before a man works as nibo, he works as 'bo' or assistant priest for quite sometime till he attains the confidence of doing the work independently with proficiency. The *Nibo* at their late age, through the performance of ritual and through close intimacy of the habits and practices of the groups, are said to be experts in their own society. During our work the Gallong, among the nibo could give us quite a lot of data on migration, festivals, spiritual beliefs, etc.

In the Kabu village, there are six *nibos*, *i.e.*, Tomo Loyi, Beke Loyi, Ekke Loyi, Jumdo Loyi, Toke Loya and Magum Loya.

A nibo of Loyi clan can serve to officiate in the rituals of a Loya family too and again out of these six *nibos* Jumdo and Magum were earlier 'bo', *i.e.* assistant priests, but then gradually they became 'Nibo'. Again in the adjacent village of Paya there is no nibo and the *nibos* of Kabu worked for this village also. A nibo can marry but it is not necessary that he will press his son to follow his profession. The Minyong village, Pangin consists of four hamlets with three gams. Talem Messor of Moli, Talour Dupak of Mobuk and Tapyam Moang of Rusing. The leader is one Tamang Jamo of Moli and the bango secretary is from Kumruk. The functions of the gam and the leader in Minyong villages are the same as those in the Gallong villages and the duties and obligations of bango secretary tally with those of Head-gam in the Gallong area. The same man may at different times hold different offices. Thus we have an example when one person who was a leader was made bango secretary and then later on relinquishing this office become *gam*. But the same person cannot hold two different offices at the same time.

The Minyongs tell that earlier, before the Britishers approached their tract, they had no gam. There were village elders who managed village affairs. Government officials who approached the villages first did make friendship with some influential village elder through the presentation of tobacco and fabrics and other fancy articles. By this, the common people were less benefited and the village elders made their fortune. For example,

tobacco was cultivated in the Pangin village and around quite widely. But then the elders got plenty of tobacco, as presents, and thus they did not favour tobacco plantation. And thenceforth, in the Minyong area, tobacco plantation was abandoned gradually by most of the villages. But eventually, with the contact being deeply established by the British, the profuse tobacco presentation was on the wane and now they depend mainly on the outsiders for tobacco which is consumed by both the ladies and gents. But the Britishers themselves organised the village elders into systematic offices of gamship and leadership and thenceforth, one, two or three gams were selected in each village and some executive powers were delegated to them. Among the Minyongs, there are *mires* who are parallel to the Gallong *nibo*, Minyong *mire* may be male or female. The *mire* is not assisted by any assistant. Not all the villages have *mire*; and a *mire* of one village may render service in some other village if he/she is called to attend. They are not to officiate in any community festival or in any ritual connected with the life cycle. But they are called on to appease or drive away the spirit causing sickness, causing delay in childbirth, etc., and their jobs are to prescribe sacrifices of animals and to utter incantations and dance, a special type of dance to frighten the spirits. *Mire's* jobs, as in the case of *nibo*, are learnt through close association with some other *mire*.

Any man/woman can turn into *mire* in dream when the special spirit of *mire*, *mire Uiyu* enters the individual. This transferring *mire* spirit into other's body is called *Irikunam*. Earlier, the *mires* were allotted free land where six persons, selected by the gam, would have to devote free labour for one working day for *adi rike* (Slash and burn cultivation) work. This free labour in *Mire's* land was called *Mire Arikh*. Any family utilising the services of *mire* used to give to the *mire* six costly yellow beads. At present, a cash remuneration of Rs. 10.00 or so is given in the stead.

If the *mire* is summoned to drive away any evil spirit causing sickness, he/she would come and sit on a mat inside the house at *Kodangepu*, drink opong made in some other house. He/she will not accept anything, edible from that house. He/she would, then, stand up, utter incantations, at times touch the diseased and dance. The dance is termed *avitmire*. The house-owner or any of his representative tells the *mire* formally about some animal which may be slaughtered. The *mire* instructs to slaughter which is done by members of the lineage. The head of the animal is taken by the *mire* and the flesh will be shared by the members of the house and of the lineage. *Mire's* rituals usually are held at night but it might continue till the next dawn. After a day or two, the *mire* will pay a visit to the house on his/her accord, to know of the diseased.

There are some notorious *mire* called *tagolana* who can achieve some



objective by hurling stone, *tagong* on some particular person. *Tagolana* achieves the objective with the help of a spirit *ngokopumi*. *Tagolanas* are not socially boycotted by the rest of the villagers and they eat and drink in other's company too. *Tagolana* is mostly a female and people cautiously avoid them not to arouse their wrath. *Tagolana* cannot be employed or engaged by others with any motive. Whatever he/she does, it is done on his/her own whims. People tell that some *tagolanas* are such expert that they can swallow a piece of stone and bring it back through the mouth. In the Pangin group of villages, there are 5 *mires*—2 male and three female. All the hamlets of Pangin do not have *mire*, just as all the clans do not have *mire* from them. A *mire* of one clan can work for other clans outside his/her village too. *Mire's* son or daughter does not always become *mire*. At Pangin village, there is one lady *tagolana* who mastered the art in dream. In dream she had a contact with *ngokopumi*.

The selection of gam is always done by the village elders. Meeting is generally held at *deyerigidong* (arena in front of dormitory). The Bango Secretary, or a leader or the circle officer will suggest a name and the members of the gathering are at liberty to accept or to reject the name. Generally no serious controversy arises and once the leading elders affirm it is accepted. Earlier, it is told, only the *mirem* (rich) was selected as gam and now, even a commoner can come up to be a gam. Only they see that the selected man is (1) elderly, (2) holds impartial view, and (3) has a good reputation in the village. A man once selected as gam continues to hold the office as long as he lives or likes. He is given a half sleeved red coat by the Government. He is not entitled to get any free patch of land.

#### KEBANG

In an illuminating foreward to the treatise 'Democracy in Nefa' Mr. P. N. Luthra has said that 'to disseminate the feeling in the countryside, the people must be free to manage their own affairs and have some measure of delegated authority to deal with their problems in the economic, welfare, judicial and such like fields. Happily in the North East Frontier agency, the inherent urge of its people to take stock of their problems and deal with them has remained in tact'. The 'Democracy in Nefa' edited by Dr. Elwin, has delineated the variety of traditional bodies among different Nefa groups to adjudicate local crimes and norm deviations. The *Kebang* is one such strong body the authority of which is upheld by people of all cross sections.

We get the first description of *kebang* probably from the writings of Father Krick in 1853. He writes, 'Each village is self governing and independent. It has its own administration both legislative and executive,

women have no share in the Government...Laws are framed by the people, sanctioned by the Council, promulgated by the President. Every decision must come from the people, the chiefs have no right but to enforce it. Hence the people propose, the council sanctions and the President promulgates. Every evening all the men gather in the council room to discuss the topics of the day which means (1) to inform one another of what has been seen or heard ; (2) to discuss the political questions put forth by one of the chiefs, (3) to settle what the village will do the next day...injunctions are obeyed to the letter, for this people is as law abiding and respectful to the powers that be as it is proud of its liberty. The council house is also used for extra ordinary gatherings convoked to deal with a sudden emergency...sometimes especially on rainy days it is turned into a rendezvous of gossip and hand-work. Everybody takes his tool and passes the time as pleasantly and as usefully as he can”.

Before we get Sachin Roy's account on *Kebang* of 1948. We have the accounts left by E. T. Dalton of 1955 and then by G. D. S. Dunbar of 1913-17. Both of them have detailed how *kebang* plays an important role in their daily life. Roy describes the *kebang* of Siang in the following words. “The administrative structure of the Adis is essentially democratic ; Autocracy in any form has not been known to them and in the absence of a distinct class of nobility, oligarchy has remained equally unknown. This is in a true sense, a Government by the people and for the people. The structure is very simple and effective. Every village is an independent unit by itself ; it has a council of elders which exercises the highest legal and judicial powers, this is known as *kebang* and all judicial and political control of the village rests with it.....the *kebang* directs all village activities according to their traditional laws and customs of which it is supposed to be a repository.....all matters of common interest are placed before it and nothing can be done without its approval and sanction. The opening of agricultural plots, building of new houses, settling of new comers, punishing of wrong doers and whatever else that concerns the village either individually or communally is discussed and decided in it. As it is the chief Judicial body of the village, all cases of disputes are brought before it for Judgement..... The carrying out of the *kebang* decision and verdict is automatic and few ever challenge it”.

Actually, any meeting of village elders is *kebang*. “We will do *kebang*” that is the reply from any gam or village elder if he is approached for any job. The people are very much *kebang* minded and they take pride in such an institution where common people has the right to decide their own affairs in their own way. The existence of *kebang* among them for quite a long time past shows that the seed of democratic form of executive and judiciary

worked among them right well without the intervention of any police force or the sophisticated administrative machineries. Kebang is the supreme village level authority to decide the course of action to be taken regarding the shifting of village, opening of new arable plots, observance of *mopin* or *shulling* festival, making or rennovating dormitories, welcoming and assiting any outsider and/or trying any dispute on land, adultery or incestuous union. Here, the complainant and the defendant can relate their cases and others can also speak in favour or against the case. The president of Kebang, who is generally the gam or headgam or some other influential person of the locality, takes the verdict of the people and promulgates order. The verdict which now-a-days is written down by some literate person, becomes binding on both the parties. This democratic institution has duly survived probably because no monarchial system grew in this area and the land has always been known to be belonging to the people.

During our stay in a Gallong village, we witnessed three Kebang meetings. The first one arranged with us in the dormitory to decide the course of action the village has to take as regards our work. We reached the village around 2 p.m., when most of the villagers were away in the jhum fields or in the forest. They returned around 4 p.m., and before it was evening almost all the villagers returned. The political interpreter accompanying us soon communicated the news of our arrival to the gam No. 1 who immediately summoned all the other gams, elders, leaders and other villagers. The *deyeri*, our temporary camp, was soon humming with noise. There were talks and talks and finally they decided to help us. The gam No. 1 finally told that the village was glad to welcome us and would extend all possible help. Immediately two persons each day were allotted to us as informants and they selected the right men for the right topic. After the first day's Kebang was over, they cordially invited us to attend the dance, *ponung* that was going on in the school premises on the occasion of its closure for the winter vacation.

The Second Kebang meeting, held during our stay, continued for about 25 hours at a stretch with hardly 3/4 hours break in late night. The persons seated on chairs were Hokda Lolen (gam of Dego village), Moli Lolen (gam of Panya) and Yakarbak (a contractor of Along : of Karbak village) and Page Lomi (Head gam of Pakhtung Bango). All the gams, elders, leaders and other villagers attended the meeting. The news of Kebang meeting was announced on the previous night and on the day of Kebang the villagers started assembling in front of the dormitory where the meeting was to be held. As the Kebang was going on some of the people were engaged in splitting bamboo poles or making bamboo baskets. The case centred round the construction of some sheds of Border Roads organisation by one HL of the village. HL accepted private contract for this piece of work but,

at this, some of the villagers raised the objection that such contracts should always be on the village basis. After a prolonged discussion in which different speakers spoke very eloquently about the history of the Gallong, about this particular case or about similar issues. It was ultimately decided at the Kebang that no individual contracts could be accepted by any party to construct sheds in a plot of the village which was leased out. Such contracts should be accepted community wise, and the work should be done by all the villagers jointly. During the holding of the meeting *opong* was served and this *opong* was made by the villagers jointly. The three persons from other villages passed their night in the house of HL but still the verdict did not go in his favour. HL was fined Rupees seventyfive out of which rupees fifty was distributed among the gams and the Political interpreter accompanying us also got a share. The remaining twentyfive rupees were shared by the rest seventy families. A bull (given by HL) was slaughtered and a packet containing pieces of meat was given to each of the families of the village. The final judgement was written and was kept in the custody of the secretary of the school.

The third Kebang meeting was held in the house of the 1st Gam to decide how to throw us a farewell *ponung* party before we departed from the village. As per the decision of this Kebang, 12 persons went on fishing to catch fish and *opong* was prepared by the ladies and we were offered a hearty farewell, *ponung* where all the villagers irrespective of sex and age and class participated.

In the Minyong area too we could come across the functioning of similar Kebang on allied issues.

## RULES OF INHERITENCE OF PROPERTY

Among the Gallong, arable land (dry or wet fields), dwelling hut, granary, cattle, *tadok*, and cash (if there be any) etc., are regarded as inheritable property. No need is essential for the properties to be handed down to the heirs. The channel of inheritence is traditional. The widow, *tumbo*, of the deceased does not get any share because the widow remains attached to the living brothers. Property is always shared by the sons; and never by the daughters. If any man dies leaving daughters only, the property would then go to the brothers of the deceased. In case he has no brothers, the property, especially the land, goes to the clan and the clan elders and village elders sit together to reallocate the land to some one else.

The sons are labelled by their seniority *i.e.*, the eldest, intermediates and youngest are called *oroabina*, *repa* and *oroyie* respectively. Since the *oroabina* has to look after the last rites of the deceased and as the *oroyie* receives

the paternal care for the minimum period, they two receive the lion share. The *repa* is unfortunate as his share is meagre. *Tadoks* or the precious stone necklaces are always reserved for daughter's marriage. If daughters are not there, the *tadoks* are also shared by the sons. Among the Minyongs, too, the children are labelled in terms of seniority *i.e.* eldest, *obing*, intermediate *riyang* and youngest *oyi*.

Since the *obing* son becomes the caretaker of the family and the *oyi* becomes the dearest of the parents, the major share of the property goes to the *obing*, and the *oyi* receives the second major share. The *riyangs* share the rest, *e.g.*, if 10 acres of land are to be shared by the sons, four acres will go to *obing*, three to *oyi* and the remaining three acres will be shared by the 2, 3 or 4 *riyangs*.

The widow of the deceased as well as the daughters, married or unmarried, do not get any share of the property. But the widow will be staying with the *obing* or *oyi* and never with the *riyang*. Even if the sons are minor, they are not deprived of their due shares. If a *obing* boy marries a Gallong of Padam or Pasi girl and settles in the girl's village, he is relieved of his status of *obing* and the seniormost *riyang* is declared as *obing* and gets *obings* share of property. But even on marrying a non-Minyong girl, if he remains in his own village, he is not deprived of his usual share.

If a person dies leaving no male child, his daughters or his widow gets nothing. The property would then go to the brother's sons or, in the absence of any brother's son, to the father's brother's sons and in the absence of father's brother's sons to any man of the lineage who carries the dead body. In many cases, however, the widow, if she is able-bodied, carries the corpse and claims the property. She gets it under such circumstances.

*Oyi* gets the dwelling hut of his father. Mostly people make two huts during their life time if they are having more than one son. In that case the 2nd dwelling hut goes to *obing* and the main one goes to *oyi*. *Riyangs* make separate houses for themselves. But the *obing* inherits the granary of the father and the *oyi* and the *riyang* would construct new granaries.

The animals are also distributed in the proportion as described earlier. But if there are two mithuns, the *obing* and the *oyi* get one each and out of sheer good will the baby mithun, if any is born, is given to the *riyang*. The *tadoks* are also shared among the sons in the above proportion (as shown in the case of land). The *eglum* (grove of *takpat*) and *balek* (bamboo grove) are equally divided between the *obing* and the *oyi*. Of course, by sheer mutual understanding, the *riyang* sons are allowed to bring *tokpat* and bamboo from the groves of *obing* or *oyi*.

## INTER ETHNIC RELATIONSHIP : CHANGING OUT LOOK

Though the innerline restriction exists, the lower Siang area cannot be conceived as completely sealed and isolated. The Gallong and the Minyong constitute the two important groups and besides there are also, as we have told earlier, the Bangalee, Assamese, Bibaree, Nepali and people of some other states as govt. employees, as school teachers, petty businessmen, porters, cobblers, drivers etc. The Adis do not have to depend on the areas outside Arunachal other than paying short visits to places like Silapathar, Dibrugarh on purely business transactions. There is no village in lower Siang where Gallong or the Minyongs have been staying side by side with the plains people. The outsiders have primarily settled in and around the administrative centres of the Along market, Pangin and Pasighat. The situation of culture contact in lower Siang may, therefore, be described as 'regulated' or 'controlled' in contrast to the 'free and unregulated' contacts to be found in areas without 'inner line' restrictions.

In the administrative centres of Along market and Pasighat, the Gallong, Minyong and other Arunachal people get opportunity to come in contact with the plains people and be acquainted with new styles of dress, items of food, or learn about film stars by seeing cinema. Through cinema some of them have learnt some place names too. Whenever any villager comes to Along, a part of the cash money he earns or brings is spent in taking tea and snacks and for seeing cinema. With the establishment of the 'vartak' organisations, etc., some of the petty contracts also come in the hands of the local people and the contracts are accepted on individual or on village basis.

Other media of contact are the educational institutes namely the Ramkrishna Mission School which was started at Along in 1965 with 40 students. The number has now increased to 160 of which 60 stay in hostel. At present, the students are mainly Gallong and Minyong. But the School authorities will make it a central School to provide facilities for the whole of Arunachal. It has been our impression that due to the running of such institution, the Arunachal students of this area have been very much keen to go to Narendrapur and Belur in West Bengal and these are considered as advanced centres of studies. Again, Mopin and Shullung, two very important festivals of the Gallong and Minyong respectively, were being observed in respective villages. For the last two years, the villagers in collaboration with the Bango elders and the administration have tried to universalise the festivals by holding them at Along market and Pangin respectively, the scope for intergroup participation has widened in this way. In December, 1968, the Governor of Assam and Nagaland has formally opened a Mopin ground at Along for the holding of Mopin dances for three consecutive days. Now it is learnt that the Bango elders manage the show. We expect that through this sort of universalisation

of local festivals their songs, dances, etc., will receive a new colour, in future. In the interior villages, there is no definite system of weekly or daily markets. Big villages are now having some petty grocery cum stationery shops owned by the local people. All the day to day necessities are either grown or made by them or procured by them locally. Generally, in the Gallong village of Kabu, the women make their apparels in the handloom, the menfolk make the baskets and bamboo tubes of the loom. The construction of houses are done by them. Most of the Gallong villages have one or two black-smith families to cater to the requirements of iron implements. Each village has *nibo* and *bo* to officiate in the rituals connected with the driving away of malevolent spirits. The ladies doing midwifery are all Gallong and each village has at least 2 or 3 of them. In the matter of agricultural pursuits too, the members of a family help each other or the help of a co-villager may be sought. Such helps are returned on some similar occasions. Normally, they do not hire agricultural labour. But in the village of Kabu, recently two or three well-to-do peasants have engaged Nepali and Biharee labourers permanently as share croppers. In the Minyong area also, the villages maintain self sufficiency as regards the day-to-day requirements, services of priests, black-smiths, midwives are concerned. The market at Along give a good platform for economic transaction and the Gallong and the Minyong come to purchase different types of clothings, luxury items, utensils or buckets, etc. And homespun products like *gadu* (blanket) or *gale* or horticultural products like orange, vegetables, etc., are also sold. Cosmetics, *viz.*, snow, powder, lipstick are used by some girls reading at Along ; and they use them even at their villages. For petty stationery items they are to depend on townships of Along or Pasighat or Pangin. For grocery articles they either go to the village shops or procure them through the co-operative stores installed at these administrative centres.

With the opening up of better system of communication and better avenues of getting higher education for the intending students, the people of lower Siang, in general, have started thinking in terms of more local autonomy and for improving their own area and their villages. In the Minyong area, we could hear a popular demand of getting two administrative zones in Siang, *i.e.*, one for the Gallong area and the other for the Minyong area. The Minyongs tell that the administrative Headquarters being located at Along, in Gallong area, serve for the rapid changes among the Gallong. The Minyongs tell when the British came to Siang District, they had their headquarters at Pasighat and thus the Padam, Pasis came to limelight. Again, after independence the India administration has established headquarters at Along and thus, they tell, the Gallong have been benefited more.

The Minyong area being in the centre of the district has always been in the rear. The Minyongs further argue that as this district is named after the Siang river that flows first through the Minyong area, they should be given due prominence. We are, however, not very much keen to adjudicate the logic of such claim. What seems to us important is the extent of political consciousness and their craziness not to accept things as it is and to place their own model in the stead.

We could come across a general curiosity amongst the people to know about the Panchayati Raj and to see how their local institutions of *Kebang* and *bango* fit in with Panchayati system. Homely discussions often are held in the village and such talks are dominated by the *gams*, leaders, *bango* secretary or half-educated personalities in the village. commoners are primarily listeners. Among the people of the Lower Siang, the desire for improvement has been at two levels, *i.e.*, on village level and on individual level. In any village, in course of talks, people point out how such and such person has amassed wealth and is now possessing gun, mithun, etc. The recent opportunities of getting cash money through petty contracts have opened their eyes and there are occasional *Kebang* sittings to decide whether these contracts should be accepted on village level or on individual level. In the village Pangin, we found a large number of persons engaged in constructing School building under local contractors. To get a job of Political interpreter or Political Jamadar, *i.e.*, to get a Red Coat is commoner's aspiration. Side by side, they are eager to procure a gun licence or a shop licence. On the village level, the village elder think of improving a village by raising homeguards, by starting a School or by improving the water supply. This is the result of a pervading tempo to have better living and to get some symbols of betterment. On the other side there is the rising intelligentsia consisting of youngsters who are ambitious of occupying coveted posts in administration in the All India or Arunachal cadre. It has been observed that none in this rising intelligentsia aspires to be a professor or scientist and contribute in the field of education and science. Probably, by seeing the powerful administrative authorities at close quarters, they have built up this model of aspiration.

The improved road communications have given mainly the Gallong better means of contact with the outside world. The village elders look to the welfare of the village and the villagers have to be in touch with the officials in the development, education and engineering wings of administrative machinery at Along. To them C.o. *migam* or overseer *migam* (*migam* = important personality) wield much power and they feel that the local D. C. (formerly Political officer) is a very big authority who works on behalf of the Adviser stationed at Shillong. Some of these elderly people remember the



past political Agents and Political officers, their names, antecedents, their habits and likings. This set of people have moved out of Siang only upto Likabali or Dibrugarh. They have heard that Delhi and Shillong are policy making places. The second type of outside contact is to be seen among the students reading in the colleges at Pasighat, Gauhati, Dibrugarh or Shillong. This section is ambitious and due to their contacts with big cities, the big cultural centres, they keep pace with the modern trends of development, the exact administrative hierarchy, the political aspirations in the other states of India and so on. They, being the most progressive set of local people, percolate new thoughts and ideas to the people whenever they visit their homeland. The third set of people comprises a few local personalities amassing considerable fortune, power and prestige. They have much frequent contact with the big administrative centres (other than Along). They are respected by the people and can approach the top administrative authorities, and that in turn, again increase their local prestige. The last and fourth type is composed of the commoners of the interior villages. They have very rare contact with Along, not to speak of other cities. They come to Along only on very special piece of work and they are mainly concerned with the subsistence of their families. This group of people is least concerned about the maior current politics or important events and are verily guided by the village elders.

## CHAPTER IX

### LIFE CYCLE

#### PREGNANCY AND BIRTH

Among the Gallong a pregnant lady is called *taligane* and they believe that the child will be born in the tenth month from the stoppage of menstruation. By examining the *taligane*, the *nikam*, midwife, can tell the approximate period of delivery. In delayed pregnancy the *nikam*, on examining the pregnant lady, may prescribe to summon the *nibo* (priest). The priest utters a course of incantations inside the house in front of the lying pregnant lady. No sacrifice is done at this time. They believe that this chanting by *nibo* makes the delivery easy. Delivery is done inside the house at any place other than *nyode* and *nyodehere*, which are primarily sleeping spaces and further that the delivery is not done by the side of the main fire-place, *merum*, where usually cooking is done. Delivery is usually done by the side of subsidiary hearth at *pimebago*. Thenceforth, the mother cooks her own food at the subsidiary fire-place, at *pimebago*. She is not to observe any restriction of food and can drink *opong* too. On the sixth day, a feast is arranged inside the house where only the elderly men and women (not necessarily of the same clan) are invited. The feast for which chicken and pig are slaughtered, is arranged to mark the end of all restrictions for the mother and since then she can use the main fire-place (*merum*) for cooking food. On this day, for the first time since her confinement, she can go to some nearby field but only with the baby at the back. And from the 7th day she moves about as any other lady does. The first cutting of the baby's hair is done by the parents only after the 2nd month. No ritual is associated with this. A pregnant woman does not observe any taboo on work or food. They believe that pregnant women should not eat less because the babies in the womb might feel hungry.

Among the Minyong, the woman with no issue is called *miumsodan*. For a *miumsodan* often the ritual *omartola* is performed by the *mire* of village. The *mire* dances in the house of the *miumsodan* at night and then goes up the hill to bring water in her palm and holds her palm on the head of the *miumsodan*. If the water trickles down through the gaps of her finger it is a good omen and the *mire* declares that the lady will have issue soon. The water, in that case, will also be sprinkled on the head of the husband. A feast of meat and *opong* follows in which elderly men and women are invited. Barrenness is not considered a crime but it gives the husband a plea to remarry.

Among the Minyong a pregnant woman is called *aogudung* and they know about pregnancy through the stoppage of menstruation. *demangkodang*. The lady delivers in one corner near the sleeping space of the house. Only old ladies of the same lineage attend the *aogudung* at the time of delivery. If the *kinam* (labour pain) lasts for 2/3 days, the *mire* is called on. This calling on *mire* is known as *miretamtokaka*. *Mire* dances at the *kodaug* of the house. Cow or mithum and chicken are slaughtered to throw a feast to the members of the lineage. The pregnant woman and the *mire* would not take the meat but the husband may take it. The feasting being over, the *mire* would perform *menkang* i.e. he/she puts his/her hand on the belly and other parts of the body of the pregnant lady and chants mantras. Under such circumstances, it is thought that a malevolent spirit, *nripom uiyu* is, causing the difficulty in delivery and the *mire* takes necessary steps to appease the spirit.

The pregnant woman almost squats on the floor and the attending elderly woman helps her. After delivery the baby and the mother is cleaned by warm water. If the case is normal, she can take any type of food. But if she needs the services of *mire* for the delivery, she is to abide by the restrictions imposed by the *mire*, and she is not allowed to take anything from outside. But she is to maintain a taboo on beef or the flesh of mithun.

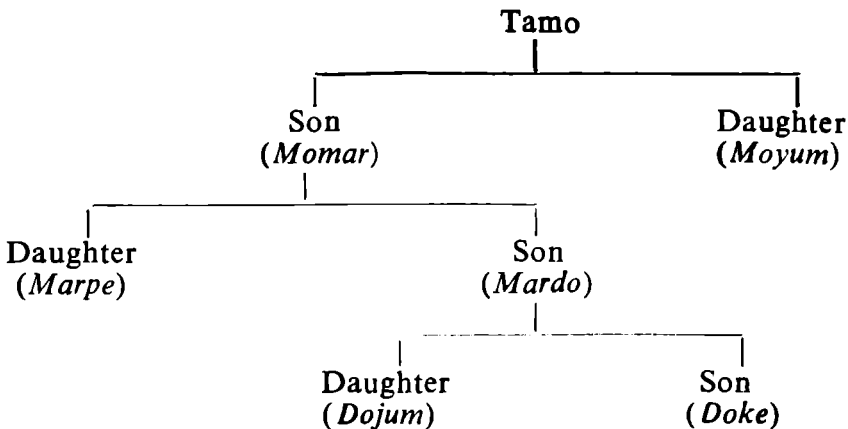
On the day of delivery or the day following, *nyilum* is observed and chicken and opong are served to old ladies and the youngsters. Men folk are not invited in *nyilum*, and *mire* has nothing to do on this occasion. *Nyilum* is observed to propitiate *onipolo*, the creator of the universe. For the next five days, the woman cannot go out and her husband abstains from his normal economic activities and remains indoor. During this period, others can enter the house and accept food. This period is called *obonyoeum*. On the expiry of *obonyodum*, all the inmates of the house take oblation. After this, the woman takes some husk, in a container, a bow and arrow. Now she accompanied by her husband and the baby (who is carried by some other woman or girl at the back) goes to the outskirts of the village following an ascending path (if a girl is born) or a descending track (if a boy is born) and moves helter-skelter for a while and returns. No feast is arranged to solemnise this ceremony *gideksideng*. Only after *gideksideng*, the husband and wife, individually or jointly, can go to the field and attend to all sorts of economic activities.

On the day of *nyilum*, the piercing of the ears, *nyorung edung*, is done for both a boy or a girl. Earlier, say 25 or 30 years back, *nyorung edung* was compulsory. At present this ear piercing ceremony is not done for the boys; and in the case of girls too, it is in most of the cases deferred to some other date. *Nyorung edung* if performed, takes place inside the house and is done by the mother's brother (1st preference) or father (2nd preference) or

the mother (3rd preference) of the child with the help of the hair of the wild animal *yagong*. Nothing else is to be done on this occasion. Girls pierce the ears to use ornaments but boys need to pierce their ears to be distinguished from the spirits. The Minyongs believe that the universe is inhabited by two sorts of beings i.e, human and spirits. Spirits do not pierce the ears which the mankind does.

### NAME GIVING CEREMONY

Among the Gallong, the name giving ceremony is termed *emrukkalaju*. On this day a name is suggested and the nibo and the father of the child sit with a branch of taji plant and lit its anterior part. They carefully watch the fire ; if the ashes fall down then the name is thought to be unsuitable. But if the ash sticks to the stick, it is said to have obtained divine sanction. Regarding the selection of names they follow certain procedure. The first syllable of the name of the children is always formed of the 2nd syllable of the father's name. The following example, we feel, will substantiate.



The boys are addressed as such, but in the case of girls while addressing 'ya' is put in the place of first syllable. Thus a girl Mope will actually be addressed as Yape and so on.

Among the Minyong, the name giving ceremony, *aminminding* is held on the very day of *nyolum* ; first the name is given and then the ears are pierced. They are very much prompt in naming the child because, they feel, unless this is done some malevolent spirit might be after it. The name is to be given by the elders of the house or of the village and they are not to observe any ritual for that. But in case a man has already lost a few children, he invites suggestions from the *mire* to avoid any 'bad' name. Generally, the male names start with the letter 't' and the female names with 'y'. At a time, two or three names are suggested but the name that 'sounds' best is kept. No ancestor's name is repeated unless it is specifically prescribed by *mire*. The final choice of name is usually done by the parents.

The Minyong do not name a child in the Gallong way putting the second syllable of father's name as the 1st syllable of the children's name. Moreover a child is named according to the time of birth as follows :

<i>Time of birth</i>	<i>Name preferred</i>
morning	rokomp for boy yakomp for girl
noon	tagomp for boy yagomp for girl
evening	tama for boy yama for girl

Names are often suggested on the basis of the clan's name as follows :

- 1 A man of messar clan may be called Loling even if his actual name be Taling.
- 2 A man of panor clan may be called Donam even if his actual name be Tanam.
- 3 A man of gao clan may be called Jogo even if his actual name be Tago.
- 4 A man of taki clan may be called Lipang even if his actual name is Tapang.

Similar prefixes are also used for members of other clans. Why such prefixes of 'Lo', 'Do', 'Jo', 'Li', are used for clans as messar, panor, gao, and taki, is not known to them. But they tell it is traditional.

Children are also labelled on the basis of their seniority, *i.e.* the eldest (*bing*), intermediate (*riang*) and youngest (*oyi*).

## EDUCATION

In a published comparative statement (Education in NEFA : 1966), the NEFA administration has shown that the number of students reading in schools and colleges in NEFA has increased from about 30 in 1947 to about 15,000 in 1966. The number of primary schools has increased from 3 (in 1947) to 311 (in 1966), and the number of M.E. and High & Higher Secondary Schools has become 33 and 11 respectively. The number of graduates of NEFA is somewhat around 30. There has now been an urge on the part of the villagers to get a school in the village or to raise a school from primary to M.E. standard. In the Gallong area, we have seen that the village elders and especially the secretary of the school are very much particular about the attendance of the students and the comfort of the teachers of the school. Before the annual examination, the village students,

both boys and girls, stay in the attached hostels so that they may be earnestly devoted to their studies. Otherwise, the hostels are vacant. The village primary schools are catering to the requirements of the boys and girls of the particular village but an M. E. school caters to the requirements of the neighbouring villages too. Thus the M.E. school at Pabdi has students from five other villages and the six members of the teaching staff hail from six different places. This school has about 160 students including 50 girl students and the headmaster of the school has organised a very beautiful museum with a rare collection of Gallong specimens. In the Minyong area of Pangin, there is a M.E. school at Pangin with about 76 students coming from 10 different villages. The school originally opened in 1948 as L.P. school was raised to M.E. standard in 1962. But the headmaster of the school complains of a very poor attendance of the local students and have already approached the village elders to look into the matter. From the school records we could get an idea of the seasonal fall in attendance so far as this Pangin School is concerned. The percentage of attendance in February, June, August and November is about 60·2, 61·2, 69·6 and 58·5 respectively.

In the lower Siang area there are two Higher Secondary Schools, *i.e.*, one at Along and the other at Pasighat. The Along Higher Secondary School was raised to Higher Secondary standard in 1964. At present this school has a roll strength of 171 students of which, 102 are Gallong, 12 Minyong and the rest 57 non-Adis. The hostel has 99 boys and 20 girls. According to the headmaster they are all well disciplined and have shown propensities for N.C.C. training and scouting.

In the Along Higher Secondary School where the Adis and non Adis have been reading together, both the Gallong & Minyong boys have proved to be meritorious in the general proficiency tests. In all the upper classes they have either topped the list or occupied one of the first three positions. In all these schools, at all levels, the system of co-education prevails and no untowardly incident is in record. In the Along Higher Secondary School there has not been any act of indiscipline by the students and the amount of respect extended towards the teachers is really commendable. The teachers in these schools are mostly non-tribals. The relationship between the students of hills and plains, in the school, is cordial and fraternal.

Prior to the introduction of modern system of education in school and college, they had their own system of training the boys and girls through institutions such as *moshup* and *risheng* that are still functioning among the the Minyong. The Minyong boys and girls, in the remote villages even now-a-days attend *moshup* and *risheng* respectively, sleep there and learn about their traditions and cultures from the elders. The ponung dances and

songs are learnt in these dormitories. The younger boys often bring fuel wood, water or are asked to kindle fire. Thus they imbibe the habit of obeying command and to lead a disciplined life. On the other hand, in the Gallong area, in the vicinity of Along, people are crazy to send their wards to schools, etc, and they do not care much about these dormitories. Even the school or college going boys feel shy to pass on any information on these dormitories. It seems that with the gradual spread of education, these traditional institutions will gradually go into oblivion.

## DORMITORY

Elwin (1947) has shown how the *ghotul* of the Muria play an important role in the matter of training the young boys and girls. In the tribal pockets of eastern India, we know of similar institutions, *viz.*, *nokpanthe* (of Garo), *chhangghar* (of Lalung), *morung* (of Naga). In the district of Siang, *deyere* or *moshup* earlier played an important role for imparting a sense of discipline among the growing young folk of the Gallong and Minyong. Gallongs use the word *deyere* and the Minyong, Padam, Pasi use *moshup* for similar institution. The latter groups have *risheng* as spinsters dormitory. Among the Gallong, the *deyere* has lost its earlier function and is now used as guest house or for holding Kebang meetings. In the interior villages such as Riga, Riu, Komseng in the Minyong area, both *moshup* and *risheng* (bachelors' and spinters' dormitories respectively) are still functioning. In the more enlightened village of Pangin, due to outside contact the actual functions of *moshup* have dwindled away. In some villages around Pangin, *ritek*, which may be described as mini *moshup*, is to be seen. *Ritek* does not contain the stones representing the presiding deity of the village.

The Minyong have the belief that long back one small hut was made by one Tarup Merap on some river side. People of the vicinity enquired 'why you are making the hut'? Merap replied, "For the villagers to assemble". So also Doni Dongar, the earliest ancestor of all the Moshup people made a dormitory with the help of wild varieties of leaves locally named *enge anne* and *nijje*. But this first *deyere* was spoiled by sunrays. So another type of leaf *tamra* was added to it. Now-a-days, the *moshups* are made of *tokpat* which are usually used for other common huts. Merap made the hut but did not name it. But Doni Dongar labelled it as *moshup* and enunciated its purpose: The Minyong elders then declared, 'we are all sons of Doni Dongar', we accept it. The Minyongs believe that all the sons of Doni Dongar, *viz.*, Minyong, Padam, Gallong and Pasi accepted the *moshup* simultaneously. The main functions of the *moshup* are: (a) meeting of villagers, (b) sleeping space for unmarried boys, (c) making of poison for annual communal hunt and (d) the abode of *gomin-soyin*, *i.e.* the presiding deity of the village.

One corner of the *moshup* is demarcated and is called *bango mobiang*

which accomodates three stone slabs, *i.e.* two big, *mobiang*, and the other small, *motup*. These three stone slabs are used for making poison and it is believed that the poison if made in the *bango mobiang* brings about success in hunting. In case these stones are displaced or upturned for any reason, it is regarded as a very bad sign, indicating probable outbreak of epidemic in the village. Once displaced, the deity should be appeased with appropriate rituals. The rituals consist of sprinkling of blood of chicken on the stone and pounding of *magne* (lump of fermented rice/millet and *taken* (ginger) pieces on the stones. After these are done, the stone slabs can be properly placed by such person who has not slept with his wife for the previous seven nights. Such person is to be selected by the village elders.

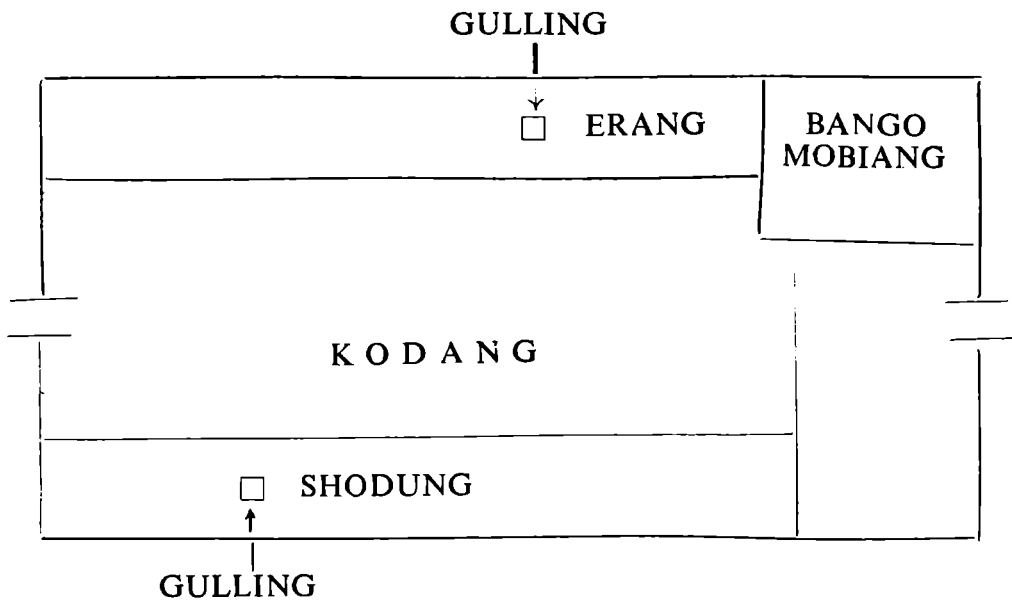
In the villages that have now become administrative centres, the exact nature of these dormitories has much been blurred. Even some 40/45 years back, the moshup at Pangin was functioning right well and the boys till they were married used to come every evening after dinner, kindle up fire, gossip, listen to elder boys about anything of interest, sing *ponung* songs & dance *ponung* dances with the members of the *risheng* and thus spend the whole night. *Risheng* was located only half a furlong from *moshup*. In its outward appearance *risheng* and *moshup* do not vary much but because the *risheng* do not have the *bango mobiang*, poison for hunting cannot be made in *risheng*. It was seen that most of the *moshup* boys had partners in *risheng* with whom they used to dance or gossip or sleep in the *moshup* or *risheng*. It was often seen that these partners used to marry each other. This freedom of mixing between the boys and girls of *moshup* and *risheng* was accepted by the village elders earlier. It is presumed that due to this amount of free mixing, there were heavy cases of divorces and illicit ties. Hence now *risheng* has been withdrawn from many Minyong villages including Pangin. Since *risheng* was attended by young girls even though they were betrothed, young boys who had got school education started looking the affairs as a matter of disgrace. But even now in some of the remote Minyong villages, both *moshup* and *risheng* are functioning. The *moshup* goers are called *dereyaming* and the *risheng* goers are called *rishemimum*.

The *dereyaming* and *rishemimum* have no leader. In fact the senior-most boy or girl, as the case may be, would guide others in the dormitory, and has command. But any irregularity occurring in the *moshup* or *risheng* remains the headache of the village elders. These elders, whenever, they meet to discuss anything, meet at *moshup*. Dormitory members are not to contribute free labour for any village work except for the construction of *moshup* or *risheng*. Generally, each village has a separate *moshup*. In certain cases, the hamlets forming a village may have common *moshup*. Thus the



Pangin village group has four hamlets, *i.e.* Mobuk, Rusing, Kumruk and Moli. Of these, the first two are the older settlements while the latter two have recently been started and some of the families from the first two villages have settled down in the newer hamlets. The two old hamlets had *risheng* which have now been discontinued. Rusing is still having *moshup* but the *moshup* of Mobuk has been shifted to Moli. Kumruk, the other recent hamlet has *got* one *ritek* for the sleeping of boys and for holding village meetings. Due to the absence of *mobiang* and *motup* (stones) poison cannot be made in *ritek*. Hence, the people of Kumruk join with the Moli people during the community hunting.

Externally, a *moshup* looks like any other dwelling house. It has a rectangular ground plan and occupies a central place in the village.



Ground plan of moshup.

The above is the ground plan of the *moshup* at Moli (Pangin). *Bango mobiang* is a sacred place and no one enters there except on business. *Erang* and *shodung* are sleeping spaces. *Kodang* is the passage and it is never used for sleeping purpose. Even at *erang* and *shodung*, boys sleep around *gulling* fireplace.

The *deyere* among the Gallong exists in theory but not in practice. Gallongs *now-a-days* do not know about any spinster's dormitory. Srivastava (1962) writes, "... ..at present the *dere* in Gallong villages is mainly a resort for visitors and a place for holding *Kebang* meetings or for holding *ponung* dances". Some of the big *ponung* dances when the whole village assemble are also held in the open area in front of *Deyere*. Gallong *deyere* has no specially allocated spot for making poison for community hunting but still they make it within the *deyere*".

## MARRIAGE

The Gallong marriage is quite an expensive affair and the whole marriage rituals continue for a number of years. The search for suitable girl continues as a part of other daily activities as soon as a boy attains the age of puberty. Wherever a suitable girl is seen or heard a *lampo* or mediator belonging to the boy's village is engaged, by the boy's side, to convey the desire to the guardian of the girl. As the negotiation starts one *lampo* is also engaged by the girl's guardian to carry on the talk. The boy's *lampo* would first go to the girl's father or guardian and propose. If the other side agrees to it, the girl's side will get 2, 3 or 4 mithuns, 2 or 3 cows, 1 *dachi* (big brass vessel), *yokse* (sword), two cane hats, *banko* (big brass plate) and as the first instalment of these presentations the *lampo* (of boy) will hand over to the girl's father at least *yokse, dotak, talo*. As these are handed over, one day, the boy, boy's parents and boy's *lampo* will visit girl's house when a cow will be slaughtered and about 100 pieces of meat will be distributed to the villagers (of the girl). They would halt in the girl's house for the night. Next morning, discussion follows. Girl's side is represented by girl's guardian, girl's *lampo* and a few village elders of the girl's village. A settlement is reached regarding the number of cattle or mithun to be given. The boy's party returns, thereafter. Then follows *nidayime*.

After about a month or so, the boy, his parents and the *lampo* will go to the girl's house with the mithuns and cows (the number being previously agreed upon), about 200/300 small pieces of smoked fish, and some *opong*. The boy's party may also be composed of some other villagers preferably of the same clan. They take their dinner in the girl's house. They all sit to dine in a place when the girl's father or guardian tells, "you have come to our house, so some good food will have to be given. We will slaughter for you some 20 chickens and 20 pigs". A sumptuous dinner then follows. *Opong* is served to all by the girl's *lampo*. They would halt in the girl's house. Next day, before they depart, they would have lunch in the girl's house. A chain exchange of gift follows then ; boy's mother will get *barko, bati, ikih* (brass cup), *malo* (also brass cup) and 3 pair of blue bead necklaces. Girl's *lampo* will get (from boy's father) *bali, bore* (brass utensils). Boy's father's younger brother will get one *bore*. The persons carrying the fish will get each one *bali* or one *rumtum* (brass vessels) or *malo* or *nyare* and the mithun carrier will get one *bali*. As this give and take is over, all leave for their village. After a month or so, it is time for *nidatomnam* when *opong* is specially made for the girl's parents, invited through *lampo*, to visit boy's house. Accordingly, girl's parents with the girl's mother's brother (but not the girl) come. To entertain them, about 10 chicken, 1 small pig and one horned cow are slaughtered. They all pass the night in the boy's house and are also

entertained with opong by the boy's lampo. Next morning, other villagers, specially the consanguinal and affinal kins of the boy assemble at the boy's place to meet the girl's party. They gossip as they sip opong. After some discussion, 'give and take' goes on when the boy's father will give for the girl's sister *barko* and *bore*, for the girl's lampo *bali*; and one *bore* or *bali* or *rumtum* for any brother of the girl. Following this the girl's party departs. In the following year, they observe *gadumgokopala* when the boy with his parents and lampo come to the girl's house with 20 packets of fermented millet, 100 packets of smoked fish, 5 small pigs, and hand over these to the girl's father. The sister of the girl will then serve opong to these visitors in bamboo vessels. In the evening, the girl's lampo will offer to the party-members opong and beef. This is *nidatomla*. They pass the night in the girl's house and next morning, before the party departs, the girl's father gives two *barko*, one each for the boy's brother and sister. After a few months, in the following year, the boy's lampo will come, *dokikaponam*, to the girl's house and talk. This formal talk is called *dokidalamponam*. The boy's lampo will bring from the boy's father one cow and one pig (*dokiyegle*) and salt (*dokialo*) for the girl's father, *barko* or *talo* for girl's father's elder brother and *boli* or *rumtum* or *nyane* for girl's father's younger brother. Next year, the boy's lampo together with some assistant will come to the girl's house with 40 packets of fermented millet for opong and gives to the girl's father 20 pieces of *hurgen*, *biye*, *komje* and *nyarreh* and take from the girls side (for the boy) *talo*, *bore*, *bali* (total 4 pieces). Lampo will get 10 *hugen*, 10 *nyare*, 10 *koyi* and his assistant, *lampo poyi* will get 1 *bore*, 2 *hugen*, and 2 *nyare*. This visit of lampo and *lampo poyi* is called *sobopanam*, and this give and take is called *toga*. Next morning as the lampo and *lampo poyi* return, the bride starts dressing up and gets ready for the bridal journey to the bridegroom's village. The bride is dressed up with ornaments, *i.e.* *gumli duli*, *dongnebelle*, *hoyi* and apparels such as *emo* (long woollen coat) and also with (*hurgen*) brass bells *hurgen* hanging from the back. The bride is accompanied by her elder brother and younger brother, her parents, her friends and some other village elders and departs from her village with tears rolling down the eyes. Two of her close mates catch her by the hands as she bids farewell to her mother or other villagers. The party consists of 50-60 members both men and women. The party members carry two chicken, *yongmo* (bamboo arrow) and *eggi* (axe). In the midway the party members halt for a while and take fish, opong, etc. On reaching the bridegroom's village, they wait outside the village boundary and again, they are served with opong. The mates of the bride give a finishing touch to dress up the bride nicely and proceed to the bridegroom's house, where as they enter the campus, the bridegroom greets the girl and the party. This is *dagriknam*. Then follows the *morolarikehinam* when the bride and the bridegroom

exchange *kopu* (a bundle of soft ekkam leaves) and *yongmo* (arrow). The bridegroom who is dressed in short dhoti and waist cost and cane hat will then take the bride to the varandah where both of them rest a while (*nam-jakobahala*) and then go inside the house, sit by the fireplace with all others and sip opong. On the other hand, by the side of the granary the nibo of the boys village utters incantations, that can be translated as, "this mithun is being slaughtered as per tradition. You mithun; you die in good spirit. You, boy's father, you be calm". The bride will then hit the mithun's shoulder with *kopu* and the bridegroom will pierce the arrow at the left front leg and hip of the mithun and after that the girls elder brother kills the mithun with *eggie*. This is *sobodeynam*. In the evening, after the food is taken, the boys and girls of the village dance ponung dances. The girl's father will give *barko bore, bali*, etc., to the boy's father and the latter will give bamboo vessels (for keeping opong) to the former. This exchange is *patamhatompoka*. The girl's father will give to the boy *eggie, dumbo, hurgen* and *yokse*. This is called *hopin*. Two *belle* are also given for boy's mother. This is known as *anyobelle*. The members of the bride's party are then entertained by the boy's lampo with opong and pieces of mithun meat. In the following morning the bride's party members depart for their village, leaving the girl with the boy. This is called *nyodunam legabe nididasijido*. The bride and the bridegroom stay in the latter's house at *nyodula* for a week and they can sleep together since the first night. After a week, the bride and bridegroom with the latter's parents will go (*ledokakoinnam*) to the bride's house and stay as many days as the latter desires. If the girl is adult (i.e. have attained puberty), she would return along with others. But if the girl is a minor (i.e. if she has not attained the puberty yet), she stays with her parents and comes back only on her attainment of puberty. A bride is called *nyamte* and the bridegroom *magbo*. Marriage with different sets of rituals and separate names is called *midamala*. A person having married is called *nidamempa*. A person married to one wife is called *mimmeaken*, with two wives *mimmeanilapa*, and with three wives is called *mimmeayum*. Similarly, a girl marrying one husband is *millsaken*, two husbands is *milloani* and so on. Even if a man marries for the second time, he is to pass through the same train of rituals. Even when a girl is married to a single husband, his brothers have equal access to her. But all the children born to this lady go to the credit of the 'actual' husband.

Marrying parallel cousins, wife's younger sister during wife's life time and mother's brother's wife is strictly forbidden. Mother's brother's daughter marriage or father's sister's daughter marriage is permissible, but even then the rituals are to be performed. Even if the boy absconds with the girl, they are to face a *kebang* when a compromise is arrived as to the brideprice the boy has to pay.

*Mimmelanam* is the Minyong term for marriage. It is held mostly in the months of Junme, Besing, Kobong because these months are deemed to be auspicious and because Minyongs have good stock of food during these months.

Minyong marriage is less elaborate in comparison to Gallong marriage and is less expensive too. Any day, as the boy's parents select a particular girl in their mind, they both go to the girl's house and tell to the girl's parents, "I/We like to give you opong". The mother of the girl tells, 'I will ask my daughter'. Later on the boy's parents depart and the girl is conveyed this piece of news. If the girl puts her consent, this is communicated to the parents of the boy through somebody (no lampo is engaged by the Minyong). Subsequently, the boy's mother comes to the girl's house with one *kaksor* (bamboo vessel) of opong. As it is accepted by the girl's mother, the girl is said to be betrothed, *reying relang*. The *reying relang* being over, on some other day, two baskets of fermented millet and 20 or 30 dried small fishes are sent to the girl's house by the boy's father. This is shared by the girl's lineage members too. After about a year and a month, *magbogidum* is held when the boy is asked by his mother to go to the bride's house. The boy, therefore, passes a night in the girl's village, at the moshup. He takes with him one *kaksor* of opong and hands it over to the girl's parents. The boy comes back next morning, meanwhile, whenever any animal is killed, half the meat is sent to the girl's house.

As the boy returns, *arebinam* starts. A few months before the stipulated day of girl's entering boy's house, the girl starts coming to the boy's village and works with the boy in the jhum field but every day goes back to her own village. She starts coming before the sowing season and helps her future husband in the matter of weeding, fencing, felling of trees, sowing, etc. On the day of sowing, she comes with a basketful of seeds and sows in the future husband's field. In this way one complete agricultural cycle elapses and she starts reaping too. On the first harvesting day, she enters her husband's house with a basketful of newly reaped paddy and this time she does not go back to her own village.

After a week, *nyamemgilikken* takes place when the bride and the bridegroom go to the girl's house to bring her clothes. They may stay for a night or so in the former's house. If the girl be the eldest daughter of her father, a big boar is roasted and about 50—60 pieces of pork and some quantity of opong is to be sent to her house, by the boy's father along with them or a few days later. But for next daughter, only rice and opong are to be sent. After about a month, the bridegroom is invited to the girl's house and as he reaches there with his wife, the father-in-law tells him, 'you go to our *kheti*, i.e. field.' He does so and thereafter he is given by his father-

in-law, one chicken, one boar, *amliruli* (opong in dried gourd vessel), about one maund of maize, about a maund of paddy, vegetables and some other edible items, as many bead necklaces as the father can give. These are actually given for the girl. The boy and his wife return thereafter with the above articles.

After this and till the death of the spouses, this sort of exchange of food articles continues between the two sides. The girl's house generally gives back half the quantity sent by the boy. This exchange is *alingapit* which primarily consists of rice and opong. *Alingapit* maintains a bond of fraternity between these two families. Meanwhile, even if no issue is born of this couple, the parents of either sides exchange visits. In the Pangin area, the Minyong do not give Mithun to the girl but the Minyong of Riga, even now, pay *renam*, cash or mithun to the girl. The married girls do not wear anything as insignia of marriage. During the period following *reying relang* till she finally enters her husband's house, no one cares whether she is perfectly chaste or not. But once she enters in her husband's house, everybody cares whether she is leading a chaste life or not and moral laxity on her part becomes a matter of concern for all. In case of adultery, she will be fined by the village *kebang*.

Among the Gallong divorce cases are rarely heard of. Probably, due to the polyandrous type of union permitted by the society and the high bride prices, divorce cases are almost nil. Among the Minyong, divorce cases occur. If the husband and wife live separately without being formally divorced it is called *gikok kangkok*. A formal divorce is *mepakminsinam*, formalised by the holding of village *kebang* at the moshup. The mire, through a means of divination determines whether the fault is with the boy or the girl. If the boy is found to be guilty, he is to pay a fine of one mithun or a sum of rupees five hundred only. Divorce is then allowed and the fine realised is spent for feasting. If the girl is found to be at fault, the village leaders will tell her, 'we will take, from your next husband, a fine of rupees five hundred or a mithun'. The divorce is formalised. And thus a divorced girl is not to pay anything before she is married.

Polygyny is practised and the reasons are (1) barrenness of first wife and (2) procuring additional hand for agricultural pursuits. Barrenness on wife's part is not considered to be a crime. When a man marries for the second time, he is to pass through the same series of rituals. Sororal marriage is permissible but is not much in vogue. Cross cousin marriage is not to be seen among the Minyong, A *tumbo* (widow) can or will marry only a *meyang* (widower). In doing so, the *meyang* will give rice and opong to the guardian of the *tumbo* or to the *tumbo* but no *arebinam* is to be per-

formed. Meyang will not get from tumbo's guardian any bead necklace, because these are given only on first marriage.

The marriage among the Gallong is a highly expensive and time taking ceremony covering 3, 4, 5 years between the betrothal and the actual marriage. The intervening period is studded with rituals, exchange visits, exchange of gifts and slaughtering of mithun, cow, pig and chicken for feasting and entertainment. Due to the high bride price and enormous cost of the ceremonies, many young boys and girls have remained unmarried. And probably because of this, again polyandrous type of union has survived among them. In contrast to this, Minyong marriages are relatively simple ceremonies involving less expenses. The exchange of gifts, in the case of the Minyong are just as is necessary to maintain a cordial relation. In every Gallong marriage, the role of lampo is essential whereas in Minyong marriages, which go without a lampo, the role of the lineage member are conspicuous. *Nibo* or the *Mire* (priest) have virtually no significant role in the marriage ceremonies.

Roy (1960) has written, 'The girl after marriage, may continue staying with her parents—it is expected, however, that he (her husband) should have his house and take his wife there with the coming of the first child'. Today, the Minyong of Pangin, do not, however, conform to the above. On the contrary, we have seen that after *arebinum*, as they enter the husband's house, they continue in that house with their inmates. In view of the high percentage of barrenness, it is not always possible for the wife to wait for a child to go to the husband's house. It has been seen that according to convenience the married sons make separate sheds for their stay.

## DEATH AND FUNERAL

Among the Gallong, if a person falls ill, *nibo* is called. But inspite of *nibo*'s best efforts, a person may die. On death, the corpse is kept inside the house, by the side of the fire place and the relatives and villagers (members of the same or the other clan) come and sit by its side with unsheathed cutter in their hand lest any malevolent spirit jumps upon them. They, thus remain alert all throughout the night because it is believed that the death has been due to the failure of *nibo* to subdue the malevolent spirit causing sickness. Therefore, that adamant spirit might be haunting around the house. Unless the cutter is unsheathed, some other person might be the victim of its wrath. There are certain spirits, say *yapom*, that moves helterskelter, in hills and forest, assuming the form of various wild animals. *Yapom* can kill anybody instantaneously. "*Nyhidko*" in Gallong means 'a person dies'. The Gallong are very much particular about the spot of death. A person dying inside the house at *nyode* will be rested for the

time being, at nyode, if he/she dies at parmo will be rested at parmo. But if he/she dies in the forest or in the agricultural plots, the corpse will then be carried home and placed where he/she used to sleep.

The corpse is buried at a burial place, *ebu*, in the outskirts of the village. *Ebu* is made by the brothers and or the members of the same clan. The body is interned in a crouched position with knees folded and hence, *ebu* is made quite deep. The head is directed towards the west because the sun sets in the west. It is called *donianam*. As the *ebu* is made ready, all come to the house, cook rice and pork and the persons attending the corpse partake of the food. The clothes used by the dead is tied into a bundle and is carried to the burial ground along with the corpse. The corpse is carried at the back by the father or brother or the son or some other members of the same clan. Men and Women, young and old, may accompany the funeral party but the actual works are done by members of the same clan. No *nibo* or *bo* accompanies because he has no role to play. The person carrying the corpse puts it in the *ebu*; along with, the bundle of cloth is also put. As the corpse is taken out, some lady of the house would keep the spot where the corpse was placed.

The burial being over, the person carrying the corpse takes oblation in the nearby stream, river or rivulet, takes the rice and pork cooked earlier and comes back to the house of the deceased and sits by the side of the fire place. He then visits the *deyere* and then departs for his own house. The following day would be a day of rest. The next day *i.e.*, after three days from the day of death, *himakoba* or a bamboo pole with 6/7 knots is made. The knots indicate the steps for the departed for his/her journey from the terrestrial world to the celestial world. The corpse carrier would then slaughter a chicken that no one takes. The *himakoba* will then be thrown by the corpse carrier, in any dense untraversed forest so that none can discover it.

The man carrying corpse is to observe pollution for three days and he is called *himagenna*. He cooks his food separately and no one in the house or outside would accept food cooked by him. During these three days he cannot attend to any economic activities or social call and he even does not go outside. It is believed that he is charged with the soul of the deceased. Then on the 4th day, one *nibo* and four *bo*'s will be invited to perform rituals, *simakoba*, for the removal of the soul of the deceased from the house. Some ritual objects, *kanikam*, *nyogam* (of bamboo splits) are made earlier and the *nibo*, with his aides, chants prayers in the *parmo* of the house. Ultimately, one *bo* carries an *erap*, winged object made of leaves and bamboo splits, from the *parmo* of the house to the *deyere* and keeps



it vertically in the open arena, in front of the *deyere*. As the *bo* carries the *erap*, the *nibo* chants incantations forcing the soul to leave the house. It is believed, that the soul obeys the *nibo*'s hymns.

*Hikkeng* is the Minyong word for a dead person. When the person suffers from long sickness, a *mire* is called and he/she dances at *nukodang* in the house. A cow or boar or chicken is slaughtered by strangulation by any member of the lineage and the blood is collected in a pot. At night the *mire* dances and utters incantations by touching the body of the diseased they believe that different types of diseases are due to the influence of different malevolent spirits, e.g., ailments connected with stomach, urine and stool are due to Mimeragokinain (Nyipum spirit); ailments of any part of the body are due to Epomkinam (Epom spirit), and ailments like pain of chest and general weakness are due to Nekubaku.

Of course, for appeasing these different spirits, different types of sacrifices are necessary, i.e. for no. (i), goat, dog and chicken. These are slaughtered and the meat is thrown away. For no. (ii), boar, cow, mithun & chicken, and for no. (iii) mithun and chicken are necessary. *Nekubaku* is in fact regarded as the spirit of a dead ancestor. If the ritual is performed on anybody's sickness, it is done at *erang* and if the rituals are done after death, these are done at the *kodang*. In the latter case, the mortar and pestle stationed at *kodang* are removed.

In the morning, the blood of the slaughtered animal is sprinkled on all sides of the house by the *mire*. But then all the efforts of the *mire* may turn fruitless and the diseased may die. Even if the death occurs in the morning, the dead body is kept for the whole of the day and night. The members of the same clan assemble, in the house and if any of the relatives is staying in some other village, he/she is given intimation. The assembled persons will sit at *rising*, *erang* and *chatak* of the house. All will remain awakened. The fire at the fire place will be kept burning for the whole day and night. Just after death, a number of boars will be killed (number of boars killed is generally equal to the number of children), the meat is cooked and the following morning each of the assembled persons, is served with two pieces of meat and some opong. The richer folk also serve *etting*. This is called *mankebanam*.

Next morning, the eldest son or any other member of the lineage goes to the graveyard, *golung*, with rice and other eatables in *ekam*, leaves. There *deko*, grave, is made in the form of tunnel (4' by 2'). As the grave is dug the party returns to the house of the deceased and then the body is borne at the back of the eldest son. He also inter the dead in the *deko* and blocks its mouth with dried herbs & earth. Over *deko*, a small (approx. 2½' or 3' in height) hut is built. The grave with the hut is *ago*. The body is

interred sideway in the usual posture of sleeping. Each of the assembled kith and kin now puts *gameng gadu*, small clods of earth, on the *deko*. These clods are later pressed, *matik*, to completely block the mouth of the *deko*. Persons doing *matik* are not to take oblation.

The primary responsibility of carrying the corpse rests with the eldest son. The other persons, preferred in the absence of any son, are father's brother, brother's son, and father's brother's son. No female can carry corpse. But if anybody dies leaving no children or leaves behind all minor children, the wife shoulders the job. As the corpse carrier always gets half of the property of the deceased, the wife always tries to avoid interference of other relatives.

As the burial is over, the carrier of the corpse and the other relatives accompanying the funeral party first come to the *moshup* and sit in front of the *moshup*. Then all leave except those who carried the corpse and dug grave. These latter people spend two days and two nights at the *kodang* of the house of the deceased. During these two days and nights, *shimagenna*, these persons cook and eat separately and their food cannot be shared by others, not even by any inmate of the house.

On the second day, *dodgang* is performed. Mithun and/or cow, boar, chicken will be slaughtered by the relatives and all will go to the *gallung* and build a platform on the *ago*. On that platform one or two pieces of meat of each animal and all the heads of animals slaughtered will be kept in a row. This is *gakong*.

After *dodgang*, the diggers of the grave go to their respective houses, but the corpse carrier has to observe seclusion (*belumbekkam*) for ten days. Food of the person under *belumbekkam* is never shared by others, because that will cause sickness to the latter.

On the eleventh day, *mibisirikgepakdun* is performed in the morning. The person observing *belumbekkam* takes a bundle of *ekkamleaves* and fuel-wood and goes to the outskirts of the village and stops at a *bebadeying* (crossing of two or more paths). Then he throws the bundle in any direction signifying that the pollution period is gone. Since then, he can come out of his house but should abstain from all economic pursuits. In the night, on this day, the elders of various clans of the village are invited to a feast, called *pideng* and this is symbolic of the withdrawal of all food restrictions. But still he is to wait for the twentieth day, (after burial takes place) to undertake his normal economic pursuits.

In the case of *sior*, i.e. death due to accident or pregnancy, all the cooked food and the paddy seeds are thrown away. But the clothes and utensils, used by the person, are not thrown. In the case of *sior* death, the corpse is buried

not at *gollung* but in some nearby forest. In the case of death during child-birth, the body is buried near the junction of 2-3 paths.

The Gallong believe that the soul, *vasi*, does not die and lives at certain places such as *Uiyomokoh*, *dirumoroh* and *talehala*. *Uiyomokoh* is some plain-land and only on good work the soul can rest here. But for bad work the soul goes up to *talehala*. But if a man is killed in jungle due to the influence of *yapom* spirit, the soul will rest at *dirumoroh* that is full of hills and forests.

The Minyong believe that the human body consists of *ayi* (body) and *ayit* (soul). The *ayi* is put in grave but the *ayit* goes to some other place according to the type of death :

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| In <i>sinu</i> death, <i>i.e.</i> | (a) <i>sutking kejeng</i> beneath the earth. |
| death due to disease              | (b) to hilly and forested <i>Epom</i> .      |
|                                   | (c) in <i>dite</i> — snowy peak.             |
| In <i>sior</i> death, <i>i.e.</i> | (a) at <i>dorum Nisam</i> (cloudy & foggy)   |
| death due to accident             | (due to death from fall)                     |
|                                   | (b) at <i>lene</i> (up in the sky)           |
|                                   | (death due to murder)                        |
|                                   | (c) at <i>silisiang</i> (watery place)       |
|                                   | (on suicidal death)                          |

Of these, *dite* is regarded as the best place, next are *sutkingkejeng* and *epom* ; and next best are *dorum nicam*, *lene*, and *sllitiaug*.

Even if a person's *ayit* goes to *sutkingkejeng* or *epom*, the *ayit* of his father or father's father or father's father's father brings his *ayit* to *dite*. Similarly, the *ayits* at *Lene* or *dorumnisan* are brought by the forefathers to better places. The Minyongs are not sure of the life after reaching *dite*, whether the same soul after resting at *dite*, for some period, takes rebirth. Even if the *ayit* is to reach *dite* it cannot reach direct ; it must pass through *kellung kebang* (some other place above the earth). But the *ayit* goes directly to such inferior places such as *epom* or *lene*. By good work they mean mutual co-existence with family members and relatives, impartial views and pleasing behaviour towards others. Persons not attending to the above norms are considered to have been doing bad work.

## CHAPTER X

### RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION

#### PANTHEON : CONCEPT OF SOUL

The Gallong believe that every aspect of their day to day life is being presided over by one or the other spirit. Of these some are benevolent and some are malevolent. The benevolent spirits are to be periodically appeased with offerings and the malevolent spirits whenever enraged are offered blood so that their wrath is suppressed. The spirits, *uiyu*, dwell in the hills and forests and the common people, especially the *nibos*, are quite conversant with their habits, nature and moods. Pig, cow, mithun and/or chicken are the common types of offerings to make ; of course *opong*, locally distilled liquor, is a must.

Deities may be male or female. *Peka*, *yapum*, *rini*, *hippo*, *tayi*, *mopin*, *jimi*, *hiji* and *takur tajo* are common *Uiyus* worshipped for the general welfare of the village. *Hippo* is propitiated for bumper crop, *yapum* & *nini* as a protection against snake bite, *hurin* against common ailments and so on. Some of these spirits are residing in hills (e.g., *hippo*), some in forests (e.g., *yapum* & *rini*) or some in *dojidonyak* or *hichikode* (places in between the sky and the earth). Some of these spirits are male (e.g., *mopin* and *hiji*) and some are female (e.g., *pinkin* and *jimi*). No spirit is considered to have any anthropomorphic or zoomorphic form. At present presiding deity of the *mopin* festival which is now observed in bango level, at Along, has been given a shape with bamboo and leaves. The deity has been installed at the *mopin* ground at Along. This transformation in the people's concept about the form of deity is an interesting feature.

About the *uiyus*, they feel that any *uiyu* can turn malevolent if no proper offering is made to him. Once they are full of wrath, these spirits may do harm to the cattle, to the crop and to the people. Therefore, through the annual cycle of festivals, offerings are made to the appropriate deity. It is believed that *donipolo*, a male (?) deity, is the supreme of all these spirits. They cannot describe *Donipolo* but feels that he (?) lives in the sky. Some, however, identify *donipolo* as the Sun. They further subscribe that *Hurin uiyu* tops the *uiyus* in the matter of importance and comes next to *donipolo*.

The Minyong pantheon is also topped by *Donipolo*. People are not, however, sure whether *Donipolo* is a male or a female deity. Some tell that *donipolo* is a single male deity but others contend that *donipolo* is virtually two ; it is male with a female counterpart. However, this much we are

sure that donipolo is a benevolent deity. The Minyong idea of pantheon is as follows :

*donipolo*  
*Banje banmang*  
*Heku buku (ancestral God)*  
 all *Uiyus* such as *nripom*, *epom*, etc.

A host of *Uiyus* dominates the pantheon. The most prominent among them are described below :

<i>Name of the Spirit</i>	<i>Benevolent/malevolent</i>	<i>Presiding over</i>
<i>Agam</i>	Benevolent	Chicken, boar
<i>Podipitpo</i>	Benevolent	mithum
<i>Bankebare</i>	Malevolent	house (if not pleased, may give dysentery and blindness to the inmates)
<i>Bimyat</i>	Malevolent	Cultivation
<i>Kumsung Uiyi</i>	Malevolent	granary
<i>Gominsoyin</i>	Moderate	Village (installed at the moshup)
<i>Epom</i>	Malevolent	diseases such as chest pain, etc.
<i>Nripom</i>	Malevolent	Child birth

The Minyong are conversant with the habits of these spirits. For example, *Bankebare* is propitiated in case of sickness with opong, rice, white she-chicken and white rat. These articles, in cooked form, will be kept at the Kombang inside the house. No one touches. Next day, these foodstuff are brought near the fire-place and the elderly gents and ladies are invited. To appease the *Kumsung uiyu*, the presiding spirit of the granary, a special festival *pipak* is performed on any day during December-February, *Etting* (rice cake), *opong*, etc. made in the house are kept in the granary. Chicken and *bumbo* (a form of rat) are slaughtered near the *Kumsung* (granary) and blood sprinkled on the six main poles of the granary. The food articles are left there as it is. On the second day, they are taken out and eaten by the inmates. To propitiate *Binyat Uiyu* also *etting* (rice cake), *opong*, rice and both the *libo* and *bumko* type of rats are taken to the *Poyup* (temporary shed built in the cultivating field). The lady of the house would hold these articles and utter "*tirik dorik lanka ali ango am Kayimo lanka, Unum lanka*" i.e., "I have brought all these. Do not be displeased and let any crops survive".

Except for the *Gominsoyin*, the presiding deity of the village, no other spirit is represented in any form. *Gominsoyin*, as we know, is installed in

one corner of the moshup, and is represented by two stones. Before going for the annual hunting the blessings of *gominsoyin* are sought to make the hunting expedition a success. Otherwise, the other *Uiyus*, it is believed, have their own abode such as granary for *Kumsung Uiyu*, *Epom* for *Epom Uiyu* and homestead for *Bankebare*. In addition, some say, that all the *Uiyus* are living in the neighbouring forsets only they have there respective responsibilities. No one has ever seen any *Uiyu*. *Mires* are the experts to deal with the wrath of the spirits. *Opong* a favourite drink for the *Minyong*, happens to be a favourite for the *Uiyus* too. The whole domain of *Uiyus* dominates the life and activities of the *Minyongs*. Hence, at every step, from construction of house to hoarding grains in granary and from sickness to hunting, it is a compulsion to appease the presiding spirit.

In the matter of pantheon and the sacred offices, the *Gallong* and the *Minyong* have certain things in common. There are certain elements in which they differ. In both the cases, the pantheon is headed by *Donipolo* whose identity, character and sex are matters of controversy. Innumerable *Uiyus* dominate the different aspects of their life and these *Uiyus* are to be appeased with animal sacrifices and with offerings of *Opong*. *Gallongs* have *nibo* and *Minyongs* have got *Mire*. The *Nibo* are always male while *Mire* may be female, too. *Gallong nibo* is always assisted by *bo*, but the *Minyong mire* never takes any assistance in his sacred performances. *Minyong moshup* is the seat of *gominsoyin* where as in front of the *Gallong deyere*, the *erap* representing the souls of all the dead persons are brought. In both the groups, no temple or shrine has been built as the abode of any of these spirits. However, festivals are observed to propitiate these spirits.

#### GALLONG FESTIVAL

*Gallong* have the following important festival in the cycle of one year :

1. *Billk Linnam* : In the month of January, in a house with a case of snake bite, this festival is observed as a protection against snake bite. The whole village will abstain from doing any work. The rituals are performed in some adjacent jungle, at a place where no person can penetrate. The rituals are done by the *nibo* and *bo*. The spirits, *Yapum* and *Rini* (former male and the latter female) are propitiated with chicken, goat, etc. The animals are slaughtered by the person who happens to be a victim of snake bite. The meat will be cooked there itself and all, including the priests, partake of the meal. That night the inmates of the house will sleep in the *deyeri* but the *nibo* and *bo* will sleep in their respective houses. The *nibo* will get a brass made *bali* (price approx Rs. 30/-) and his assistant get, a *nyar* (iron made). The horn or head of the animals slaughtered in this connection is not kept in the house.

### *Hurin Uiyu*

It is worshipped in the month of *Desih*. Whenever, a person falls ill and the illness be of recurring type, a chicken is slaughtered and its lungs examined by a *mire*. The diagnosis can be done in any month, but the rituals are to be observed in this month ; near the granary of the household. For the whole day, the *nibo* and the *bo* chant hymns. The venue of worship is decorated with wild flowers and plants. According to the prescription of the *nibo*, pig, cow and or chicken are slaughtered by the mother or wife of the deceased or by the person himself. The meat is cooked inside the house and all the villagers are given a share of the meat.

In a similar way, in the month of *jete* too, *Hippo* (male, and *Tagi* (female) the two other malevolent spirits, are worshipped. Both of these spirits, stay in the *Diniloma*-hindum hills. In this case also the *nibo* and *bo* extend their services in a similar way.

### *Mopin*

This is held in the month of *lumi*.

This festival continues in the *deyere* for three consecutive days. The three days have their separate names :

1st day—Hingam alo

2nd day—Kimenyengmen alo

3rd day—Rhinam alo

On the first day, they bring bamboo and make effigies. on the second day, the sacrifice of goat or pig is done and the third day is a day of no work and they are engaged in dances and songs.

The slaughtering of the animals is done by any married or unmarried girl. On the day, group dancing goes on whole day and night. On the second day, as the animals are sacrificed, the *nibo* and the *bo* utter incantations incessantly. On the third day, the dancers (boys and girls) will visit different houses where they are entertained with opong. Mopin is observed with great eclat with the hope of getting bumper crop in the following season. The presiding spirits are male, *Jimi* and female, *hiji*. Both of them stay in *dojedonyak* a place in between the sky and the earth. The date of holding this festival will be settled by the villagers jointly and the *nibos* have some role in settling the date. The *nibo* officiating in rituals gets two baskets of paddy and one basket of millet and the *nibo* gets one basket of paddy. The horn of the mithun, if slaughtered, is taken by the person who slaughters.

### *Togu Panam*

It is observed in the month of *Lukki*. Any marriage is always to be preceded by this festival. This is for prosperity and good harvest and is strictly a household festival observed by the well-to-do only, because mithun

must be sacrificed in *togu panam*. But for Togu observance of *jethe* is also a must. No *Jethe*, no Togu. In *togu*, too, the *nibo* with his assistant will perform the rituals. The sacrifice of animals will be done by some male member of the house. The thigh of the mithun will go to the *nibo* and the thorax to the *bo*. The deities worshipped are male, *Takar* and female, *Pingani*. Both live in *kichikode*, a place in between the sky and the earth. But the date of *togu panam* is to be fixed by another ritual *hitaktagnong*. On this day, some persons will go to fell some bamboo when a cow will be slaughtered in front of the house. Their two or three pigs will be fed with *ekkam* leaves and powdered rice signifying that they will be sacrificed during *togu panam*. On the day, they will also collect *ekkam* leaves for preparing *opong* on the day of *togu*.

No festival is observed in the month of *Luchir*, *Lyo*, *Tenio* and *Hiyo*, *Birrah* and *Lukko*. In the month of *Hitte & Iku*, soft bamboo shoots emerge that are sour to taste. Villagers, male and female, old and young go in groups in the forests to collect bamboo shoots. *Iku* dried in the sun for a number of days is called *Ipe*. *Ipe* may be taken as vegetables or just in boiled form. Before the collection of *Iku* takes place, no specific ceremony is to be observed. In the month of *Raleh*, people get busy in constructing or reconstructing houses and house warming ceremony, *ratur-rale* is performed by respective houseowners.

The festivals of the Gallong are primarily centred round the welfare of the people. Save and except the *mopin* festival, observed for good harvest, almost every other festival is arranged on individual family level. Sacrifices of animals are essential and chicken, boar and cow are usually sacrificed. In two festivals *v/z. mopin* and *togo*, sacrifice of mithun is a must.

The Gallong festivals differ from those of the Minyong primarily on two points (1) Among the Gallong, the presence of *nibo* and *bo* is essential to utter incantations and to dictate the proceedings of the rituals, and (2) in each festival the Gallong simultaneously propitiate a pair of deities one male and the other female.

#### MINYONG FESTIVAL

The Minyong have the following important festivals :

1 *Uyining or Arang* : It is observed in the month of *kombong*. The whole festival is divided into six phases ; *Uyinying dogin*, *satkadogio*, *tapu*, *mopum ettu*, *petpum* and *rikte*. This is observed by individual families and the six phases are spread over the whole month. In the first phase, a mithun is slaughtered by a family which can afford to do so. The mithun's head, is kept at the burial site of one of his dead ancestor, the two thighs, are given to the clan members to share, and the front parts are kept by



the house owner. The meat given in the name of the clan members is shared by other villagers too. The persons who slaughter the mithun get the thorax, of the animal. No community feasting is arranged ; only people assembling to see the slaughtering partake of *opong*. The house owner sends a portion of his share to his married daughter and/or married sister's house. In return they send rice, and some other edible items. This return gift is *alimoyko*. Mire has nothing to do at this phase.

The second phase of rituals consists in the making of rope, *sarka*, for tying mithun. This rope is ceremonially made with the help of bamboo strips by men, and with the help of this newly made *sarka* and a bundle of *ekkam* leaves, a mithun is tied to a pole, *hopit*, and is left for a night. Next morning it is set free. It is done on individual family level.

In the third phase, all men and women of the village muster strong at the moshup to sing and dance for the whole night. But for the next two days, people abstain from all types of agricultural pursuits because, they believe, if they work the fertility of the arable plots will be lost.

In the fourth phase, married and unmarried girls of the whole village assemble by the side of a river or a stream in the vicinity. *Rumgo*, small images made of bamboo splits are immersed by them in the waters and then the girls make mutual exchange of *opong* and *etting* (rice cake). Simultaneously, they annoint each other a paste of rice powder and water and make a fun out of this. A boar is slaughtered by the villagers jointly and each of the girls gets two, three pieces of meat. After this *tapu*, too, they abstain from all out door works for two consecutive days.

In the fifth phase, *etting* is prepared in each house. *Etting* and *opong* are sent to the house of betrothed girls. They may invite friends or kins and entertain with *opong* and *etting*.

The sixth phase *rikte* is observed by feasting and merriments. *Rikte* marks the beginning of agricultural work and before they are seriously involved in economic pursuits, they spend a few hours in pleasure. All these series of rituals are, it is believed, performed for bumper crop in the following season and also for the welfare of mithun.

2. *Ettor* : It is observed in the month of April, on the occasion of fencing the jhum field and also for the welfare of cattle. Fencing of plots takes about five to ten days and during this period all the animals, including the mithuns, are brought in the field and kept tied to the fencing. This is done on community level and the animals are kept like this till the fencing is over. Men guard the animals. As the *ettor* is over, boar and chicken are cut and feasting on family level follows. For the following five days they are to abstain from all types of work even from collecting fuelwood. This festival is observed

for the welfare of the domesticated animals through the propitiation of *Agam*, the presiding deity of animals.

3. *Shullung* : It is observed in the month of August. Shullung is observed villagewise with special songs and dances and a thick type of beverage, *nyogrin*, made in each household. Different villages observe it at different dates. On the specific date, the menfolk of the village go on announcing 'the beverage is ready ; take shullung'. So the villagers get themselves ready ; to observe the sullung festival from the day onwards. On the following day, mithun, cow and/or boar is slaughtered by the villagers individually or collectively by raising subscription. Whether the animal is killed on family level or on community level, shullung meat is always shared by all the householders. Shullung special dances are held throughout the night. Through the songs, they relate the origin and history of mithun. While the menfolk sing such songs, the girls dance and the best singer gets a few pieces of meat from the girl dancers. Some people have the reputation of singing good shullung songs and such persons are even requisitioned by adjacent villages on such occasions. Shullung *ponung* is held in the open space in front of the village moshup. Shullung meat is very auspicious and gives the person some immunity against the attack of epidemic diseases. Shullung was previously celebrated on village basis. But since 1967 they are holding it on Bango basis so that the villages within a bango can observe it jointly. Hence, now-a-days shullung goes by the name Bango Shullung. The idea behind holding it on bango basis is to imbibe a fellow-feeling and a spirit of fraternity. In 1968, Pangin observed the Shullung festival along with other bango members in front of the circle office at Pangin. As a result of this, the non Minyong tribal people or the plains people residing at these administrative centres also take active part in these festivities.

4. *Pineng or Yageng* : This festival is observed in the month of September. This is primarily a hunting festival and is now obsolete in the Pangin area. In the stead, *clorung kerukh* is observed in the month of December. They justify the shunning of this festival because September is a month of famine and fasting. December is a convenient month because then the people remain affluent.

5. *Dorung Kerukh* : It is observed in the month of December. *Dorung kerukh* means 'all men's hunting'. On some stipulated day which generally falls at the fag end of December or in the first week of January, able bodied proceed towards the neighbouring jungles with *epik* and *iyi*, bow and arrow, and *jok*, chopper and *yoksik*, small cutter. But on the previous day, at the *emotapko*, seat of Gowin soyin in the moshup, a man (selected by the village leaders) makes poison by making a paste with the fruit of morang and the roots of mopong tree (mopong tree is profusely grown in upper Siang and

the people of that area sell it). This poison is put on the arrow heads with the help of millowbeying leaf. This poison within a short while gets stuck to the arrow head. Next morning before starting all assemble at the moshup where the poisonmaker will kill a hen and examine its lungs. He is helped by a Mire and they instruct the party as to in which direction the party should proceed. The party members enter the forest and halt at a place, *dumbang* where again another chicken is cut to examine the lungs and know the definite direction. As this is done, the party is splitted in two different directions. The first party comprises all adept hunters equipped with weapons, who ambush themselves in a row. The second party consists mainly of youngsters who with help of dogs shout and scare the animals so that these would come out. Anyway, if they can hunt a game they rejoin by yelling as they return home. If they fail on that day they would return and begin hunting a fresh the following day by re-examining a chicken. They try for three consecutive days at the most.

The animal killed is kept in the moshup. Following day, all villagers assemble and distribute the meat in packets to every household. The shares are always equal. The actual hunter will get the head of the animal. As they distribute the meat, taking of *opong* also goes on. No outdoor work is done. As the party starts from the village, women are not allowed to husk paddy or to go to collect firewood.

## PIPAK LAMMO

It is observed in the month of December. As the crops are harvested, paddy is first stacked at the *poyup* i.e., the temporary shed in the field. On the third day these are carried in baskets to store in the granary *kumsung*. As the storing is completed, near the granary a boar is slaughtered by the head of the household and *etting* and *opong* are taken by the inmates of the house and also distributed amongst fellow villagers. Generally all the houses in a village, observe *pipaklamo* on the same day, but on the previous day *gonam* is held and it is marked by mutual visits to the neighbours' houses.

A few important features emerge from above. Most of the festivals are observed when they have not much of agricultural work and have enough to eat. Services of mire are not always solicited. Festivals are observed for propitiating presiding spirits for the welfare of people, better crop, better hunting and healthy cattle. Generally, festivals are observed on family level. The most important community level festival Shullung is now observed on inter village basis. They eat, drink, sing and dance on the occasions of festival.

## PONUNG SONGS AND DANCES

On any ceremonial occasion or on any occasion of rejoicing, the Gallong and the Minyong arrange ponung dances. Dancing means dancing in a group and they do not know of any solo dance. Ponung dances are danced by young boys and girls, men and women. The central man or woman in the performance, by holding a sword, *Yoksik*, sings the first line of each song repeatedly.

Srivastava (1962) writes, "The ponung dance is performed invariably in conjunction with songs. These songs are sung in chorus. In a ponung, the leader goes on narrating an incident, a myth, methods of cultivation and the like". The Gallong, earlier, had only one type of dance *i.e.* the marriage dance, *mida*, and the rest of the ponung dances they acquired from the Minyong. We feel that in the Minyong area these dances had their origin in the dormitories. Dutta Gupta (1960) writes, "In the lower regions of Abor hills, the institution of the risheng (spinsters) dormitory is not represent. The Padam, the Pasi, the Minyong living at the foot hills, do not show the reshing of the upper hills but at present, the association of girls known as ponung and the members are known as *ponus*.....She remains a *ponus* till the birth of her first baby". It is felt that the dances of these ponung members have now been common amongst all. Even now-a-days, the members of the *moshup* and *rishing* regularly practice different types of dances.

The dances are held in front of the dormitory or in the house of any village elder. The dancers stand cross armed at the back and generally, the boys and girls dance together. If the dancers are all female it is called *ponung memine*. The steps and style in a dance vary. For example, in a war dance which is danced by members of both sexes, the steps are rapid and heavy, whereas in the thanks giving dance, there is less foot work and dancers slightly stoop and move their hands in the style of greeting. During the dancing of *ponung minum* the participants clap and yell. Dancers may remain static, or move in a line or walk one after another. In most of the cases, the participants of a ponung form two queues or form 'U' and the leader moves in the middle. Unless it is some special occasion, the dancers are not very particular about wearing special dancing apparels. Commoners and the leaders, the rich and the poor, join hands while dancing. In the Minyong area, we found that elderly men and women also very actively participated in ponung dances and their performances were very neat. In contrast, we observed that in the Gallong area, ponung dances were mainly the concern of the youngsters, and the elders very seldom actively participated. The interregnum during ponung dances is called *menno*.

Ponung songs generally relate some myth, some activities or some tradition. Songs are also framed on some event of the present day. They can promptly compose songs and add tune to them, but the tunes are mostly monotonous. Songs are sung with passion. Thus, there are ponung songs on mithun, on the origin of earth and nibo-robo, on the good conduct of the Rajasthani army personnel who were once posted in the Minyong area. They also composed songs to greet us, 'Kalikata migame, Shillong migame' (important personalities from Calcutta and Shillong) and there are songs invoking people to proceed towards Tuting (a northern village of Siang district).

## SUMMING UP

The present study on ecology, and social organisation among the tribes of lower Siang (Arunachal Pradesh) gives us a comparative picture of the two important groups, *viz.*, Gallong and Minyong, living in the lower region of Siang. Other groups living in the same region, *viz.*, Pasi, Padam, etc. have also been marginally covered while noting some important observations. The district of Siang can broadly be divided into two ecologically distinct zones on the basis of geological structure, topography, settlement, cropping pattern and socio-economic life. The 1200 metres contour is roughly the dividing line between the two zones, *viz.*, upper Siang and lower Siang.

The lower Siang is the zone of shifting cultivation. It is accompanied with settled cultivation of wet rice wherever possible. It is inhabited by the Gallong, Minyong, Padam and Pasi, etc. Their economy is undergoing tremendous changes as a result of the contact with the people of Assam Plains and proximity to small towns and urban centres such as Silapathar, Pasighat and Dibrugarh.

The upper Siang is inhabited by Bori, Bokar, Ashing, Simong, Tagin, etc. They practise semi-permanent cultivations and produce maize and millet for subsistence. They make periodic trips to the lower areas for trade purposes. The production is meagre due to limited growing season and it is supplemented by hunting Takin deer.

By living in a common ecological zone, the Gallong and the Minyong share a common subsistence economy. Apart from this, there are some similarities in their social life that go to form a common cultural base for the Gallong and the Minyong. The common culture traits are given below :

- (a) Both the group follow the same cycle of activities in jhum cultivation and produce the same crops.
- (b) Use of cane hat by the men and *tadok* (precious bead necklace) & gale (skirt) by the women is seen.
- (c) The houses are built on piles. Inside the house, two fire places are there and separate names for sleeping, storing and cooking spaces are found.
- (d) Both the groups have granaries outside the residential huts and they are located in one corner of the village or near the water sources for protection against fire.
- (e) Malevolent and benevolent spirits dominating the pantheon with a supreme unidentified deity donipolo, capping the pantheon, is the dominant feature.

- (f) The village priests are called to drive away malevolent spirits causing sickness and also to save the village from any impending epidemic.
- (g) Village *Kebang* and bango *Kebang* settle village level or inter village disputes.
- (h) There is lack of any concept of caste stratification. The internal stratification of the societies into rich and poor is to be seen.

Apart from sharing the common cultural base the two groups in the Gallong and Minyong show some variations.

Ecologically Siang can broadly be divided into two zones from north to south ; but culturally, Siang may be seen as having two culture areas *i.e.*, one consisting of the eastern and central areas, and the other western and north western areas. The first area comprises the tribes such as Padam, Pasi, Minyong and Ashing and the second culture area comprises the Gallong, Pailibo, Ramo, Bori and Boker. Thus the Gallongs represent the western and the Minyong the eastern culture area in Siang district.

The chief characteristics of these two culture areas are as follows :

1 In the western and north western, polyandry and heavy bride price are to be found ; both these traits are absent in the other area.

2 In the eastern and central part, bachelors' and spinsters' dormitories play very important part in the training of youngsters and in organising *Ponung* dances. But in the western part bachelors' dormitory is not significant.

3 The base of the cane hats used by the Gallong and some other groups of the western part form cones whereas in the eastern part we see oval bases of cane hats. Weaving is traditionally associated with the groups of eastern and central part but this is lately adopted by the western groups.

4 The women in the eastern and central part keep hair only on the crown of the head but the women of the western part keep long hair.

5 In the matter of social structure, the Gallong and the Minyong show certain variations. The Minyong society is segmented into a series of social units. But the Gallong society is more or less simple in structure.

It, therefore, becomes apparent that in spite of a supposed common cultural base of the Gallong and the Minyong of lower Siang, we find some amount of differences in some cultural aspects, *viz.*, polyandry, base of cane hats, hair of women, importance of dormitory, etc. This, again, gives us some lead to think that in the lower Siang, Gallong are representative of western Siang culture and the Minyong of eastern-central type. It is also seen that though the ecological variations run from north to south, the cultural variations run from east to west. More details collected from upper part of Siang may throw further light on this aspect.

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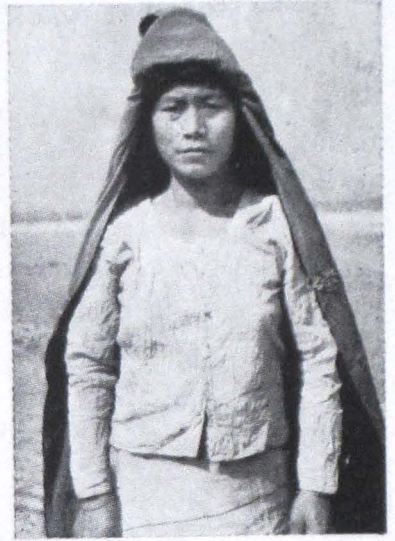
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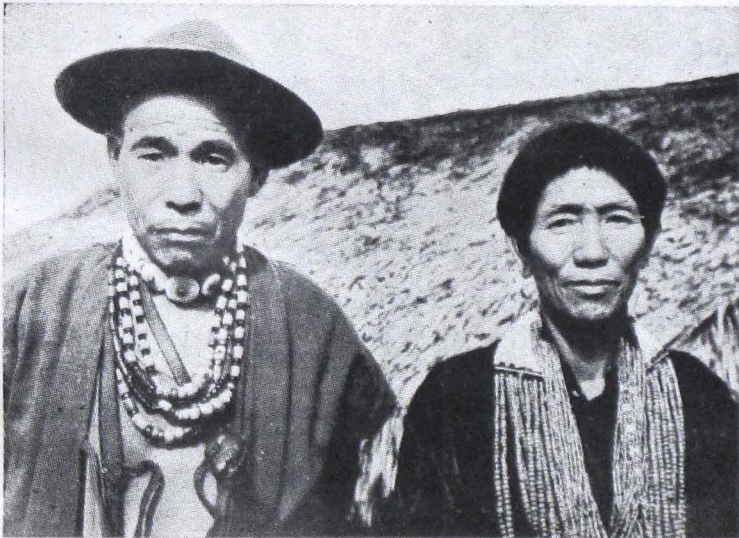
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*A Minyong woman in traditional apparel*

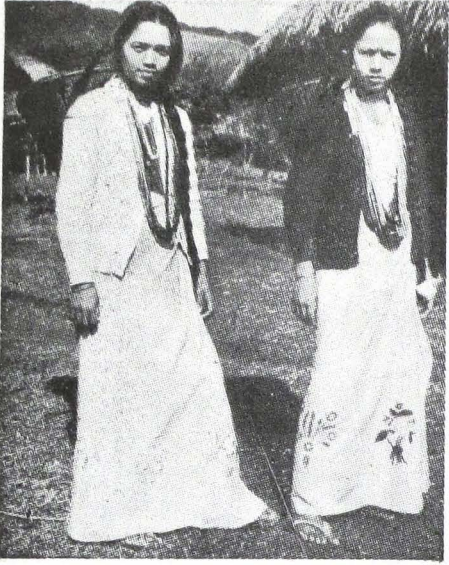


*A Pasi woman in Pasighat town*

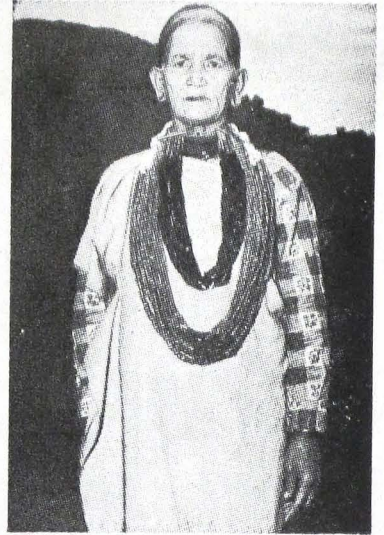


*A Gallong village chief with his wife*





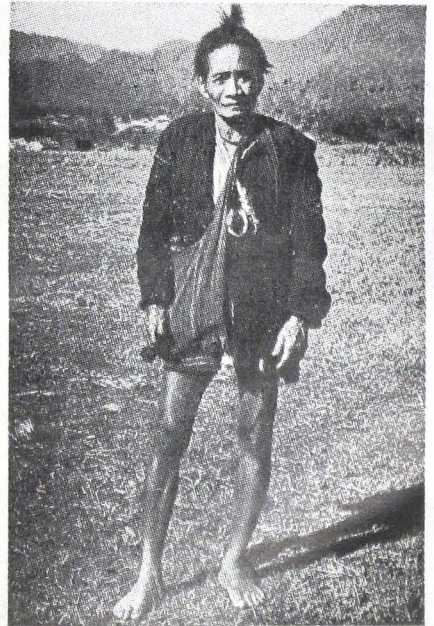
*Two Gallong girl students of H.S. School*



*An old Gallong woman wearing  
precious bead necklace*



*A Gallong priest*

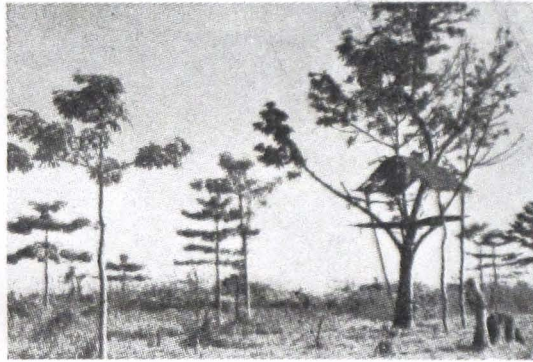


*A Tai priest*

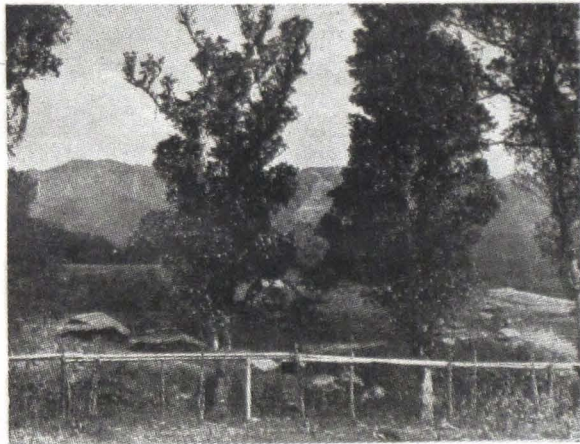




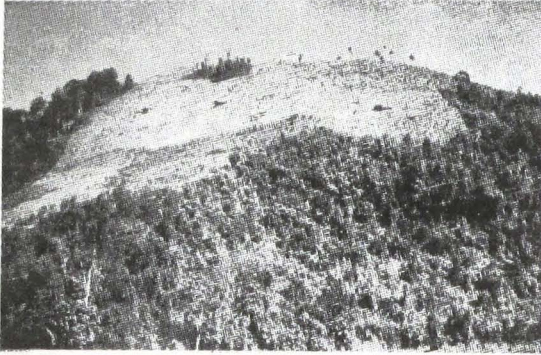
*A Jhum field being made ready for firing*



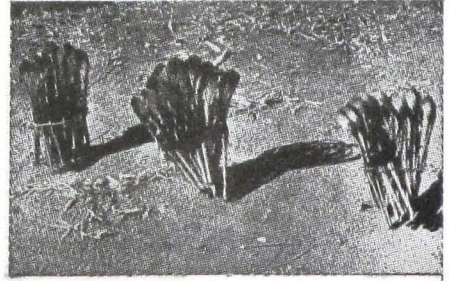
*Guard house constructed by the Tai in the midst of paddy field*



*In the Minyong tract, the Jhum field, terraced field and the hamlet. The bamboo pipe in the front shows how water source is tapped by the villagers*



*A Jhum field in the Gallong Area with temporary sheds constructed right in the field*



*Bamboo made weeders*

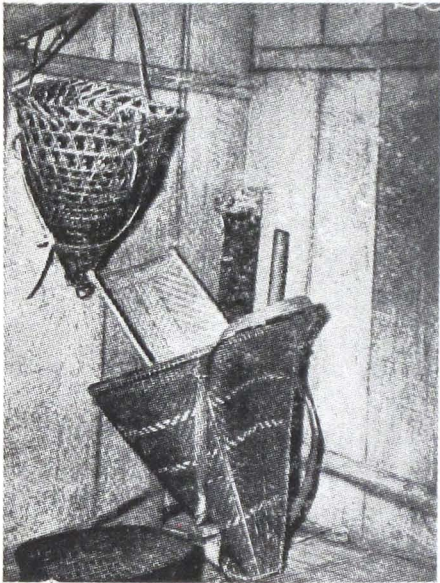


*Husking the paddy by the Minyong*



*Drying of paddy in a Tai village*





*Baskets used in a Gallong house*



*Gallong belle carrying fuelwood from jungles*



*Husking of paddy by a Gallong woman*





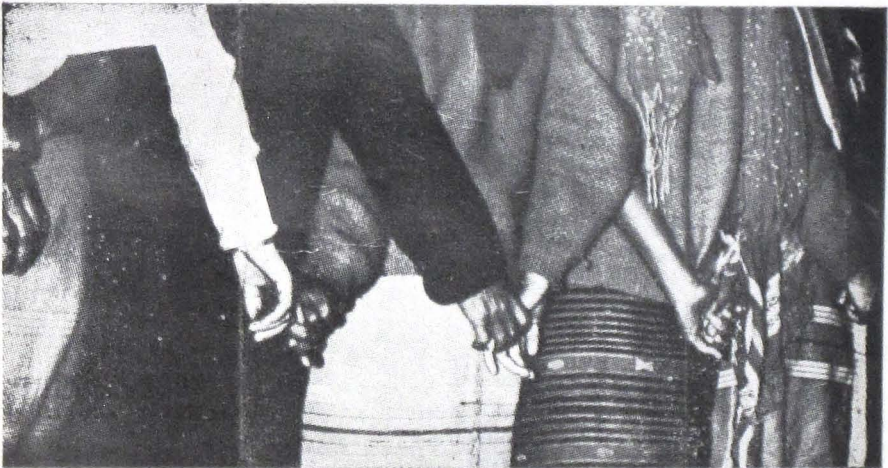
*Tokpat being carried to the villoge by Gallong men*



*A fully attired Gallong bride going towards the bridegroom's villoge*



*A group of Minyong dancers*



*Group dance going on*





*Kebang meeting in progress in Gallong village*



*A Gallong worshipping the village deity*

