



# A Study on the Lushais of Jampui Hills in Tripura

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Tribal Research and Cultural Institute  
Govt. of Tripura

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## FOREWORD

The first edition of the book '**A Study on the Lushais of Jampui Hills in Tripura**' written by Dr. Mahadev Chakraborty, Dr. Malabika Dasgupta, Dr. Bithi Sircar has already been exhausted.

Considering the demand of the books among the readers, researchers, educationist, administrators attempt for printing the 2nd edition of the book has been made.

Dated

Agartala, July, 2011

(**SALOHNUNA**)

Director

Tribal Research & Cultural Institute

Govt. of Tripura

## FOREWARD

The present monograph entitled "A Study on the Lushais of Jampui Hills in Tripura" is confined about the Mizo of Jampui Hills only. The Lushai likes them to be called as Mizo. The word Mizo means high landers. A concentration of Mizo is also found on the Sakan Hills, Kailashahar Subdivision, North Tripura District. The present work may be considered as a pioneer one on the Mizo community at Jampui Hills. This is divided into 2(two) parts. The approach in part-I is mainly historical, and part-II deals with the socio-economic and cultural aspects of the tribe. We hope the publication would be helpful for administration, scholars and the community at large.

On behalf of the Directorate of Research I would like to thank Dr. Mahadev Chakravarti, Dr. Malabika Dasgupta, Dr. Bithi Sircar for their contribution and to Shri Saliانا Sailo, T.C.S. who took great pains to go through the manuscript in order to help us with valuable suggestions to improve upon.

Dated, Agartala,  
1987

**A. M. DUTTA**  
Director of Research  
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# A Study on the Lushais of Jampui Hills in Tripura.

Part-I

By Dr. Mabadev Chakravarti

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By Dr. Malabika Dasgupta  
and  
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# A STUDY ON THE LUSHAIS OF JAMPUI HILLS IN TRIPURA

## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

**A Study on the Lushai of Jampui Hills in Tripura** was planned two years back as part of a collective attempt to write the history and socio-economic conditions of the life of the Lushai people of Tripura. The present work is divided into two parts. Part-I is done by Mahadev Chakravarti and Part-II by Malabika Dasgupta and Bithi Sircar. Part-I deals the historical aspects and attempts a synthesis of the rare and valuable data, unpublished records and documents and of the oral testimonies of the knowledgeable Lushai people. The approach in Part-I is mainly historical and the author is particularly indebted to Mr. S. Sailo, the Deputy Director, Tribal Welfare, Government of Tripura, for his suggestions and help. The present work would have been inconceivable without the support of the Directorate of Research, Department of Welfare for Scheduled Tribes and Castes, Government of Tripura. No word is sufficient enough to express gratitude to the authorities of the Secretariat Archives (Record Room), Government of Tripura:

Part-II of the monograph is the result of the joint efforts of Malabika Dasgupta and Bithi Sircar. Though the former took the responsibility of writing Chapter 1, 2 and 4 and the latter, of writing Chapter 3 of Part II of the monograph, each author went through what the other had written and gave suggestions for improvement which were incorporated in the final draft of the chapters. So the final responsibility of writing this part of the monograph is jointly shared by the two authors.

Part II of the monograph would not have seen the light of the day had the authors not received the help of Sri N. K. Dutta, Superintending Engineer, Sri Sushil Bhowmik, Executive Engineer, Sri Sen, S.D.O., Kanchanpur, P. W. D. Government of Tripura. The help received from Sri L. Z. Sailo, Member, Tripura Tribal Autonomous District Council (TTAADC), Sri L.F. Sailo, Gaon Pradhan, Sabual village and Sri Sailiana Sailo, Tribal Welfare Department, Government of Tripura, is also gratefully acknowledged. Thanks are due to all the people of Phuldungsai who extended a warm welcome to the authors and the field investigators. Sri L. T. Hlima, Sri Thantluanga, Sri Hmawaka and Sri M. K. Gupta deserve a special mention because without their help it would not be possible to canvass the schedules. Sri L. T. Hlima also deserves to be thanked for giving the field assistants a guided tour of the forests and Jhum fields near Phuldungsai and especially for giving the

authors and their field assistants first-hand knowledge of the traditional Lushai cuisine by inviting them to a typical Lushai dinner. The field assistants Sri Swapan Roy, Sri Amiya Krishna Pal, and Sri Paritosh Chakravarty deserve special mention for their sincere help in the field-work and in processing the data.

The main purpose of this monograph is to draw the attention of the readers to some important problems of the Lushai life and to indicate that for making present development programmes one must be aware of historical and socio-economic and cultural traditions of the people living there.

31.3.85

Calcutta University post-Graduate Centre,  
Agartala.

Mahadev Chakravarti  
Malabika Dasgupta  
Bithi Sircar

PART - I  
CHAPTER I

**The Lushai of Jampui Hill:  
The Question of Identity**

**A. Jampui Hill:**

Jampui, the natural boundary between Tripura and Mizoram and the main abode of the Lushai of Tripura (Sakhan Hill being the other home), is conspicuous among the six principal hill ranges of Tripura for its highest peak Betling Chhip (3080'). This home of the Lushai is in Dharmanagar subdivision (North Tripura) and 74 km. in length with some other peaks like Khantlang (2236'), Behliang Chhip (2216'), Vangmun (2342'), Hmunpui (2064') and Bangsul (902') situated at different heights of the Jampui hills which are widely known for charming landscape and bracing climate. Some other villages of the Lushai people are Tlaksin, Hmawchuan, Banglabari, Khedacherra, Monacherra, Tlangsang, Sabual, Phuldung sai, Vaisom etc.

**B. CASUAL REFERENCE OF THE LUSHAI OF TRIPURA:**

We have had some authorities on the Lushai people of the Lushai Hills, namely, W. W. Hunter, J. Shakespear, R. G. Woodthorpe, P. S. Dahrawka, T. H. Lewin, A. Mackenzie, A. G. Mc Call, N. E. Parry, A. S. Reid, B. C. Chakravarty, Rev. Liangkhaia, Vanchhunga, Zatluanga, K. Zawla, Animesh Roy and others. But, unfortunately, we get nothing but casual references of the Lushai of Tripura in these authoritative sources. Hence, it is difficult to construct a complete history of this tribe. Still, the casual references provide some important clues.

**C. THE WORD 'LUSHAI' and some legendary tales:**

The origin of the word 'Lushai' is not definitely known. There is controversy among scholars and knowledgeable Lushai people about the real meaning of the two compound words 'Lu' and 'Shai' or 'Lu' and 'Sei'. It is needless to mention the controversy here.

Tracing the origin of the Lushai people to hoary past, C. A. Soppitt remarked, "In some accounts of Burma mention is made of traces having been found of a people ruled over by the Lua Kings or King, in days gone by. Now, in



both dialects, the people ruled by the Lua King would be styled 'Luahai'; i.e. 'Lua people'. This 'Luahai' is almost identical with the term 'Luashai' or 'Lushai'. This derivation, if the true one, is most important, and enables us to trace back the people for many ages and into a country removed from the North Eastern frontier of India. The term 'Kuki' might be traced in much the same manner, though the derivation may be considered, perhaps, less satisfactory than in the former case."<sup>1</sup> Infact all the Lushai Chiefs claimed descent from a certain Thang-ura, who, in the words of J. Shakespear, "...is sometimes said to have sprung from the union of a Burman with a Paihto woman, but, according to the Paihtes, the Lushai are descended from Boklua, an illegitimate son of the Paihto Chief Ngehguka."<sup>2</sup> Again, Sibuta (Sheeboot) and Lalsuktla (Lalchokla), the best-known chiefs of the Lushai clan, had some contacts with Tripura, and according to A. Mackenzie, Sibuta (Sheeboot) had thrown off the yoke of Tipperah with 25,000 houses. "It is extremely doubtful", thinks J. Shakespear, "...whether he ever was really subject to Tipperah, though it is certain that all these Lushai clans had dealings with the Tipperah Rajahs and feared them greatly."<sup>3</sup> Woodthorpe opined that the Lushai first appeared on the scene about the year 1840, and the first known chief being Lalal; from whom are descended the other chiefs of the Lushais.

The Lushai, who belong to the Mongoloid stock, call themselves Mizo, the term includes Lusei, Hmar, Ralte, Paihte, Zo, Barlawng, Kawm, Pawi, Chiru, Aimoul, Khawl, Tarau, Anal, Purum, Tikhup, Vaiphei, Lakher, Pangkhua, Tlanglau, Biate, Khiang, Khiangte, Rangte, Khawhling, Chawngthu, Vanchiau, Renthlei, Hnamte, Tlau, Pautu, Rawihte, Fanai and some other clans. Thus it is wrong to say that the word 'LUSHAI' should be used covering all the sets of Mizo tribe as the word Lushai are just a misrendering or a corrupted form of the word 'LUSEI', only a sub-tribe of the Mizos.

According to Rev. Liangkhaia's classification, the Luseis consist of 'ten commoners and six chiefs' clans. These are Pachuau, Chhange, Chawngte, Hauhna, Chuaungo, Hrahse, Tochwawng, Vanchhawng, and Chhakchhuak. The Chiefs' clans are Zadeng, Palian, Thangluah, Rivung, Rokhum and Sailo. The Sailos dominated the scene in Tripura. C. A. Soppitt has found three sub-tribes in Hill Tipperah, namely, Paitu, Omroi and Koreng, all nearly connected with the Lushai of Tripura.

#### **D. THE LUSHAI AND THE KUKIS :**

The Lushai were once wrongly identified as Kuki. During the days of Warren Hastings (1772-85) we find the first record of the Kuki raiders,

when the Chief of Chittagong in 1777 applied for a detachment of sepoy to Hastings to protect the inhabitants against the incursions of the Kuki as they were then called.<sup>6</sup> Since then it was continued to be applied to the whole Mizo group until the nineteenth century; when it was replaced by the term, 'Lushai' as a result of the active part taken by the 'Luseis' - a sub-tribe of the Mizo, against the British Expeditions. Lewin has given an account of the "Cucis or inhabitants of the Tipperah mountains", written by J. Rennel, Chief Engineer of Bengal in 1800.<sup>7</sup> "With very slight alterations," in the words of Shakespear, "this account is applicable to the Lushai of today, and I have no doubt that the Cucis therein described were the Rivung, the advance-guard of the great Lushai invasion."<sup>8</sup>

Quoting a number of secret proceedings of the year 1824, Alexander Mackenzie wrote, "...one of the Tipperah Rajahs married a daughter of the Manipuri stock. This fact seemed to indicate a means of direct communication between those kingdoms and Government caused efforts to be made to discover the line of route. It is found that a road did exist, but instead of passing into the interior right across the Tipperah Hills, it ran along the outer margin of the hills on the north-west through parts of Sylhet into Hylakandy, in Cachar, and thence through a Kookie village called Thanghum into Manipur (Secret Proceedings, 30th July, 1824, Nos. 6 & 7). There were disputes between the Cachar and Tipperah Rajahs as to the parts of Hylakandy, and the Tipperah Rajah set forth claims to the allegiance of all the Kookies lying south of Cachar. Thanghum mentioned above was on the right bank of the Surmah, three days' journey from Bansbandi, in Cachar. In an interesting report submitted to the Secret Department in 1824, we find that the Poitoo Kookies, numbering 50 to 60 thousand, and occupying the whole of the eastern and part of the northern hills were said to be the most turbulent and formidable of the tribes: and the Rajah to reduce them to obedience was anxious to establish a thanna at Thanghum, the inhabitants of which place were described by him as orderly and obedient. Government while raising no objection to his doing so, declined to associate British troops with his guards on that frontier. It is very clear that the authority exercised over the Kookies was more nominal than real, for in every case we find the roads from post to post take long detours so as to pass through the plains, and not across the hills; the reason given being always "for fear of the Kookies". In this same report the Raja(King) is described as "...a weak and stupid man, entirely in the hands of one or two Bengali amlah."<sup>9</sup> We have quoted this long remarks above, of Mackenzie only to show the nature of control exercised by the Tripura Raj( Tripura Kingdom) over the Kuki, the



ancestors of the Lushai, and the British reactions over it. In another place, Mackenzie quoted Colonel Lister's famous Report of 1850 which is quite relevant in this context, "The Lushai are a very powerful tribe under the Government of six sirdars, of which one is acknowledged chief. They all have their separate cantonments with a number of dependant villages attached. In these cantonments the fighting men reside; in the dependant villages are located their ryots, who are merely used as coolies, and for tilling the soil. They consist, in many instances, of the captives they have brought away in their different expeditions, a great part of them probably taken as mere children and gradually reconciled to their captivity".

"The fighting part of the Lushai population are composed, first, of Lushai, who appear to be a cross between the Kookies and Burmese; secondly, of a certain number of true Burmese, entertained for the purposes of warfare; and, thirdly, of refugees and outlaws from Munipore and our own frontier..... the Lushai are a cross between the Kookies and Burmese, and this opinion is strengthened by the belief universally prevalent, that a part of the Burmese army which occupied Telyne and its neighbourhood in 1824 never returned to Ava, but settled in the jungles to the south of Cachar. Almost all the other Kookie tribes are migratory in their habits, changing their residence every two or three years; but from the substantial way in which the Lushai villages are built, I am convinced that they are a stationary tribe, and this stamps them as different from the other Kookies, who one and all entertain a great dread of them."<sup>10</sup>

In Tripura, it is difficult to demarcate the Lushai and the Darlong Kuki. Upto 1921 Census Report, the Lushai of Tripura were included under the Kuki (see Table No. 1). But in 1931 Census Report, Thakur Somendra Chandra Debbarma made a clear cut demarcation between the Lushai and the Darlong Kuki. Although it is difficult to distinguish the Lushai from the Kuki, still, broadly speaking, the Lushai of Tripura is today far more advanced than the Darlong Kuki in matters of education and social advancement. Unlike the Kuki, the Lushai like to perch their villages on the top of a hill or ridge, as evident from the geographical location of the Jampui Hill, partly for the sake of climate and also partly for the sake of security or good defensive position. Both the Kuki and the Lushai of Tripura are Jhumias, naturally the old migratory habit or the nomadic character of both the tribes are to be found even today, but the extension of education through missionary activities, the orange-economy of the Lushai in the Jampui Hill helped them to become more or less a stationary tribe, as found by Colonel Lister in the Lushai Hills also more than a century back.

In fact the Kuki and the Lushai in spite of their existing differences are practically the same group of people.

Table No.1  
(Tripura as per CRI)

Year of Census	Total Population	Tribal Population	Lushai Population
1901	1,73,325	91,679	(Kuki & Lushais) 7,547
1911	2,29,613	1,11,303	( " " ) 2,281
1921	3,04,437	1,71,610	( " " ) 4,005
1931	3,82,450	1,92,249	(No. of Kukis) 1,479 (No. of Lushais) 2,175
1941	5,13,010	2,56,991	(No. of Lushais) 1,991
1951	6,39,029	2,37,953	( " " ) 1,947
1961	11,42,005	3,60,070	( " " ) 2,988
1971	15,56,342	4,50,544	( " " ) 3,672
1981	20,53,058	5,83,920	

As the authenticity of the Censuses of 1872, 1881 and 1891 regarding enumeration of tribal populations was challenged by a number of authorities on various grounds, as in the words of L. S. S. O'mally<sup>11</sup>. "The first reliable census was that of 1901", we have here the population index since 1901. In spite of this, because of the inaccessibility of the Jampui Hill due to communication lag in the old days, and also because of the fear of the tribal people due to a number of factors, there was enough scope for wrong response from the people and necessarily, incorrect record of the census enumerators even in the present century."

Thakur Somendra Chandra Debbarma who first had drawn a demarcation line between the Darlong Kuki and Lushai of Tripura in his **Census Biharani**<sup>12</sup> had also given a picture of the Lushai of Tripura through a table (see table no. 2) as per 1931 Census Report :-

TABLE NO. 2  
(Lushai of Tripura as per 1931 Census Report)

Place	Total	M.	F.	Hindu	Christian	Educated	Blind	Mad	Deaf & Dumb
Udaipur	75	46	29	73	2	2	-	-	-



Kailashahar	2083	1054	1029	-	2083	333	1	1	1
Dharmanagar	17	10	7	-	17	3	-	-	-
Grand Total	2175	1110	1065	73	2102	338	1	1	1

### E. QUESTION OF MIGRATION etc, AND THE AREA OF TRIPURA

In common with all the hill-tribes of Tripura, the very early history of Lushai people perhaps remains unwritten, although some monographs on Lushai customs and ceremonies as prepared by Parry and the works of Revs. L. H. Lorraine and F. W. Savidge and others on the Lushai's Tibeto-Burman-in-origin language (**Duhlian-tawng**), grammar and vocabularies may help us to trace the old.

Like other sub-tribes of the Mizo, the Lushai also claim how their forefathers came out of a mythical cave Sinlung, the legendary rock-cave of Burma. Thlanrawkpa ('**Thlan**' means a grave, '**rawk**' means to rob, and '**pa**' means a male person)<sup>13</sup>, who robbed the grave, was that great legendary hero of the Lushai who first domesticated '**Mithun**' (a kind of animal which is a cross between a cow and a bison and which occupies a very important place in Lushai life as the cow occupied in the life of the ancient Indians). The so called 'closed-stone' mythology of the Lushai people was sometimes linked with Prince Chin Lung (perhaps from Sinlung) of the Ch'in Dynasty of China to whom the Great Wall of China was closed. "The existing Lushai Chiefs", to quote Shakespear, "...all claim descent from a certain Thang-ura, who is sometimes said to have sprung from the union of a Burman with a Paihte woman. .... I estimate that Thang-ura must have lived early in the eighteenth century ..... From him sprang six lines of Thang-ur chiefs:- (1) Rokum, (2) Zadeng, (3) Thangluah, (4) Pallian, (5) Rivung, and (6) Sailo."<sup>14</sup> But scarcity of food, inter-tribal conflicts and the prospect of provisions in other part were perhaps the main factors responsible for the migration of the Lushai people from one place to another. Migration from Burma took place, halted at several locations for longer, lesser periods, until they finally came to settle at their respective present areas in Mizoram, Tripura, Manipur, Cachar and Chittagong Hill Tracts.

In the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the question of the Eastern Boundary of Tripura, which was quite uninhabited, created a great controversy, the then minister of Tripura state, Rai P. K. Das Gupta Bahadur pointed out in a letter dated, the 21st September, 1922, to the Political Agent, Tripura, Comilla, that ".....thousands of Lushai have migrated from

the Lushai Hills District to these territories within recent years and immigration is still in progress. On this side of the Langai we have thousands of Lushai inhabiting this State in perfect contentment. Two of the Lushai Chiefs, Raja Doikuma and Sardar Hrung Bhunga, have come to settle on this side of the Langai with all their followings. This is certainly an evidence of the popularity of the Tripura Government. Sir William Marris has sought to meet this undoubted evidence by saying that this migration does not prove that those who still continue to live in the Lushai Hills District, wish to have the transfer. I would respectfully submit that this argument does not appear at all convincing to the Durbar and Sir William Marris appears to have missed the point of our argument-viz, that when large number of people migrate with their families from one area to another it is certainly evidence of unpopularity of the area abandoned and expected advantages in the country of adoption. I may note that the Government of Assam does not deny that there has been such migration. His Highness takes this opportunity to further urge a positive fact brought to his knowledge by reliable State officers that far from unwillingness of the Lushai to come under Tripura rule, some of the Lushai Sardars living in the Lushai Hills District have expressed themselves clearly in favour of returning to the authority of the Tripura Government, saying "Maharaja of Tripura is our Maharaja, why should we not wish to return to his rule."<sup>15</sup>

The above letter of Rai P. K. Das Gupta Bahadur, the minister of Tripura state, is a very important document. In another portion of this long letter, Rai Bahadur Das Gupta pointed out that the Lushai of Tripura "...regards His Highness with wellnigh superstitious veneration and love". J. Shakespear quotes a folk-tale which shows how the Tripura Raj enjoyed a great prestige among the Lushai, who call him "Rengpui"<sup>16</sup>. Even as late as 1931 the migrating Lushai people glorified the Tripura Raj in extravagant terms (see Appendix No.5) which is evident from the welcome address of one Doctor Thanglura, who on behalf of all the Lushai, Kuki and Reang of Tripura informed the Dewan of Tripura on 18 March, 1931 at Fatikray (now in North Tripura) that "It was from our fore-fathers that we heard something about His Highness the Maharaja; some stories tell about him as a God and others as a great king of the west. When we came in this land to settle, leaving our homes and country the way was so far that we had to take some quantity of rice for the way and some mothers had to suffer the trouble of having children on the way, and after suffering many more hardships and troubles we arrived in this land. But when we arrived here we saw to our greatest joy that the troubles were worth suffering for we



found that His Highness the Maharaja and his Officials were very kind to us; we were exempted from all taxes till we could easily support ourselves and the State even supported several hundreds of people for a considerable period of time. Now Your Honour's people are beginning to know the value of education, cultivation and medicine. We, therefore pray to your Honour as a child to a father that two students from our own community should be sent out for training, one for L.M.F. and the other for Agriculture Inspector."<sup>17</sup> Apart from the question of migration, which the above 'Welcome Address' provides an important clue, the other notable thing is the nature of the petty demands of the tribal people.

Although, the Tripura Durbar upheld the question of the immigration of the Lushai as '...certainly an evidence of the popularity of the Tripura Government', the records of the British officers, on the other hand, give totally a different picture. Thus W. W. Hunter narrated how, "...all the Tipperahs in the Chittagong Hill Tracts have immigrated from Hill Tipperah. Emigration still goes on yearly from the territory of the Raja of Hill Tipperah; and in the year 1872-73 upwards of 2,500 Tipperahs of the Reang clan fled from their own country and took up land on the Myani river in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The movement was encouraged by the Deputy Commissioner, as in addition to the advantage presented by an increase in the number of cultivators, it was hoped that if the Myani valley were peopled there would be communication and increased friendliness with the Kuki tribes, who occupy the country immediately to the east. The Reang Tipperah immigrants arrived in the Hill Tracts almost in a state of destitution. They at first Subsisted principally on roots and other wild products of the forest; but the Deputy Commi .sioner reported, in 1873, that the colony was then thriving."<sup>18</sup>

It is sometimes pointed out that the question of immigration of the Lushai to Tripura from other parts of North-Eastern India does not arise at all because in Rennel's map of 1781, which is the earliest Revenue map for the Eastern provinces published by the Government of India, the boundary of Tripura touched with the confines of the kingdom of Ava (i.e. Burma). A number of documents show that between 1835 and 1872 the Revenue Surveyors and Boundary Commissioners appointed by the Government of India regarded Tipaimukh, 48 miles to the east of the Langai river, as triple boundary of Manipur, Cachar, and Tripura. In Thornton's Gazetteer published in 1857, it was mentioned that Hill Tipperah was bounded on the east by the territory of Burma. Pemberton in his famous Report pointed out that "...from the sources of the Jeeree river, along the western bank, to its confluence with

the Barak; thence south on the western bank of the latter river to the mouth of the Chikhoo nullah of (or Tipaimukh), which, as before mentioned, marks the triple boundary of Muneepoor, Kachar, and Tripurah.”<sup>19</sup> Alexander Mackenzie also mentioned that “...the narrow hilly tract running down between Hill Tipperah and Manipur, and represented in our most recent maps as part of Cachar, was in Pembedton’s time considered to be part of Hill Tipperah.”<sup>20</sup> That the entire Lushai land upto the border of Burma belonged to Tripura was admitted even by Sir William Marris.<sup>21</sup>

We have thus shown that the Lushai land, before the Lushai Expedition, belonged to Tripura, by Government maps, Government records and the contemporary British writers and statesmen who directly dealt Lushai troubles and the punitive, expeditions from the second half of the nineteenth century. The Lushai land had not been taken away from Tripura on the right of conquest or annexation. Maharaja Bir Chandra Manikya (1862-1896 A.D.) acquiesced in fixing the Langai only as a provisional boundary in 1874, the year of the Notification of the Langal Boundary. In 1922, Rai P. K. Das Gupta Bahadur, Minister, Tripura state confessed in a letter to the Political Agent, Tripura, Comilla, that “...the hill tribes inhabiting the disputed tract never paid any rent in coin but acknowledged the sovereignty of, and owed allegiance to, the Rulers of Tripura by periodic presents of Ivory, gold in lump and the like of which no record is ever kept. Even the Lushai and Kuki living to the west of the Langai did not pay any cash rent till 1916 when a capitation tax was introduced for the first time and they have not been fully assessed yet. Hill families move from place to place and carry on cultivation on **Jhum** system on any waste lands in the territory without entering into land settlement even now.”

The real nature of control of the Tripura Raj over the Lushai people is evident from the above letter of the Minister of Tripura state.

Time and again the British authorities accused the Tripura Raj for the Lushai raids on the British territory. The **Pioneer**, dated 4 May, 1870, pointed out that The events of late years have given rise to much consideration of the position of Hill Tipperah. Flanked on three sides by settled districts it is bordered on the east by that unknown land of mountain, stream, and jungle, from which burst forth the bands of Lushai or Kookies that from time to time ravage our tea gardens in Cachar, or butcher our cotton-growers in the hills of Chittagong. For the last sixty years a suspicion has lurked in the breast of Government that fuller knowledge of this tract would prove that the Tipperah Rajah was to some extent responsible for the outrages so done. Responsible, we mean, in this way - that while in some few cases the attacks



were probably committed by his own proper subjects without his antecedent knowledge, in nearly all they were brought on by his mode of dealing with the fierce tribes of the interior, who were unable distinguish in retaliation between his territories and those of the British Government. Further, there could be no doubt that neither by affording information, nor by substantial assistance, had the Rajah dis severed himself from the responsibility so attaching to him. No definite case against him has, however, at any time been made out, for the very simple reason that we have never had an officer resident in his territory who could ascertain for us the facts ..... let us then, both for the sake of Hill Tipperah and for our own interests, assert our paramount rights and delegate an officer to that State as we have done long since to Manipur.”<sup>23</sup> Thus on the question of Lushai raids, the office of the Political Agent of Hill Tipperah was created in 1871 and W.B. Power was appointed as the first Political Agent by the British Government.

As a result of the Expedition of 1871-72, the Lushai were subdued by the British Government no doubt, but the entire drama ended in depriving the Tripura Raj of a large portion of territory upto Burma, all along the Eastern Frontier of Tripura. Let us quote A. Mackenzie in this regard, “As regards the eastern boundary of Hill Tipperah, the Lieutenant Governor proposed to prescribe a river rather than a mountain boundary. In these countries the tops of ranges are generally occupied and cultivated, and unsuited for that reason to serve as boundaries. It was suggested that the Lungai river, running between the Jampai and Hachick ranges; should be taken as the boundary line up to its source at Betlingsib. The line would then run across the watershed to Dolujuri, and thence along the recognised Hill Tipperah border by Surduing to the Fenny. These proposals were accepted and the boundary notified accordingly.”<sup>24</sup>

Considering thus the area of Tripura which once extended upto the border of Burma, it is difficult to say when the Lushai had migrated to Tripura. However, from different records, it is evident that with the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when Hrang-Vhunga, son of Sailianpuia and grand son of the legendary figure Sukpial, settled down within the Jampui Hill with a followers of one thousand, Jampui Hills then not simply uninhabited but a dense jungle, the home of ravening bists, saved perhaps a few adventurous wax-gatherers, hunters, who had ever penetrated the shades of that hill-range.

The Lushai are mainly confined today in the Jampui Hills area in North Tripura and the percentage of female population is higher than that of the male population.

Table No. 3  
Census of India 1971

Total Lushai population		Males	Female
West Tripura:	132	61	71
North Tripura:	4,221	1,838	2,383
South Tripura:	35	23	12
Tripura	4,388	1,922	2,466

FOOT-NOTE  
Chapter I/ Part I

1. C.A. Soppitt, **A Short Account of the Kuki-Lushai Tribes, (Reprint)**, Aizawl, 1976, pp. 1-2.
2. J. Shakespear, **The Lushai Kuki Clans, (Reprint)**, Delhi, 1983, pp. 2-3.
3. **Ibid., pp. 4-5.**
4. R. G. Woodthorpe, **The Lushai Expedition (1871-72), (Reprint)**, Gauhati, 1980, p. 11.
5. C.A. Soppitt, **op. cit.**, p. 4.
6. A.S. Reid, **Chin-Lushai Land, (Reprint)**, Aizawl, 1976, p. 6.
7. T. H. Lewin, **The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers Therein**, Calcutta, 1869, p. 109.
8. J. Shakespear, **op. cit.**, p. 6.
9. A. Mackenzie, **The North-East Frontier of India, (Reprint)**, Delhi, 1981, pp. 276-77.
10. **Ibid.**, pp. 292-93.
11. cf., Thakur Somendra Chandra Debbarma, **Census Bibarani**, (in Bengali), Agartala, 1343 T.E., p. 2.
12. **Ibid.**, p. 90.
13. L.B. Thanga, **The Mizo**, Gauhati, 1978, p. 1.
14. J. Shakespear, **op. cit.**, pp. 2-3.
15. Letter of Rai P. K. Das Gupta Bahadur, Minister, Tripura State, to the Political Agent, Tripura, Comilla, Dated 21st September, 1922.
16. J. Shakespear, **op. cit.**, p. 98.

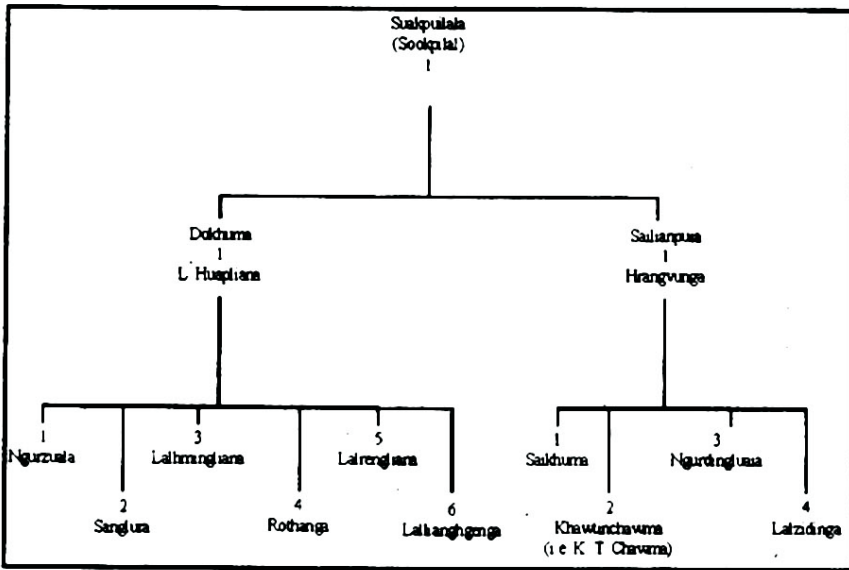
17. Dr. Thanglura's Welcome Address to Sri B. K. Sen, the Dewan Bahadur, Tripura State, at Fatikray on 18.3.1931, Secretariat Archives, Government of Tripura, Agartala, B 2/ S 20/ 1331 T.E.
18. W.W. Hunter, **A Statistical Account of Bengal**, (Reprint), Vol. VI, Delhi, 1973, p. 66.
19. R.B. Pemberton, **The Eastern Frontier of India**, (Reprint), Delhi, 1979, p. 192.
20. A. Mackenzie, **op. cit.**, p. 286 n.
21. Sir William Marris's letter to the Maharajah of Tripura, No. 4248 A.P. of 25th August, 1922. 29
22. Rai Bahadur P.K. Das Gupta's letter to the Political Agent on 21.9.1922.
23. cf., A. Mackenzie. **op. cit.**, pp. 561-62.
24. **Ibid.**, pp. 364-65.

PART I  
CHAPTER II:

**THE PAST FROM THE UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS**

**A. The LUSHAI CHIEFS AND THEIR RELATION:**

TABLE NO. 4  
Genealogy of the Lushai Chiefs



The British authorities left a number of accounts about Sookpilal of the Lushai Hills. Although the relation between the first two Lushai Chiefs of Tripura, Dokhuma and Hrangvunga, the uncle and the nephew, was rather sweet at beginning but it became sour ultimately due to the ambitions of both for having more villages under their control. The Chiefs were at loggerheads with each other. It would be evident from Appendix No.3 (inspite of defective constructions of sentences) the nature of complaint one Chief could lodge against the other. Both Dokhuma and Hrangvunga were conferred upon the title 'Raja' by the Maharaja(King) of Tripura. Both Dokhuma and Hrangvunga claimed the village Hmawchuan on the



ground of necessity and lack of Jhumland. A number of personal issues also strained their relations.

Again, some Lushai Chiefs also took the help of the British authorities who were just on the other side of the border. The village Phuldungsai was claimed by Chawngbiala, the headman of the Zopui village (British territory by then) and appeared to have instigated the British authorities to claim it. We have one document which shows that the Dewan Shashan in the Revenue Department, Government of Tripura, instructed Hrangvunga not to allow any interference by the British authorities because Phuldungsai belonged to Tripura and that the watershed was not the boundary in that locality.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding some complaints of certain Lushai people migrating from Hrangvunga's jurisdiction into the jurisdiction of Chawngbiala in the Lushai District of British India, it was alleged that Dokhuma was the brain behind it. A.S. Hands, the Deputy Commissioner, Chittagong Hill Tracts, complained in a letter to the Political Agent, Tripura State, how Hrangvunga refused to allow his people to migrate to Betling mouza in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and how he forcibly seized the paddy of the migrating families.<sup>2</sup> (See Appendix No. 1).

How the British Political Agent reacted to the above event would be evident from his letter to the Dewan, Tripura state, where he pointed out in a curt way, ".....that this is not the first time that Hrangvunga has behaved in this oppressive and unjustifiable manner. In 1915 he and about a hundred of his men invaded British territory, Jhummed about a square mile of British territory, and took the dishonest plea that he did not know the boundary..... I would insist that he makes good the value of the paddy he has confiscated, with compensation to those whose rights he has infringed."<sup>3</sup> (See Appendix No.2)

But Hrangvunga denied all the allegations against him and informed the Dewan that it was just a conspiracy of his 'enemy' Raja Dokhuma who had time and again sent 'bad and false reports' to different authorities against him. (See Appendix No.3). According to the Lushai custom of 'Papelhman' and 'Zarzotawp', the Chief had the right to confiscate the paddy belonging to the subject who attempted to leave for a different jurisdiction without the permission of the Chief concerned. It becomes clear from Hrangvunga's correspondences that the main dispute was in connection with the steps taken by Hrangvunga to ensure age-old Lushai custom of emigration because the men who migrated from his jurisdiction to the British territory removed all the paddy clandestinely in contravention of the custom.

The above simple event would prove how the Lushai chiefs were at loggerheads with each other and how the British authorities took advantage out of those. Infact, the history of the Lushai in Tripura in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was virtually the history of unceasing disputes of the Lushai Chiefs among themselves.

### **B. THE PAST AS REVEALED FROM LETTERS:**

In 1901 Buckland, while explaining the factors responsible for the Lushai raids, pointed out. "...A private quarrel with a neighbouring clan, a scarcity of woman and domestic servants, and the consequent necessity of procuring a requisite number of captives to supply the wants of the tribe. the simple desire of plunder, or of obtaining heads to grace the obsequies of some departed chieftain, were the principal causes of these raids."<sup>4</sup> What Buckland perhaps overlooked was the bamboo flowering in the Lushai Hills, which was always followed by increase of rats in astronomical proportion and thus destruction of crops and consequent famine in Lushai life. Infact the famine arose, according to the contemporary testimony of all persons concerned, from the depredations of rats. The famished Lushai descended from the Lushai Hills and followed the way where there was prospect of food. Thus with the dawn of the present century, they reached the Jampui Hills.

L. Huaplina Sailo in his representation to the Chief Commissioner of Tripura dated, the 20 February 1960 recorded among other things the history of his family and also of the Lushai people in Tripura. In the words of L. Huaplina Sailo, "...About the year 1900, a good number of Mizo families came down to Tripura and settled in the east of the Dharmanagar subdivision which was covered with a thick forest abounding in wild animals. At that time there were no men to be found in this region. We then moved towards Jampui Hill and have been settling here for more than 55 years..... I beg leave to mention here my personal history and grievances for your kind special consideration. That my father was Mr. Dokhuma Sailo, who was conferred upon a Title of Raja Bahadur for his good services to his subjects in promoting and safeguarding their wellbeing and interests. After the death of my father I was the heir and took up all the village administrative works in my hand. To be able to continue the works of my father, I was then in conformity with the prevailing system entitled to use and exercise all the State dresses and powers of my father. For the services to the subjects I enjoyed all dues from them for about 20 years."

Similarly, in his representation to the Prime Minister of India, dated, 24.10.1952, K.T. Chowma Sailo, another Chief of the Jampui Hill, expressed,

“.....My humble self is a son of Late Raja Hrangvunga Sailo of Jampui Hill, who and whose fore-fathers ruled for more than 300 years over the Lushai Hill people of the part of Kirat Country, i.e., within Assam and Tripura. My beloved late father before his death settled in the soil of Tripura for the last 50 years and ruled over the Lushai people of Tripura as a Lushai Raja (Feudatory Prince) getting sorts of ‘nal paddy’ annually from each house of the Lushai people and thereby maintained his families. Lushai Raj is hereditary and as such my humble self heridate my father in the capacity of Lushai Raj and used to enjoy the same family as my fore-fathers did. That is the only source of living of the Lushai Raj family.” (See Appendix No. 7)

The above two simple letters of the two Chiefs of the Jampui Hill throw light on the past of the Lushai people and in that sense these should be considered as important sources. After examinations of the relevant documents it has transpired that Rajkumar L. Huapliana Sailo and K. T. Chowma Sailo of Jampui Hill were recognised like their fathers as Lushai Chiefs by the Maharaja of Tripura. Thus they received tacit approval of the Maharaja for collection of levy known as ‘Fatang’ from the Lushai subjects of Kailashahar and Dharmanagar (and presentday Kanchanpur also). People belonging to Lushai tribe used to live under the customary authority and control of the Chiefs and used to owe allegiance to them. The jurisdiction of each Chief was the following :-

TABLE NO.5

(A) L. Huapliana Sailo: -	1) Belianchip .	
	2) Vangmun	* In the later stage Tlaksih
	3) Tlaksih*	and Hmunpui were ruled
	4) Hmunpui*	by Saikhuma Sailo
	5) Hmanchuang	
	6) Kalagang	
	7) Khedacherra	
	8) Monacherra	
(8) K. T. Chawma Sailo: -	1) Tlangsang	*It was virtually administered
	2) Sabual	by Ngurdingluaia Sailo,
		the younger brother of K. T.
	3) Phuldungsai*	Chawma Sailo, who was
	4) Vaisam	not officially recognised.)
	5) Kachari	



### **C. THE 'FATANG' SYSTEM**

The 'Fatang' to the extent of four tins (approximately one maund) of paddy per family was used to be collected by the Lushai Chiefs from their respective jurisdiction. The families which used to get special privileges from the Chiefs in matters of selection of plots for Jhuming and the like had to give 'Fatang' to the extent of six tins of paddy. The indigent people incapable of paying the quantity of levy had to pay a sum of rupee one as a token of loyalty to the Chief. Besides the levy, the Chiefs used to enjoy the benefit of free labour from their subjects.

The 'Fatang' system was a customary and traditional practice and it is difficult to ascertain how and when it came in vogue in Lushai society. Both L. Huaplina and K. T. Chowma Sailo were the last descendants of the two traditional Lushai Chief families in the Jampui Hills who used to enjoy privileges by virtue of their Chiefships and the annual income of them derived from 'Fatang' was as follows:

L. Huaplina Sailo-Rs. 500/- per year

K. T. Chowma Sailo-Rs. 250/- per year

However, the 'Fatang' system was discontinued not by any official order of the Government of Tripura, nor as a result of integration of Tripura with Indian Union, but as a result of the movement of the Tripura Lushai Union which passed a number of resolutions in 1949 to put an end to this system which was looked down upon by a large young section of the Lushai of the Jampui Hills.

### **D. QUESTION OF LAND SETTLEMENT AND REALISATION OF TAX BY THE MAHARAJA OF TRIPURA FROM THE LUSHAI CHIEFS:**

Due to the peculiar geographical position and the inaccessibility of the Lushai areas from the distant state capital, the Lushai Chiefs had been allowed to enjoy a considerable measure of autonomy for a long time by the Tripura Durbar.

Except for a loose allegiance to the Maharaja of Tripura and 'Ghar-Chukti-Kar' (Household Tax) levied on households, the State could not derive any land revenue from that area because of the difficult terrain. According to official estimates, the collection of 'Ghar- Chukti-Kar', realised through the Lushai Chiefs and not directly by the State officials, had always been a token collection: -

As for example, the total amount of 'Ghar-Chukti-Kar' realised from the Lushai Chiefs from 1353 T.E. to 1357 T.E. were: -



1353 T.E.	—	Rs. 373/-
1354 T.E.	—	Rs. 372/-
1355 T.E.	—	Rs. 204/-
1356 T.E.	—	Rs. 639/-
1357 T.E.	—	Rs. 647/-

In 1920 Rai P. K. Das Gupta Bahadur, the Chief Dewan, proposed the following to settle land with the Lushai through their Chiefs:

“Land settled with Lushai people Chiefs for plough cultivation:

1) For the present any chief may have a perpetual lease with varying rent at the rate of 4 annas per kani plus 10 days' free service in a year from each adult. Rent will be assessed from one year to year for the land brought under plough cultivation. Chief may select 10 (ten) drones of land suitable for plough cultivation immediately and may apply to the Divisional Officer, Kailashahar.

2) Of four annas of rent payable for each kani, one anna will go to Chief for collection and three annas will be payable to the State.

3) Perpetual settlement will be granted for more land, as soon as the ten drones now to be settled are brought under cultivation.

4) Similar land grants may be offered to all the other Lushai Chiefs and also Kuki Chiefs on the express condition of introducing plough cultivation among their people.”

But the attempt of the Chief Dewan in 1920 to shift the attention of the Lushai from shifting cultivation to plough cultivation and to collect land revenue from the Lushai Chiefs was not given effect to in practice. However, regarding 'Ghar-Chukti Kar' we have found an order of the then Chief Dewan (Rai P. K. Das Gupta Bahadur), dated 10 February, 1917, issued from the Revenue Department empowering Raja Dokhuma to realise Household Tax at Rs. 4/- per family, and to keep Re. 1/- out of that Rs. 4/- as his collection commission to keep his own dignity. Over and above the commission from the Household Tax, we have seen how the Lushai Chiefs have all through been permitted to get their dwelling houses built by the Lushai of villages under their jurisdiction and to collect 'Fatang', i.e., a share of the harvest each year. Again, the Lushai Chiefs had also been permitted all along to realise what was known as "Sachhias" from the men under their villages, i.e. a share of any games killed by them. Although we have no document to show that the Tripura Durbar had ever approved of these realisations of 'Sachhias' by the Lushai Chiefs, still, the Government had been acquiescing in that practice since a very long time past.

As regards the Forest Revenue etc. it is better to quote a letter of the late forties of the present century by the then Chief Commissioner of Tripura (Mr. A. B. Chatterjee) to the Adviser to H.E. the Governor of Assam for Excluded Areas and State (Mr. N. K. Rustomji) on 8 September, 1948: "This Government has no Forest, Customs and Police Posts in the Lushai area. For all practical purposes, no forest revenue is derived from this area either. The nearest Police Outpost is at Fatikroy which is about 15 miles from the Lushai area. The forest path from this Police Outpost to the Lushai area is through very dense jungles along which it is impracticable to send any Expedition Force during the rainy season."

### **E. RIGHTS OF THE LUSHAI CHIEFS AND THE MOVEMENT OF THE LUSHAI PEOPLE AGAINST THOSE RIGHTS**

In 1946, Tripura Lushai Union was formed. One of its main aims was to dethrone the ruling Lushai Chiefs and to stop all dues paid to them. That agitation reached its height in 1949-50, i.e., at a time when the Communist agitation in the rest of Tripura reached its peak. It is interesting to read a letter of the Lushai Chief K. T. Chowma Sailo to the Dewan of Tripura dated, 28.10.1949, ".....For fear of there may be communism propaganda in Lushai Hills, the Government appoints detectives and lends pistols to the Lushai Chiefs for defence of themselves against the communists." We do not know how the communists were involved in that struggle against the oppressive taxes imposed by the Lushai Chiefs in Jampui Hills, but one thing is interesting, i.e. K. T. Chowma Sailo who left the world on the 22 December, 1984, at the age of 90, was the main inspiring force behind the Reang-Lushai fraternity and the consolidation of the bases of the CPI (M) in the Jampui Hills during his last days. His son Lalfangkima Sailo representing Communist Party of India (Marxist) was elected Pradhan (head) of Sabual Gaon-Panchayat (elected local governing body at village level). The Tripura Lushai Union, otherwise known as the Social-Customs-Reforming Committee, with Ch. P. Thanga as Chairman, Zaliana as Vice-Chairman and Lal-Chhuanga as Secretary, first expressed its loyalty to the then Government of Tripura in its constitution. In the minutes of the first meeting of the Committee held at Tlaksih on 25.10.1949 it was resolved unanimously that :

1) Each Lushai family should give paddy full of two kerosine tins annually to the Chief as 'Fatang' for the time being provided that family had sufficient paddy for a year's consumption; and if not sufficient then Re. 1/- only might be paid instead of it.



- 2) The custom of free and forced labour for the service of the Chief, which was considered a mark of slavery, should immediately be abolished.
- 3) The custom of 'Sachhiah' should also be abolished as by that custom the Lushai people were compelled to pay to the Chief the front leg of the animal killed and the defaulter would have to pay a fine of Rs. 40/-.
- 4) The custom of 'Zalen' and 'Ramhual' (according to that custom some men had the right of best plot of Jhum land on payment of Five maunds of extra paddy to the Chief) should immediately be abolished.
- 5) The custom of 'Papelman' (i.e. fine of Rs. 40/- to the maximum realised by the Chief from a subject whom the Chief had shown favour previously but when that subject attempted to leave the Chief) and the 'Zarzotawp' (i.e. the custom of confiscation by the Chief of the paddy of belonging to the migrating subject) should also be abolished.
- 6) The Custom of privileged class be abolished and all men should be equal in the eye of customary laws.

Finally, the Social-Customs Reforming Committee took the power in its hands to introduce better and progressive customs among the Lushai of Tripura.

The above resolutions of the Committee were sent to the Government of Tripura for consideration, and in reply the then Chief Commissioner of Tripura (R. K. Ray) pointed out "..... As it is against the policy of this Government to interfere unnecessarily in the manners and customs of tribal people, you yourselves will have to devise the means by which old customs which you now consider to be undesirable should be abolished. The only thing that I would advise you to bear in mind in this connection is that such changes should be brought about by lawful means and the weight of public opinion and not by resort to any acts which affect public peace and tranquility or contravene the existing laws of the land." <sup>10</sup>

However, as a result of constant movements the practice of imposing levies by the Chiefs ultimately died out. Although most of the demands of the Social Customs Reforming Committee were of a social nature, as already evident from the minutes of their first meeting, and although the Chief Commissioner of Tripura did not stand in the way, still the Adviser to the Governor of Assam for Excluded Areas and States thought, "...The move of the Lushai in Tripura State is probably an off-shoot of the general move in the Lushai Hills District, the main object of which is to do away with the System of Chiefs. There is evidence that this movement has Communist inspiration and probably Communist support as well." <sup>11</sup>

The pitiable conditions of the Lushai Chiefs, when they were deprived of their age-old rights, were reflected in their appeals for political pensions to different authorities (see appendix no. 7). In a letter to the Prime Minister of India dated 24.10.1952, K. T. Chowma Sailo, otherwise known as 'Lushai-Raja', observed, ".....In these days of democracy it is natural that political consciousness will prevail every corner of the country and as such the Lushai people also think that they are now free from any ruling authority like myself and they are likely to discontinue to pay any sorts of rent either in kind or cash to Lushai Chiefs, i.e. to me. By this deed of the Lushai subjects now I am on the point of starvation. I have got no other source of income and as such absolutely helpless. My previous income was Rs. 4,000/-annually. "So, I most humbly and respectfully pray that a grant of at least Rs. 250/-per month as political pension may be granted to me and thereby save an ancient family of the Hill Tribe."<sup>12</sup> (See Appendix No.7).

The above letter of the last Lushai Chief of the Jampui Hill throws enough light about the economic conditions of the Chiefs before and after the withdrawal of their age-old rights. Although in 1944, the Tripura Durbar issued an order that "..... all people of the Lushai tribe must obey the Chief and render allegiance to the Chief according to the customs and practices prevailing among them as approved by His Highness." (see Appendix no. 6), still the Lushai people devised their own course of action against the Chiefship.

#### **F. CHRISTIANITY AND THE LUSHAI PEOPLE:**

The impact of the Christianity among the Lushai people of Tripura was immense. Apart from the educational field, the missionaries came forward to help to change attitudes of the people in many other fields. In a letter to Dr. G. G. Grosier, <sup>13</sup> the Field Secretary, North-East India General Mission, the then Dewan of Tripura pointed out in 1931 that the first batch of Christian cultivators numbering about forty migrated into Tripura in 1912 with the Lushai Chief Hrangvunga, a grandson of Sukpilal, who settled down within the state with a following of one thousand. Rev. F. G. Sandy, in a letter to Rev. W. R. Roberts, the Field Director of the North-East India General Mission, pointed out <sup>14</sup> that the number of Christians among the Lushai in Hill Tipperah in March 1917 were the following:

Jampui No. 1	.....	100
Jampui No. 2	.....	180
Jampui No. 3	.....	50



Sakhan Hill	.....	50
Total	.....	380

During the 1931 Census, out of a total of 2,175 Lushai, 2,102 retained themselves as Christian, and only 73 persons as Hindu. With the march of time the entire Lushai people of Tripura embraced Christianity, although regarding the speed of conversion the reports of Rev. Roberts and Rev. F. G. Sandy appear contradictory. (Considering the lack of space and many other factors, it is not possible to write in detail the Missionary Activities. The present author likes to discuss the subject in a separate paper). The attitude of the Durbar of Tripura towards the activities of the Missionaries would be evident from Appendix No.4.

### **Notes and References** (PART I, CHAPTER II)

1. Order of B. K. Sen, Dewan Shashan in the Revenue Department Government of Tripura, Agartala, 30 January, 1931.
2. Letter of A. S. Hands, D.C., Chittagong Hill Tracts, to the Political Agent, Tripura State, No. 3061G, 7 December, 1929. (See Appendix No.1).
3. Letter of C. G. B. Stevens, Political Agent, Tripura State, to the Dewan of Tripura, No. 1507 P, 31.7.1930 (See Appendix No.2).

### X

4. C. E. Buckland, **Bengal under the Lieutenant Governors**, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1901, p. 180.

Mr. S. Sailo, the present Deputy Director, Tribal Welfare, Government of Tripura, thinks that famine due to flowering of bamboo was not the reason for the migration of Lushai people to Tripura, as famine did not affect them much. Rather, they fed other villagers of far flung villages following which one of the sons of Hrangvunga was given the name of Khawtin Chawma (popularly known as K. T. Chawma Sailo) as Khawtin Chawma means, the one who feeds every village.

5. Order of the Chief Dewan, Tripura State, Agartala, No. 13107, Dt. 23.2.1920.

6. Order of the Chief Dewan issued from the Revenue Department, Tripura State, Agartala, No. 6866/2-1, D. 10.2.1917.

7. Letter from A. B. Chatterjee, the Chief Commissioner of Tripura, to N. K. Rustomji, Advisor to H.E. the Governor of Assam for Excluded Areas and States, No. 1501/H/CA-66, Dt. 8.9.1948.
8. K. T. Chawma Sailo's letter to the Dewan, Tripura State, on 28.10.1949.
9. Minutes of the first meeting of the social Customs Reforming Committee, held at Tlaksih village on 25.10.1949.
10. Letter of R. K. Ray, Chief Commissioner of Tripura to Ch. P. Thanga, Chairman, Social Customs Reforming Committee, No. 1526/ CA/66, Dt. 24.11.1949.
11. Letter of N. K. Rustomji, Adviser to the Governor of Assam, Shillong, to B. K. Acharya, Dewan, Tripua State. No. 23/49/C-1048, Dt. 28.6.1949.
12. K. T. Chawma Sailo's representation to the Prime Minister of India, Dt. 24.10.1952, (See Appendix No.7).
13. Letter of the Dewan of Tripura to Dr. G. G. Grosier, Field Secretary, North-East India General Mission, No. 570, Dt. 17.2.1931.
14. Letters from Rev. F. J. Sandy to Rev. W. R. Roberts in 1918-19.

## Appendix No.1

No. 3061 G.

Deputy Commissioner, Chittagong Hill Tracts,  
Dated, Camp-Betling, the 7th December, 1929.

To  
The Political Agent, Tripura State, Comilla.

Sir,

I have the honour to state that Chongbiela the Lushai Headman of Mouza Betling of this district, on the border of Hill Tripura, near the Betling Hill Station, has complained to me that Hrangvunga a headman on the Hill Tripura border, refuses to allow Lushai from his mouza to migrate to Betling mouza in the Hill Tracts. Recently seven families came from Hrangvunga's mouza to Betling mouza to settle and Jhum there. It is reported that before they left, Hrangvunga forcibly seized the paddy of three families and a gun belonging to another family. The remaining three families managed to escape to Chongbiela's village without molestation by Hrangvunga. There are ten other Lushai families under Hrangvunga who want to come to Chongbiela's village but are afraid to do so.

There is no custom among these hill tribes by which a headman or chief can prevent people migrating from his jurisdiction to the jurisdiction of another. In fact this recognised freedom of migration is one of the main factors in ensuring that a chief or headman treats his villagers fairly.

I would request you to be good enough to ask the Tripura authorities to see that the confiscated paddy and gun are returned and that Lushai under the jurisdiction of Hrangvunga are allowed to migrate to Chongbiela's village if they wish to. Hrangvunga's mouza is under the Kailashahar division of Tripura State. The names of the men, whose paddy was seized by Hrangvunga are Sakeia son of Zothwama, Thanga S/o. Thanghula, and Leta S/o. Chaunga. The man whose gun was seized is Hrang Luaila S/o. Thangphunga.

I have etc.  
Sd. A. S. Hands,  
Deputy Commissioner.

## Appendix No.2

Telegraphic Address: -

“POLITICAL “

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
OFFICE OF THE POLITICAL AGENT, TRIPURA STATE,  
From, C. G. B. Stevens, Esq., I.C.S.,  
Political Agent, Tripura State.

To

The Dewan Shasan, Tripura State, Agartala.

No.  $\frac{1507}{X}$  P

Dated, Comilla, the 31st July, 1930.

Sir,

With reference to your 1222P dated 28th July on the subject of alleged oppression by the chief Hrangvunga on British subjects in mouza Betling, who I would request you to see that the Divisional Officer of Kallashahar deals severely with him. The confiscation of the property of persons living under British protection in British India is no light thing and should, if proved, be followed by the expulsion of the offending chief from the territories of the State.

I may point out that this is not the first time that Hrangvunga has behaved in this oppressive and unjustifiable manner. In 1915 he and about a hundred of his men invaded British territory, Jhumed about a square mile of British territory, and took the dishonest plea that he did not know the boundary. The man is a scoundrel and the sooner he is expelled from the State the better. I would insist that he makes good the value of the paddy he has confiscated, with compensation to those whose rights he has Infringed. I am astonished that he should behave in this manner, for in November 1924 I informed him very clearly of the position of the British inhabitants of Betling and warned him that the consequences of any interference with them would be serious indeed. It seems he has entirely disregarded my warning, and if the State wish to avoid a repetition of such unpleasantnesses they will be well advised to turn him out.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Sd. C.G.B. Stevens,  
POLITICAL AGENT.



## Appendix No.3

### **Hrangvunga's representations from Jampui on 30.9.1930 to the Dewan, Tripura State, Agartala.**

(TRUE COPY) (sic) (Although the meanings of some sentences are not clear, still the following letter is important - Author).

To  
The Dewan Shasan,  
Tripura State. Agartala.

Sir,

I have the honour most humbly and respectfully to request your kind consideration and favourable order on the following statements quoted below item by item: -

1. That my dear son, Mr. Saikhuma Sailo, on return of his long tour from Agartala informed me that many enemies of mine including Raja Dokhuma Bahadur have submitted several bad reports against me in making a great hardship and their intention as it appears that I might be destroyed all my rights and to withdraw the sympathy of your honour from him in the cases of confiscating the properties of the migrators etc.

2. In the case of the above, confiscating the properties, I strongly say that I never do such things even while I was in the Lushai Hills upto this day. Such action of manner I always dislike and despise thereof. Instead of such bad characters I have always trying myself for the interest of the State subjects in cultivating cotton etc.

3. That because of these false bad reports composed chiefly by the helpers of that one Kapthanga who fought severally against the State order, so as to stop the dignity commission of Re. 1/- received by the Raja from the Jhuming tax of each house which the State authorities favoured to the Raja per year for the last many years and also to discontinue taking **fathang** and building house when required according to the Lushai chiefs in previous years. Those who co-operated with Kapthanga in every way are now the leaders of making trouble even where they are in separate village in making and submitting such wrong reports against me. As their intention could not be fulfilled as desired by them on account of your honour graciously

pleased the accused Raja myself by your grace and favoured to continue in receiving Re. 1/- the commission and of that **fathang** and building house according to Lushai Chiefs laws. Therefore they migrated to some other villages even to the Lushai Hills as it seemed very shameful for them to remain in my village.

4. That Raja Dokhuma Bahadur, of his daughter Thansangi married one Mr. Saikhuma of the Lushai Hills. She, Thansangi remained with her husband Mr. Saikhuma for the last 3 years and is now called upon to come in the State to start a new village in the Jampui Hills separately. It appears that his intention was to live singly in Jampui and wished turning out other Raja - poor greedy creature it is.

5. That Raja Dokhuma Bahadur, son of Suakpial from one Lalnemi, the common woman of his concubine of his village people, not from the royal family when the State authorities favoured with much pleasing and titled Raja Bahadur. I have always pleased with him so many years and I always tried to live peacefully together under one State kind administration and I have always spoke well of him to the State authorities but on return of my son, Mr. Saikhuma Sailo, from Agartala I have come to know that, he tried and submitted bad reports containing false evidents against me. I wonder of it.

6. That in considering my previous good deed on him while we were in the British administration - it appears that he was very unkind to me rather intending to put me in the great hardship in every way making false evident against me in aid of other enemies of mine. So I also willing to unfold of his condition from the beginning of his childhood.

7. That as to unfold the childhood of that Raja Dokhuma Bahadur, if you have any doubt on my saying, your honour may kindly request to prove the facts stated by me through the Superintendent of the Lushai Hills. As he was not borne in royal family he could not be considered in among the Lushai Chiefs, having no right even before the British came in the Lushai Hills. As he was borne from the common woman they have no right to build new separate village of their own but they live in village as common people; that is our common custom in the Lushai Hills.

8. That from his boyhood (Raja Dokhuma Bahadur) he lived with legal heir Suakpial's son by name Sailianpuia who was my father, he was fed up by my father and arranged for him a wife and paid for his marriage price by my father and upto the death of my father till I became successor of my father of his own village while he was only act as my assistant under me and not allowed him with a separate village of his own.

9. That in the event of the British Government divided the land of the Lushai Hills to the each chiefs, making each portion individually, at that time he (Raja Dokhuma Bahadur) have not any right to claim the land portion, so he lived with me under my control as assistant - these facts may be proved easily through the Superintendent of the Lushai Hills if Your honour have any doubt.

10. That Raja Dokhuma Bahadur as my assistant in the Lushai Hills in my own village I had prepared to migrate with all my whole village people to live under the State administration, he (Dokhuma) was sent for first batch to have made ready settlement under the state with 100 houses because I thought that it would be difficult to arrange livelihood for the larger people by the State at a time. So the second batch of 200 houses will follow afterwards. And your State authorities was pleased with him (Raja Dokhuma Bahadur) which I also very pleased to him and not vexed so I do not unfold the previous history of him.

11. That because I have done no wrong and mischief with him from the beginning as quoted above, your honour will please clearly understand of his greedy and of his selfishness and pride over me in which your honour graced me favourably and kind to me in which act of your kindness. I shall ever be grateful as in duty bound ever pray.

12. As regards to J. Chawngbieala's reports against me in reply to, I have to say that I have already got a written paper signed by J. Chawngbiala himself in which he mentioned that his village people came from the Raja Hrangvunga's village, received their properties fully and no trouble arisen which I enclosed herewith for your honour's perusal. This written paper I obtained from him because many enemies of mine trying to put me in a great hardship. This will prove all reports against me are untrue and cleared off those false reports submitted to your honour firstly.

13. Again in 1924 Mr. Steven, the Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong Hill Tracts paid a first visit to Maure village of my own, in order to strengthen the false report made by J. Chawngbiala who killed a mythun in favour of that Deputy Commissioner and claimed the portion lying in eastern slopes of land, those drainage area between Betlingsib and Betling to be the portion of the Hill Tracts. This portion was never been claimed by him (J. Chawngbiala) before so long. So he requested that officer to see the place. I replied that the portion claim now was not yet clear enough and one officer, from Agartala came to the place previously who also claimed this portion as the State territory. So Chawngbiala encouraged



that D. C. and he rudely speaking and claimed strongly saying that he was ready to detect such state officer who claimed the same portion too. I, therefore, replied him that no definite order has yet been given for this portion who would be owner. In this time I tried my best to please him in clearing footpah and offered some oranges for Salaams but he seemed not so please. After this I stop speaking thinking that the D.C.'s statement will be true that portion is between the Betlingsib and Betling - in that place J. Chawngbiala had built a new village there.

14. That this year, the officer I. D. Khan the Survey party No. 12 paid a visit this hill and cleared off the jungle of that place making stations there he who answered that portion lying eastern slopes drainage area between Betlingsib and Betling purely belonged to the Lushai Hills and not even a single plot of Chittagong Hill Tracts were there. How can Mr. Steven, the D. C. mentioned in 1924 as his own tracts and allowed J. Chawngbiala to build a village there. If the statement made by that Survey Officer is quite true, J. Chawngbiala may kindly be requested to remove his village earlier to that his own Tracts; as it is not so good to live close to me as he seemed to be trouble-monger, rising false reports against me.

In conclusion I beg to state that I have a great desire to see you face to face but owing to illness of mine I could not proceed any further for which I was very sorry for failing to come at that time but have a mind to see you personally later on.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,

Your most obedient servant.

Sd. RAJA HRANGVUNGA SAILO

D/Jampui,  
The 30th Sept. 1930.

## **Appendix No. 4**

TRIPURA STATE  
Revenue & General Department  
Agartala.

**Extract from an order of the Dewan Shashan, Tripura State dated the 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1931.**

**The dispute among the Lushai Christians in the Jampui Hills.**

“It is my earnest wish that all differences of opinion should cease and that all Christian Lushai in the State should unite in God and give up all dissensions.

I have summoned a conference at Fatikray on the 19th March next where I hope to meet the leading members of the different schools and to see what there is against all uniting under a Church recognised by the State. Meantime I would earnestly request all chiefs, workers and Christians to see that no steps are taken such as may accentuate difference of opinion. A conference of one of the schools is said to be fixed for 12th March and I would even go to the length of earnestly requesting its postponement till I have been able to understand the situation thoroughly and to offer my advice.”

Sd. S. C. Dev Barman,  
SENIOR NAIB DEWAN,  
Revenue & General Deptt.,  
Tripura State.

## Appendix No. 5

Welcome Address to the Dewan by Dr. Thanglura on behalf of all Lushai, Kuki and Reang, on the former's visit to Fatikray, (now in North Tripura) on 19.3.1931.

"Welcome Address to His Honour B. K. Sen, the Dewan Bahadur, Tripura State. Today standing before you all and our Heavenly Father I count it a great privilege to speak the welcome address to our dear and beloved Minister, His Honour the Dewan Bahadur B. K. Sen on behalf of all Lushai, Ryangs and Kuki. I am sure such an opportunity as I have today was never had by my fore-fathers and great-fore-fathers, and as therefore the luckiest among a great many generations.

While I was but a boy my father used to tell me some stories which he heard from my grand-father which I remember very well. I do hope I shall not tire his Honour by narrating the story which I heard long ago from my father's bosom. As dear father told me, there are two tanks near the Palace of His Highness the Maharaja of Tripura State. Every morning His Highness got up and poured in 'Hraikhat' of Rupees (A Lushai measurement holding half a mound of paddy) in those tanks and thus the god of the tanks made him a great Maharaja. This story runs through the length and breadth of the Lushai Hills and even in these days most of old men and women in Lushai villages will be able to narrate the same story to their grand children.

Most of the people in Lushai Hills are much eager to see His Highness the Maharaja and His Honour the Dewan Bahadur face to face, yet, hundreds of men and women are passing away from this world without seeing what their hearts desired. But today I am speaking for all present here that it is hardly necessary to say that we are all very very glad to see His Honour the Minister whom we heartily welcome in our midst. Let my audience also note that we, His Honour's children, are eagerly looking upon him with hopeful minds and cheerful eyes and whose earnest desire is to help the distressed people and to uplift the backward tribes in the length and breadth of this country which we all love as well. I hope and I am sure that our beloved Minister will know our love to him when he sees our one but sincere welcome and also when he sees men and women and children who come here to welcome with deepest sincerity.

First of all let me speak on behalf of Darlawng Kuki Christian and non-Christians. About a century ago we came here in these parts of land, we were very much favoured by His Highness the Maharaja, His Honour the Minister



and the Officers of the State. We were very much encouraged on the lines of Art, Agriculture, ploughing and in many other ways they were ready even to support our boys in schools. But we were so backward that we could not make use of these golden opportunities which were so kindly bestowed upon us by the State on our very doors. I am sure, our beloved Minister is noticing with a painful heart that while every tribe and nation on the face of the Earth are increasing in number, we His Honour's subjects in Darlawng are decreasing year after year. There was a time when there were a thousand houses in a village and our population in those days was several thousands. But today I presume it will be all very good if there are more than three hundred houses with population over fifteen hundred in Darlawng. Permit me therefore to say that all these places around Kailashahar where we the Kuki use to live before, they all become now the graves of our fore-fathers. But we neither desire nor want to leave this Cemetery of our fore-fathers nor do we envy those who are living up in the Hills. We are enjoying full liberty and freedom under the protection of His Highness the Maharaja, and it is now becoming our second nature to live loyally to the State Authorities till we are called from this world to the happier Shore.

To all the world I give my hand  
My heart I give my native land  
I seek her good her glory  
I honour every nation's name  
Respect their fortune and their fame  
But I love the land that bore me.

However, let me give thanks once more, our joy knew no bound at the coming of our beloved Minister in this humble place and at this critical moment to lift us up his children into a better and happier life.

In these days there are some Christians among us. Mr. Roberts and his men whom we must not forget to thank, sent us some Compounders and medicines and in future we hope by all these means to rise up and increase in number. At present most of us know the value of medicines, education and cultivation and so it is one of our greatest hopes and desires that our ever beloved Minister will be pleased to send two students from our men, one for L.M.F. and the other for Agriculture Inspector, and also to establish two Middle English Schools with ten boys each supported by the State, one in Darlawng and the other in Jampui Hill. We hope by these means the hearts of the people will be opened and will raise us by degrees to a higher Society.

Secondly, permit me once more to speak on behalf of the Lushai and Ryang Christians and non-Christians. It was from our fore-fathers that we heard something about His Highness the Maharaja; some stories tell about him as a god and others as a great king of the west. When we came in this land to settle, leaving our homes and country the way was so far that we had to take some quantity of rice for the way and some mothers had to suffer the trouble of having children on the way, and after suffering many more hardships and troubles we arrived in this land. But when we arrived here we saw to our greatest joy that the troubles were worth suffering for we found that His Highness the Maharaja and his Officials were very kind to us; we were exempted from all taxes till we could easily support ourselves and the State even supported several hundreds of people for a considerable period of time. Now your Honour's people are beginning to know the value of education, cultivation and medicine. We, therefore pray to your Honour as a child to a father that two students from our own community should be sent out for training, one for L.M.F. and the other for Agriculture Inspector.

A seed if it rests on good soil it grows up in course of time; so we, your Honour's children, rest upon you bringing all our difficulties before your Honour and at the same time looking upon your Honour with greatest hope that all the dark clouds before us and in us would be wipe away by your Honour.

Lastly as a whole let me once more give our warmest welcome to our beloved Minister His Honour the Dewan Bahadur B. K. Sen, who inspite of his age comes here for us and only for us his children just to do what would be best for us all.

Dated, Fatikray.  
18/3/1931.

We are your Honour's Obedient Children  
Sd/- Dr. Thanglura.  
On behalf of all Lushai, Kuki and Ryangs."

## Appendix No. 6

“Ujjayanta Palace  
Khash Serista  
Agartala, 13th Poush, 1354. T.E.

It has been brought to the notice of His Highness the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur that some people of the Lushai Tribe inhabiting in the Kailashahar and Dharmanagar Division of the State, having taken settlement of land for cultivation on gardening think themselves freed from the authority and control of their Tribal chief.

In order to remove all doubts in this respect His Highness the Maharaja what Manikya Bahadur has been pleased to command that it be declared to all concerned that the people of the Lushai Tribe inhabiting in the State must continue to live under the Customary authority and control of the Chief recognised by His Highness and at present under the Chiefship of either Hony. 2/Lt. Rajkumar L. Huaplina Sailo or Hony. 2/Lt. Rajkumar K. T. Chowma Sailo, as the case may be. All people of the Lushai tribe must obey the Chief and render allegiance to the Chief according to the customs and practice prevailing among them as approved by His Highness, even if they go in for land cultivation or gardening or any other business or profession. These Chiefs will, of course, have no authority or control over people of any other tribe.

By order  
Sd/ P. Bhattacharyya,  
Chief Secretary  
to His Highness the Maharaja  
Manikya Bahadur.

No. 595/C, dated 30th December, 1944.

Copy forwarded to Hony. 2/Lt. Rajkumar K. T. Chowma, Hony. 2/Lt. Rajkumar L. Huaplina Sailo, Jampui Hills through the Divisional Officer, Dharmanagar.

Sd/- P. Bhattacharyya,  
Chief Secretary to his Highness the Maharaja Manikya Bahadur.”



## Appendix No. 7

(True copy of the representation of K. T. Chowma Sailo, the Lushai Chief of the Jampui Hills, to the Prime Minister of India on 24.10.1952 when the latter paid his visit to Tripura).

“To  
The Hon’ble Prime Minister of India,  
New Delhi. .

Most honoured Sir,

It is a great joy for us the hill people, specially the Lushai people, of this State to find you the Great Leader of all Asian Countries today amongst us. Your patriotism, sacrifice, suffering and above all your indomitable feelings for the suffering humanity will remain in golden letter in the history of India, nay, the world. Oh, the most benevolent heritage of the father of the Nation accept our sincere welcome and homage and oblige us thereby.

The Lushai people generally live on ‘Jum’ cultivation and orange and pipeapple gardening. They are also gradually trying to adopt themselves in agriculture. But scarcity of agricultural lands is a stumbling block. The most important problem of the Lushai people is means of communication and for want of communication facilities the garden produces of the Lushai people could not be sent to commercial centres and thus causes a heavy loss to the people, even their very existence is often threatened. We appeal to you to solve this problem and thus save our people from starvation and death.

Tripura though a small State lying in a remote corner of Indian Hill has got some importance in view of its geographical position. We, the Lushai subjects of this State are living in Jampui Hills in the Eastern Border of this State. Though it may not be proper time to approach you in this connection for getting redress or any individual calamity still the pressing need of the people compelled us to do so. My humble self is a son of Late Raja Hrangvunga Sailo of Jampui Hill, who and whose fore-fathers ruled for more than 300 years over the Lushai Hill people of the part of Kirat Country, i.e., within Assam and Tripura. My beloved late father before his death settled in the soil of Tripura for the last 50 years and ruled over the Lushai people of Tripura as a Lushai Raja (Feudatory Prince) getting sorts of “nal paddy”

annually from each house of the Lushai people and thereby maintained his families. Lushai Raj are hereditary and as such my humble self heridate my father in the capacity of Lushai Raj and used to enjoy the same family as my fore-fathers did. This is the only source of living of the Lushai Raj family. After India attained her freedom and Tripura as other Indian States being integrated the Raja and the Raj-family have fallen in great difficulties with regard to their maintenance. However, the Indian Government has very kindly and sincerely adjusted their difficulties but nothing, has yet been considered as regards the feudatory Raj of the Indian States.

In these days of democracy it is natural that poilitical consciousness will prevail every corner of the country and as such the Lushai people also think that they are now free from any ruling authority like myself and as they are likely to discontinue to pay any sorts of rent either in kind or cash to Lushai Chiefs, i.e. to me. By this deed of the Lushai subjects now I am on the point of starvation. I have got no other source of income and as such absolutely helpless. My previous income was nearly Rs. 4,000/- annually.

So, I most humbly and respectfully pray that a grant of at least Rs. 250/- per month as political pension may be granted to me and thereby save an ancient family of the Hill Tribes.

Most Loyal Subject,  
Sd/- K. T. Chowma Sailo  
Tripura Lushai Chief.”  
Dated, the 24th October, 1952.

PART II: THE SOCIOECONOMIC ASPECTS  
OF THE LIFE AND CULTURE OF THE LUSHAI  
(INCLUDING THEIR DIET AND HEALTH)

**Part-II**  
**CHAPTER-I**

**Introductory Remarks**

**Introduction:**

The Lushai of Tripura is mainly concentrated in the North District of the state in Dharmanagar subdivision. According to the 1971 Census report, the Lushai population of Tripura was 3,672 out of the total tribal population of the state of 450,544. The district-wise distribution of the Lushai population and its rural-urban distribution according to the 1971 Census are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Lushai Population of Tripura in 1971**

District	Rural population	Urban population
1. West Tripura	19	95
2. North Tripura	3,510	15
3. South Tripura	33	-
4. Total for the state	3,562	110

Source: Census of India 1971. Series 20. Tripura. Part II C (i) Social and Cultural Tables and Part VA Special Tables on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Within Dharmanagar subdivision of North Tripura District, the Lushai are mainly concentrated at the Jampui Hills and to a lesser degree, at the Sakhan Hills. In the Jampui Hills, they are mainly concentrated in the villages of Hmangpui, Tlaksi, Vanghmuhn, Behliang-chhip, Banglabari, Tlansang, Sabual & Phuldungsai.<sup>1</sup>

Since the Lushai of Tripura are mainly concentrated in the Jampui Hills, our field-work to study the socio-economic aspects of the Life and Culture of Lushai including the dietary and health aspects were conducted at Phuldungsai village which is located at Central Catchment Reserve Forest in Dharmanagar subdivision of North Tripura District and is under the Sabual Gaon Sabha. It's location is in Map No. 1 in the context of the whole of Tripura and in Map No. 2 in the context of Dharmanagar subdivision.



1. All Lushai names are spelt phonetically and they do not by and large tally the spellings in the Mizo language.

### **CHOICE OF THE VILLAGE:**

The choice of the village where the field work has been undertaken, was made in consultation with the Gaon Pradhan of Sabual village, member of TTAADC from Jampui Hills and PWD officials posted in Kanchanpur who are familiar with the villages of the Jampui Hills area. Their unanimous opinion was Phuldungsai besides being a 'typical' Lushai village; it is also a place where the transition in the life of the Lushai people of Tripura can be observed. The choice of the village was also guided by another consideration. There are 32 Lushai families at Phuldungsai. As the census method was to be adopted in collecting data from the Lushai households of the selected village, this size was considered to be a 'reasonable' one, given the time and money at our disposal. Besides, it was felt that the mixed population of the village would allow us to observe the interaction between Lushai and people belonging to other communities (mainly Reang) in the village. Jhuming and growing orange are taken to be the mainstay of the economic life of the Lushai people. Since at Phuldungsai both Jhuming and growing orange are practised by the Lushai while in many Lushai villages, Jhuming is no longer practised by most of the households, this has been another point in favour of choosing Phuldungsai as the village on which we would concentrate our attention. Last but not the least, the logistic problem of finding accommodation for a team of five in a Lushai village without putting too much pressure on the villagers would be effectively solved at Phuldungsai as there is a PWD Rest House.

### **HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE:**

The village of Phuldungsai was established in 1912 by Hrangvunga Sailo, son of Sailinpuia Sailo. His son, Ngurdingluaia Sailo, still lives at Phuldungsai and is the head of the Village Council. Hrangvunga Sailo was born in 1887 and became the first Christian in the Sailo Clan when he embraced Christianity in 1906. He moved into Tripura as a result of a "Mautum" (famine) in the Lushai Hills District in 1911 with three hundred of his followers and established the village of Phuldungsai in the Jampui Hills in 1922, Maharaja Birendra Kishore Deb Manikya conferred him the title of Raja. According to his son, each of his subjects used to pay him an annual tribute of six tins of rice. Hrangvunga Sailo began planting oranges in 1914 and this practice spread among his subjects as well with the result

that the oldest orchards in the Jampui Hills are to be found at Phuldungsai village. The Raja also introduced tea and coffee plantations in the Jampui Hills. He emancipated his slaves numbering 120 and was the first Sailo Chief to do so. <sup>1</sup>

## DESCRIPTION OF THE VILLAGE

Phuldungsai is situated on a ridge of the Jampui Hills and is bounded by Betling Chhip, the highest peak of Tripura in the south and a military camp in the North. The river Tuipui flows nearby the village. The hill slopes extending for about 4 kilometers to the east and the west of the habitations in the village also form a part of Phuldungsai. The village is also approachable by foot tracks from Dasda and Anandabazar in the plain but these tracks are so steep that even a seasoned traveller cannot carry a load weighing more than 20 kilograms while climbing up these foottracks. Fig-1 also gives the reader some idea about the location of the village in relation to the location of other villages in the Jampui Hills and some nearby towns in the plain. At present, the village has 65 households out of which 32 are Lushai households. The breakup of the households according to their racial origin is given in Table 2. Photographs (1-8) are of the people of Phuldungsai.

1. These details were given to us by Ngurdingluaia Sailo of Phuldungsai village.

**Table 2**

### POPULATION BREAK-UP AT PHULDUNGSAI VILLAGE IN 1985

	Lushai	Reang	Bengali	Nepali	Tripuri	Orang	Other	Total
No. of families	32	27	2	1	1	1	1	65

The village has about sixty five houses huddled together on both sides of the road from Sabual or around the bigger dirt road in the village. In the centre of the village is the NZBM Church, a large wooden structure painted white. On two hill-tops at two ends of the village are the military camp and PWD Bungalow. On another hill top in front of the PWD Bungalow is a Christian graveyard dominated by a huge banyan tree which can be seen even from Kanchanpur. Behind the NZBM Church is an old graveyard with tall stone pillars, with average 8 feet high, marking the burial spots of important people of the village. The water points are situated below the hill and are approached by steep foot tracks. Jhum fields, orchards and forest lands are located in the hill slopes on the eastern and western side of the



village. The accompanying sketches as well as the photographs (9-12) give the reader some idea about the village.

Since the village is located on a ridge all the cultivatable land in the village is 'tilla' land suitable for Jhum cultivation and orange orchards. Rice, chillies, sesamum, cotton, turmeric and vegetables are grown on Jhums. Oranges and ginger are also grown on the hill slopes.

Since the village is situated in the Reserve Forest area, land cannot be owned privately but the village is allowed to use the hill slopes for Jhum cultivation and for growing oranges. In the way land distributed for the purpose of Jhum at Phuldungsai is interesting. The Village Council of which all villagers are members decides which side of the hill is going to be subjected to Jhum in any particular year and which specific area of that hill side is going to be earmarked for that purpose. Relatively speaking, land for Jhum is abundant near Phuldungsai, no areas are deemed to be usable for Jhumming by the Village Council unless bamboos have reestablished themselves at those particular areas because it is felt that 5 years of time is necessary for bamboos to start growing in an abandoned Jhum plot which is supposed to be long enough period for the nutrients to be replenished in the soil. Paddy is supposed to grow best in Jhum lands where bamboos have started growing. The area earmarked for Jhum cultivation in a particular year is further subdivided into plots of three sizes, big, medium-sized and small ones. The families interested in doing Jhum in that particular year are also classified as big, medium and small ones according to their needs, which depends, among other things, on the size of the family. Within each category of households, lotteries are held to decide who gets which plot. If the family does not wish to cultivate the plot it gets, it can auction it. For the plots where bamboos have not started growing, this lottery system does not operate. Though Lushai do not do Jhumming for growing rice on these particular plots, they are free to grow ginger, oranges and other Jhum crops on these plots. Lushai take care to grow rice only on plots where bamboos have reestablished themselves because they are both ecology and yield-conscious but according to them, the Reang often cultivate paddy on lands where bamboos have not started growing. The fire hazard from isolated Jhum fields is also recognized by the Lushai. This is another reason for their sticking to the Jhum plots allocated by the village council.

#### **The Jhum calendar in Phuldungei :**

January-February	:	Clearing of land
After March 15	:	Firing



April 1	:	Sowing
April-September	:	Weeding (at least four times), chasing wild animals
October	:	Harvesting

The crops grow on Jhum fields are given in detail in a chapter later. At Phuldungsai, oranges and gingers are grown on hill slopes suitable for these crops.

Since land does not seem to be in short supply, disputes do not arise regarding who is to start developing an orchard at some place. When one individual earmarks a particular plot for himself and starts developing it, nobody else would use the same piece of land by convention and if ever by chance a dispute arises it is settled by the Village Council.

There is also two square kilometers of village forest at Phuldungsai which provides fire wood, bamboos, various fruits and vegetables, honey especially during the rainy season and deer, wild boars, wild goats etc.,<sup>1</sup>

The wild animals are either trapped or hunted with guns and provide good source of protein. It is believed that the Khas Lands (Government Land) lying fallow in the village at present can be profitably used for growing oranges.

The people of the village appreciate the Left Front Government policy of allowing the villages to use forest products from the reserve forest area but they are also aware that this can cause a deterioration of the forest over time.

There are some Charras (rivulets) and reservoirs in the village where some amount of fishing can be done. The novel method of fishing practised by the Lushai when Shakespear wrote about them is still in vogue today, "...Fishing is carried on with the ordinary casting net, and fishes are sometimes killed with spears or doos by torchlight.... Deep pools in the smaller streams are sometimes poisoned by having a decoction of a certain herb called 'Kokur' or of a bark called 'ru' poured into them. This stupifies the fish, which float to the surface and are easily captured."<sup>2</sup>

**A list of some of the facilities which can be availed by the people of Phuldungsai from their own village or from nearby village is given in Table-3 bellow**

<u>Facilities available in or near Fuldungsei</u>		
Facility	In village (nos)	Near village (nos)
Balwadi School	1	
Primary School	1	

Post primary School	-	1 Senior basic school in Sabual 1 High school in Behlian-chiip
Post office I	1	
Bank	-	1 in Dasda
Fair Price shop (Privately owned)	1	

The fair price shop was owned by the Jampui Hills LAMPS at Phuldungsai till 1983. Now, it is privately owned. However, there is a LAMPS Committee in the village with office bearers chosen from among the 55 LAMPS shareholders belong to both Reang and Lushai in the village.

A weekly market is held at Phuldungsai. The market place is in the middle of the village. Clothes, vegetable, meat and fish are brought from Ananda Bazar and nearby villages to the market for sale and the local people sell their cotton, chilly in the market. In December and January especially, the weekly market is a very big affair with clothes and other items of daily usage and luxuries being brought for sale from Aizawl, Kanchanpur, Anandabazar and Dasda.

There are three churches in the village, two of them being Lushai churches (NZBM and IKK) and one being church for Reang. (All Lushai people are Christian while only a few of Reangs are Hindus).

I. J. Shakespear, The Lushai-Kuki clans, (Delhi: Cultural Publishing House, 1983) p. 36

The health care, sanitation and sewage facilities available in the village are rather primitive or non-existent as shown in Table-4.

**TABLE - 4**

Health Facility		Sewage Facility	Drinking Water	Sanitation: Sanitary latrine	Smokeless Chula
Within Village	Nearby Village				
None	1. Sabual Primay Health Care Centre 2. Vanghauhn Hospital	None	Reservoir	None	None

Diarrhoea, Blood Dysentery are common diseases in result especially among the children in the rainy season. Most families boil water as a preventive measure of getting safe drinking water. There have been no epidemics in the

village in the last five years. Lack of Drinking water is a major problem in the village. The two water points are located quite far from the houses and approached by steep foot tracks. The water get collected slowly in the water holes and by mid-day, the water holes become dry. The women and children go to the water point early in the morning to collect water. Two or three aluminium pots are placed in bamboo baskets slung on their backs and held by bamboo straps that pass over their foreheads. See accompanying photographs (6, 7).

The water is collected in dried gourds as it slowly trickles out from the source and filled into the aluminium pots. This chore has to be repeated in the evening as well.

### **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

A preliminary pilot survey to make contacts and to test the schedule was conducted in November 1983 among Lushai households in some villages in the Jumpui Hills. In the light of our experience, modifications were made in the schedules and the investigators were trained. The actual fieldwork was done in the second week of February, 1985 and data pertaining mainly to 1984 or 1985 were collected from the respondents. Photographs (13 - 17) show the investigators and field assistants and some of the sights they saw nearby Phuldungsai.

Out of the 32 Lushai households living in the village of Phuldungsai, 28 could be contacted and canvassed. <sup>1</sup> Particulars about these households are given in Table-5 and the names of the heads of the households covered by our survey are given in Appendix 1.

1. One of these households has a Bengali head of household and 3 female Lushai members (his wife, mother-in-law and sister-in-law). As this gentleman has become an 'honorary Mizo' & has more or less adopted the Lushai life and culture, he has been included in this study. (see chapter IV for details).

**TABLE - 5**

**Particulars about the 28 lushai household canvassed at Phuldungsai village**

Total Members	Males	Females	Adults	Children	
				Below 6	6-15 yr.
164	83	81	100	28	36

Two schedules were canvassed among the 28 households, one dealing with the economic aspects of their life and another with their dietary and health



aspects. Copies of the schedules administered are given in Appendix-II and Appendix-III. Where language was proved to be a problem, help was taken from local volunteers with knowledge of English or Bengali.

### **Arrangement of Chapters in Part II of the Study.**

The results of our findings are given in Chapter II and III of Part II. Chapter II concentrates on the economic aspects of the lives of the Lushai of Tripura and chapter III on the health, diet and nutritional aspects of their life.

Informal discussions were held with the members of the households we canvassed and also with villagers belonging to other communities in order to gain additional insights into and information about some other aspects of the life and culture of Lushai of Phuldungsai which strictly speaking do not come within the purview of our study according to the terms of references laid down by us for the study. Some of our observations regarding these aspects of their life are recorded in Chapter IV.

## Part-II

### Chapter-II

#### THE ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE LIFE OF THE LUSHAI OF TRIPURA.

##### Section-A

In 1912, Shakespear, describing the economic life of the Lushai had said, "....the entire population may be classed as agriculturists as only a few people..... live on contributions of rice given them in exchange for services rendered to the community. There are no shopkeepers, and except the blacksmith, no craftsmen."<sup>1</sup>

As far as the occupational distribution of the working force is concerned, the picture has not changed substantially even sixty years later among the Lushai of Tripura. In the 1971 Census Report, 1252 men and women out of the total Lushai population of 3672 in the state were classified as workers. Out of this workforce, 991 men and women were cultivators and as shown in Table 1, the number of people engaged in different non-agricultural occupations was very small.

**TABLE - 1**

Occupational Distribution of the workforce Among the Lushai of Tripura in 1971

Total workers	Cultivator	Agricultural labourers	Livestoc readers	Household Industries	Trade	Teansport	Other services
1,262	991	161	2	1	3	6	148

Source : Census of India, 1971

In 1985 at Phuldungsai we observed more or less similar occupational pattern. All the 28 Lushai households surveyed practised agriculture but unlike Shakespear's observation, we found that 16 Lushai households of the village had non-agricultural occupations as well. The number of people engaged in different non-agricultural occupations at Phuldungsai in 1985 is shown in Table 2.

**TABLE - 2**

Number of Lushai Engaged in Different Non-agricultural Occupations at Phuldungsai in 1985

Contractor	Ration shop dealer	Money lender	School teacher	Social education worker	Other Govt. servants	Village industry	Private nurse
2	1	1	4	2	9	2	1

1. Shakespear. Op. cit., p. 17.

One person sometimes had more than one non-agricultural occupation and more than one member of the same family had non-agricultural occupations. In addition to the numbers shown in Tables 2, 5, Lushai families at Phuldungsai owned shops or tea stalls in the village. It may be noted that within the village only one Lushai family canvassed reported that the father of the head of household was a carpenter by profession; agriculture was his secondary occupation. The rest of the heads of households among the Lushai in the village had fathers who were agriculturists if we exclude the case of the Bengali gentleman married a Lushai lady.

Shakespear had also said that among the Lushai, 'the only form of agriculture practised is that generally known to us as Jhuming'.<sup>1</sup> Rice, Maize, Millet, Job's tears, Peas and Beans were grown by the Lushai house-holds on their Jhum plots, according to him roughly seventy years ago from today tobacco and cotton were grown 'mainly for self-consumption'.<sup>2</sup> An Phuldungsai today, 82 individuals out of the total workforce of 87 from all 28 Lushai households in the sample practise Jhum. The main crops that are grown at the Jhum fields are paddy, vegetables, chillies, cotton and ginger. While rice and vegetables are grown mainly for self-consumption, the last three items are grown mainly for sale. Another noticeable change that has taken place in the agricultural occupation of the Lushai is that they have taken growing oranges for sale in a big way. Only five families we canvassed reported that the fathers of the heads of their house-holds had grown oranges and in 1985, 26 out of the 28 Lushai households which were canvassed reported that they had orange orchards.

The agricultural economy of the Lushai has undergone two changes in the last seventy years if one can make generalisation based on our experience about one Lushai village-(a) it has become more diversified and (b) production takes place for the market as well as for self-consumption. The increasing dose of commercialisation of the agricultural economy of the Lushai of Tripura is a result, in part at least, of the improvement in the road system in the Jampui Hills area. It also reflects the increased demand for goods which cannot be produced within the village boundary. In a situation where the Lushai had to visit 'the nearest Bazar', often a journey of several days, to purchase salt and the few requisites that their own industry could not produce', self-sufficiency was obviously the best expedient. But now motorable roads traverse the entire length of the Jampui Hills; Mahajans (Traders) come to the Lushai villages to buy their agricultural produce and of late, even the LAMPS has started buying some of their agricultural products like ginger and orange. These factors coupled with the demand of



the Lushai for goods produced outside their villages ranging from foreign clothes to imported tape recorders obviously have led to the breakdown of the traditional self-sufficiency of the Lushai villages about which the colonial anthropologists had written about seventy years ago from today.

Shakespeare. Op. cit., p. 32.

1. Ibid.

**Table 3 gives detail regarding the number of Lushai households producing and selling different agricultural products at Phuldungsai village**

**Table – 3**

Lushai Households at Phuldungsai Producing and Selling Different Agricultural Commodities

	<u>Rice</u>	<u>Chillies</u>	<u>Cotton</u>	<u>Ginger</u>	<u>Oranges</u>
Number of Lushai households producing these crops	23	20	13	20	26
Number of Lushai households selling these crops	0	20	13	-	13

Rice is grown as a Jhum crop by the Lushai on plots ranging in size from 1 kani (2.5 Kanis = 1 acre) to 12 kanis. About 125 kanis of land were used for growing rice by the 28 Lushai families that were interviewed. The way in which land is allotted among the families living at Phuldungsai for growing paddy is described in Chapter I. The net output of paddy is excluding the amount of rice sown varied from 100 kilograms to 3000 kilograms per family for the Lushai households, the average output of paddy per family is 1053.30 kilograms. However, only 3 out of the total 28 families were self-sufficient in the production of rice; the rest had to buy additional amount of rice to meet their consumption needs, the two sources of purchase are the ration shop at Phuldungsai and the market at Kanchanpur or Anandabazar or the weekly local market. Though rice bought from the Fair Price Shop is cheaper, its quality is not liked by the Lushai and those who can afford, buy rice from the open market at prices ranging from Rs. 3.00 to Rs. 3.50 per kilogram. Almost the entire output of chilli and cotton is sold to Mahajans at the rate of Rs. 12.50 to Rs. 16.00 per kilogram for chilli and Rs. 2.00 to Rs. 4.00 per

kilogram for cotton. The annual proceed from the sale of chillies of the 20 sellers was Rs. 3736.5 per grower on the average.

Ginger is also another commercial crop grown in Jhum by the Lushai of Phuldungsai. The 1984 ginger crop had been sold by 5 out of the 26 Lushai households in the village who had grown the crop that year, by February 1985 because they could not afford to hold their output in the hope of getting a higher price for their product. The rest of the Lushai households were able to tell us how much ginger they had planted in 1984 but were unable to give us any idea about their output because they had not harvested the crop sown in 1984 when we visited the village. However, most of the households informed us that they would sell their entire crop to the Jampui LAMPS which has decided to buy the ginger crop of the growers in the area at the support price of Rs. 2.50 per kilogram. A few households however said that they would sell their crop to the highest bidder. The amount of ginger planted in 1984 varied from 100 kilograms to 3000 kilograms per family but since the output was uncertain, no monetary value had been assigned to the output.

Oranges were also sold to Mahajans by all 13 Lushai families in the village who had sold their oranges in 1984. The other 13 Lushai households had not sold oranges that year either their trees were young and had not started bearing fruits or they had retained the fruits for self-consumption. The 13 Lushai households which had sold their oranges earned on the average Rs. 1426.92. The Mahajans generally come to the village in August or September, inspect the orchards and make advance payment to the owners whose crops they decide to buy by promising to pay a lumpsum amount for the fruits of the entire orchard. When the fruits ripen, the Mahajans come again, this time with their trucks and fruit pickers, pluck the oranges and pay the rest according to the terms of the contract. Many of the orange growers at Phuldungsai sell the fruits of their orchards to the same Mahajan year after years so that an informal relationship grows up between the buyers and the sellers and the Mahajans sometimes make full payments in advance for the crop before the plucking season starts. The 1982 crop of some orange growers of the village had been bought by the Jampui Hills LAMPS. The price paid was Rs. 18.00 per 100 oranges but the orange-buying operations of the LAMPS were not extended to Phuldungsai in later years mainly because of the distance of the village from Vanghmuhn, the head office of the Jampui Hills LAMPS, the transport problem and also for the fruit-size produced at Phuldungsai did not meet the specification that had been laid for oranges to be bought by the LAMPS. The oranges grown in the orchards at Phuldungsai

are small, because most of the fruit-bearing trees in the village are quite old; the gardens are also relatively small at Phuldungsai and it is not economical for the LAMPS to collect oranges from a number of small growers. However, the Lushai people of the village who sell oranges do not seem to be unhappy with the existing sales arrangement because when the Mahajans buy their orange, they know how much they would earn from their orchard long before the crop is ready for the market. They also do not have to bother about hiring men or transport facilities to pluck the oranges and to send them to the consuming centres. This is a big boon for them as both labour and transport facilities are difficult and expensive to hire at Phuldungsai. Last but not the least, because of the personal relationship which often develops between the orange growers and the Mahajans, they feel that the Mahajans do not cheat them.

Though labourers are not hired for plucking oranges, in addition to their own labour, hired labourers are used by 18 of the families, we interviewed, mainly for Jhuming. The labourers are mainly Reang (only one Lushai boy in the village works as an agricultural labourer for about one month in the whole year) from neighbouring Reang villages at the foothills although some of the agricultural labourers come from the Reang families at Phuldungsai also. The labourers are hired on a daily basis and in 1984, the wage rate per labourer was Rs. 10.00 a day. Wages are paid in cash and advances are occasionally given to the labourers for Jhuming or for consumption purposes. 10 of the Lushai families we canvassed rely exclusively on their own labour for carrying on their agricultural operations either because of they have a large workforce in the family or because of they are not affluent enough to hire labourers. In the case of two Lushai families we interviewed, we came across the use of reciprocal labour exchange for carrying on agricultural operations. For this kind of exchange labour, no money has to be paid. Along with pigs, goats and fowls, the Lushai these days rear cows. The 28 Lushai households we interviewed had 12 pigs, 44 cows and 20 goats. Only 2 of these families did not rear chickens. However, these domestic animals and birds are raised mainly for self consumption and not for sale.

Though income is a very loosely defined term where production does not take place exclusively for the market, an attempt was made to get a rough estimate of the average income of the Lushai households of Phuldungsai. Income comes from the sale of agricultural products and from non-agricultural sources. The non-agricultural part of the income was relatively easy to compute as some of the individuals with non-agricultural occupations



make income from salaries or wages. For other kinds of non-agricultural incomes, the figures provided by the respondents were verified from the other villagers but in most of the cases, they were correctly reported by the respondents themselves. The non-agricultural incomes of the Lushai families of Phuldungsai in 1984 ranged from Rs. 2,460.00 to Rs. 28,500.00 and the average annual non-agricultural income of the 16 households had been amounted to Rs. 9,396.25 in 1984. The computation of agricultural income was proved to be difficult and for the sake of convenience, it was narrowly defined as the amount of money earned from the sale of agricultural products produced by the households. The cost of production was not deducted from this amount and no value was imputed to the output retained for self-consumption. Similarly, items collected free of cost were not assigned any value for the computation of income. Families which had planted ginger in 1984 but had neither harvested nor sold their crops could not accurately predict their output or the value of their sales proceeds, so that for these families, their expected income from the sale of ginger was not included in the estimate of income. Besides, there were the usual problems of getting accurate output or price figures from the households as none of the families interviewed maintained farm accounts. However, income defined as the value of output sold ranged from Rs. 320 to Rs. 22,300 for the Lushai families having such income and the total annual income of the Lushai households interviewed comprising of their total non-agricultural and agricultural income as defined by us ranged from Rs. 670.00 to Rs. 29,500.00 for the year of 1984 and the average annual income of the 28 Lushai households in the village was amounted to Rs. 9,921.96. Table 4 gives the annual income from various sources of the Lushai households of Phuldungsai in 1984.

**Table-4**

**Annual Income from Various Sources of the Lushai Households of Phuldungsai in 1984**

Type of income	No. of house holds earning this type of income	Range (in Rs.)	Average annual value (in Rupees)
Non agricultural income	16	2460.00 - 28500.00	9396.25
Agricultural income	25	320.00 - 22300.00	5027.00
Agricultural and Non agricultural income	28	670.00 - 29500.00	9921.96

The saving-habit does not seem to be very well developed among the Lushai of Phuldungsai. The lack of this habit cannot be ascribed to the income level of the Lushai households. Even the relatively affluent families do not save in most cases. Since the village does not have a bank or other facilities for investing the savings and as the Lushai are fond of indulging in conspicuous consumption like transistor, tape recorder, sewing machine and pressure cooker, being very much in evidences in households which can afford such luxuries, and very few families save anything. Only four of the Lushai families interviewed which earn income from salaries have savings in the form of General Provident Fund (GPF) One household has invested money in a rice mill which is coming up in the village. The same family is going to buy a jeep to start a transport business soon. Some of the families which do not save anything have expressed the opinion that they will start saving if facilities for investing the savings become available in the village. 5 Lushai families have had to take consumption-loan during 1984. The LAMPS, of which 23 of the Lushai families we interviewed were members, (some families had more than one member) provided consumption-loan to three of these families whereas the other two families which have taken consumption-loan are indebted to fellow Lushai. Tripura Gramin Bank has provided production-loan to three Lushai households for growing ginger and to one family for starting a shop. Five Lushai families have received help under the IRD programme, seedlings of orange-tree have been received by four Lushai households and assistance for clearing Jhum-land has been received by one household. One Lushai household has received assistance from the government for starting a fishery but it has not yet started generating income to its owner.

### **Section-B**

As seen earlier, the other big group of people living at Phuldungsai is the Reang. Many of them came to Phuldungsai after 1971 from the Amarpur subdivision in of South Tripura District as oustees of the Dumbur Hydroelectric Project although the bulk of the Reang in the Jampui Hills have been supposed to have fled to here after the failure of the Reang rebellion under the leadership of Ratanmani Reang. Most of the Reang, at Phuldungsai have become Christian and adopted Lushai names after moving to the Jampui Hills because of the Lushai culture is the dominant culture of the area. They are members of the village council and participate in the village lottery like the Lushai for the allocation of Jhum land.

Yet, the Lushai and the Reang interact on the economic plane as unequals - the Lushai employ the Reang of the village or from the nearby villages of the foothills as agricultural labourers and the Reang borrow money at times from their Lushai employers or from moneylenders belonging to the Lushai tribe. Our observations at Phuldungsai reveal that there are marked inter-tribal economic differences between the Reang and the Lushai with the Lushai being the better off group of the two.

Our observations regarding certain features of the economic life of the Reang and Lushai of Phuldungsai are placed side by side in Table 5 to drive home this point. In order to make these comparisons which have been summarized in Table 5, a schedule similar to the one canvassed among the Lushai households of the village was canvassed among 26 Reang households comprising 105 individuals.

**Table – 5**  
**Comparison of Economic Position of**  
**Lushai and Reang Households of Phuldungsai**

No. of households surveyed	Lushai 28	Reang 26
Occupations:		
(a) Farming	28	26
(b) Agricultural labour	1	2
(c) Non-agricultural occupations	16	4
No. of households growing paddy	24	26
Average output of paddy (kg)	1102.8	1026.8
No. of households growing oranges	26	23
No. of households selling oranges	13	3
No. of households hiring agricultural labour	18	2
No. of households earning non-agricultural incomes	16	4
Average non-agricultural income of households earning such income (in Rupees)	9396.3	1875.00
Average agricultural and non-agricultural income of all households (in Rupees)	9921.96	2151.00



The table shows that although like the Lushai, all Reang households at Phuldungsai practise agriculture, unlike the former, all Reang households produce paddy on their Jhum-lands although the average quantity of paddy grown by the Lushai families is higher than the average quantity of paddy grown by the Reang families. While 13 Lushai families in the village sell their oranges, the corresponding number for the Reang households interviewed was only 3. The other 20 orange-growing Reang families have started their orange orchards very recently mainly with help from government in the form of seedlings. Although 18 Lushai families hire labour for agricultural operations, only two of Reang families interviewed in the village do so. On the other hand, while only 1 Lushai person works as an agricultural labourer occasionally, 2 Reang households reported that agricultural labour is their primary occupation. While 16 Lushai families at Phuldungsai had non-agricultural incomes, the corresponding number among the Reang was only 4 and the average income of these families from these non-agricultural occupations were Rs. 9396.25 and Rs. 1875.00 respectively for the Lushai and the Reang we interviewed. The average income from agricultural and non-agricultural sources per family of the 28 Lushai families in 1984 was Rs. 9921.96 as compared to Rs. 2151.00 for the 26 Reang families canvassed. In addition to these economic differences between the Lushai and the Reang at Phuldungsai, educationally also, the Reang are more backward than the Lushai. Among the 28 Lushai families interviewed, we found 1 graduate and 2 individuals with higher secondary level of education. Among the Reang households on the other hand only one individual has a higher secondary level of education and this community has no college graduates.

However, while 22 Lushai families have received government-assistance' in some form or the other, the corresponding number for the Reang households was 28; some families have received more than one kind of benefit from government programmes. There are 27 shareholders of the LAMPS among the Reang and 12 of them each has received 4 shares from the government. As against this, although 28 of the shareholders of the LAMPS in the village are Lushai, only a few families have received government-share. Again, 3 of the Reang were office bearers of the LAMPS Branch Committee of Phuldungsai as against 2 Lushai occupying similar position. These developments are significant in view of the fact that the Reang have traditionally occupied an inferior position economically and socially vis-a-vis the Lushai and were reported to be agrestic slaves of the Lushai in the past.

## SECTION - C

Although the relative deprivation of the Reang in the Jampui Hills area has often been noted, to the best of our knowledge, a phenomenon which has escaped the attention of observers so far is the lack of homogeneity from the economic point of view among the Lushai themselves. At Phuldungsai, we observed marked intra-tribal economic inequalities among them.

It is doubtful if the equality which supposedly characterises a tribal society prevailed ever among the Lushai of Phuldungsai. Almost as soon as the village was founded, the then-king of Tripura conferred the title of 'Raja' upon the founder of the village. He was also entitled to collect tribute from his subjects by virtue of his position. Even a generation ago, only a handful of inhabitants of Phuldungsai had occupations other than Jhum cultivation - these are stray evidences of economic inequality among the Lushai in the past. However, today, with the increasing commercialisation of the Lushai economy, the scope for such differentiation has widened. This differentiation is more interesting in the case of Phuldungsai because, it is situated in a reserve forest area where nobody can own land and therefore, inequality based on land ownership cannot arise there. However, even in areas where private ownership of land is not allowed, some families can do a bigger Jhum by virtue of their bigger family size or through the employment of hired labourers, they can produce commercial crops for sale at their orchards or Jhum fields and have non-agricultural sources of income. These factors will obviously lead to economic differences among them.

To gauge the economic differences prevailing among the Lushai families living at Phuldungsai, one point was assigned to each of the following characteristics and the families were ranked according to the total number of points scored by them:

- (a) Non-consumable stores and the 28 Lushai families canvassed in the village.
- (b) Family earning more than the average income from agricultural and non-agricultural sources of the 28 Lushai families canvassed in the village,
- (c) Family employing hired labour or having a large number of workers
- (d) Family planting large amount of ginger

The 11 Lushai families scored 3 or 4 points have been characterised as the relatively affluent Lushai families of the village. Their characteristics vis-a-vis those of families scoring between one and two points or none are shown in Table 6.

**TABLE - 6**  
**Lushai Families Classified by their Total Scores**

	Relatively affluent	Middle ranking Families	Low-ranking Families	All Families
Score	3-4	1-2	0	0-4
No. of families	11	9	8	28
Characteristics:				
(a) High non-agricultural income	8	0	0	8
(b) High agricultural plus non-agricultural income	11	0	0	11
(c) Large amount of ginger planted	7	3	0	10
(d) Hired labourers used or a large domestic workforce employed	10	9	0	19

The detail regarding the average income agricultural and non-agricultural sources of the relatively affluent families, the other 17 families and the total 28 families among the Lushai households canvassed as well as the average non-agricultural income of the non-agricultural income earners in these three categories of families are shown in Table 7.

**TABLE - 7**  
**Detail Regarding Different Types of Income**

	Relatively affluent households	Other households	Total households
No. of households	11	17	28
Average agricultural and non-agricultural income (in Rupees)	16937.96	3982.82	9921.96
No. of households earning non-agricultural incomes	10	6	16
Average non-agricultural income (in Rupees)	12869.20	3608.00	9396.25



Not only the relatively affluent families do earn a relatively higher income from different sources, there are important socio-economic differences between them and the other families on the one hand and the average Lushai family in the village on the other as shown in table 8. For example, while 8 or about 72.73 percent of the relatively affluent families produce paddy, 88 percent or 15 of the other families grow this crop. Although this shows that the affluent Lushai families are less concerned about being self-sufficient in rice, they have a higher average output of paddy. The 8 affluent families produce 1245 kilograms of paddy on their Jhum lands on the average while the corresponding figure for the 15 other families is 951 kilograms which is lower than the average output of 1053.30 kilograms per grower family of the village. Out of the 4 Lushai families which have savings, 3 belong to the relatively affluent group; out of the 4 families which have received production-loan from banks, likewise 3 belong to the affluent group. Out of the 11 affluent households, 2 are members of the LAMPS committee while none of the shareholders belonging to the other group are office bearers. Similarly, the three individuals in the sample households who have college level and higher secondary level education belong to the relatively affluent group. Out of the six families which reported that the heads of their households had fathers who had sources of income other than Jhuming, 3 belonged to the relatively affluent class. However, among the Lushai households interviewed, it was observed that a slightly greater percentage of LAMPS members came from the non-affluent group. In the sample, 9 out of the 11 relatively affluent families are members of the LAMPS while 14 of the 17 other families are members. Out of this total, 7 belong to the low-ranking families and quite a few of these families are recipients of shares purchased by the government on their behalf. This shows that, though there is socio-economic difference within the Lushai households, to a certain extent the difference is being narrowed down through the government's action.

**TABLE - 8**

**Socio-economic Differences Among the Lushai Households**

	<b>Relatively Affluent families</b>	<b>Other families</b>	<b>All Lushai families</b>
1. Number of families	11	17	28
2. Families growing paddy	8	15	23
3. Average output of paddy (in kg)	1245.00	951.06	1053.30

4. No. of families with savings	3	1	4
5. No. of recipients of bank loans	3	1	4
6. Member of cooperative	9	14	23
7. Office bearers of cooperative	2	0	2
8. Father's income from non-Jhum sources also	3	3	6
9. No. of adults with upto H.S. level of education	3	0	3

**Part - II**  
**CHAPTER – III**

**DIET, NUTRITION AND HEALTH OF LUSHAIS**

Diet is one of the most important aspects of material culture. It is directly linked with various sociological factors of life. Therefore to assess the existing pattern of dietary intake and the nutritional status of the members of any society, it is essential to understand their social, economic and environmental conditions.

The food that we eat is assimilated in the body and is used for growth, tissue maintenance and various activities of the body. Man has a number of food stuffs to choose from to make up his diet and this depends mostly on his ancestral habits and economic conditions. All foods are not of the same nutritive value and the normal health of the person depends on the type and quantity of food stuffs he eats. The other environmental factors, such as weather, living conditions, personal cleanliness, defecation habits etc. also play an important role in the health of the individual. Primitive living conditions might predispose the population to infection and infestation which might lead to malnutrition.

Diet also determines to a large extent, the physical anthropometry of the people living in a society. In fact, anthropometry has been extensively used to quantify malnutrition in terms of growth retardation in children. Moreover, in an apparently healthy population the average height may also be determined by nutritional factors. Many scientists have pointed out that environmental factors, especially nutrition have greater influence in exploiting growth potential than genetic make-up.

In a fast-changing tribal society, it is of further interest to study the changes that are occurring in food habits and the consequence of the changes on the health and stature of the population. In the first part of chapter III, I deal with the socio-cultural aspects of the diet of the Lushai such as

1. Food types and their sources
2. Food preparation
3. Special diet
4. Frequency of meal



5. Drinking and smoking habit
6. Food preservation and storage
7. Utensils and basketry used

In the second part of the chapter, I deal with the nutritional and health aspects of their diet which includes their

1. Nutrient intake
2. Anthropometry
3. Health and hygiene

## **A. SOCIO-CULTURAL ASPECTS OF DIET**

### **1. Food types and their sources**

The Lushai of Phuldungsai, like the other tribes of Tripura, collect their food stuffs mainly from four different sources:

- a) From Jhum cultivation.
- b) From orchard/Kitchen garden/domestic animals
- c) From local market/fair price shop
- d) Free collection from forest

#### **Source : a) From Jhum cultivation:**

Among these four sources, collection from Jhum cultivation is the most important source. Shakespear wrote in 1912<sup>1</sup> – “the only form of agriculture practised is Jhuming. The chief crop is rice..... The rice does not ripen till November or December..... The other crops grown are millet, Job’s tears, peas and beans”. Woodthrope<sup>2</sup> in 1871 wrote: “Baskets of mixed seeds of cotton, rice, melon, pumpkins, yams etc. are carried by the sowers and a handful thrown into little narrow holes made with the broad end of a dao. The sowing take place just before rains during which the villagers assist each other in weeding crops. The first thing to ripen is Indian corn, in the end of July; afterwards, in order, melons and vegetables, lastly rice and other grain in September”.

At Phuldungsai today 82 individuals out of the total workforce of 87 from the entire 28 Lushai families question Jhum-practice (see Chapter II). A list of some of the food articles that are grown in the present day Jhum field is given in Table III.1. In the table, the names of the food items are given in

Bengali, English and in the Lushai language. Tobacco and Cotton are also grown for home consumption.

However, it should be noted that harvesting of the Jhum products is done between October and December and only a few of the articles grown in the Jhum can be preserved for the rest of year for consumption (Table III. 1). During these months, the Lushai have to depend on the forest and the market mostly for vegetables.

**Source : b) From orchards/kitchen gardens/domestic animals**

It was found during our visit to Phuldungsai that 26 out of 28 Lushai households studied have orange orchards (Chapter II). The production of oranges is for sale in the market as well as for self consumption. Also small kitchen gardens are often found at the backyard at Phuldungsai. Woodthrope noted the same in 1872 – ‘Besides the crops grown in the fields, small gardens are frequent in villages in which are cultivated yams, tobacco, pepper, beans of

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1. J. Shakespear, Op. cit., p. 32

2. R. G. Woodthrope, in ‘*The Lushai Expedition 1871-72*’, Spectrum Publication, Pan Bazar, Gauhati p. 89.

**Table - III.1  
FOOD ITEM PRODUCED IN JHUM CULTIVATION**

Food	Bengali	English
1. cereals & grains	Chawl *	Rice
		Bini rice
		Kaon rice
	Bhutta **	Maize
2. Pulses & legumes	Arhar *	Red gram
3. Leafy Vegetable	Kumra Sag	Pumpkin leaves
	Sarisa Sag	Mustard leaves
	Kumra *	Pumpkin

4. Vegetable	Lau	Bottle gourd
	Chalkumra	Ash Gourd
	Jhinga	Ridge Gourd
	Chichinga	Snake gourd
	Karela	Bitter gourd
	Begun	Brinjal
	Sim	Beans
	Barbati	Beans
	Bilati begun	Tomato
	Kochu *	Colocasia
	Sasha	Cucumber
	Dherash	Ladies finger
	Kochu Doga *	Colocasia stem
	Marich *	Chilli
5. Root vegetable	Misti Alu	Sweet potato
	Mati Alu	
	Ada	Ginger

various sorts and herbs'. Shakespear<sup>1</sup> also wrote "...small gardens are often found at the backyard in which sugar-cane, beans, cucumbers are grown". A list of fruits and vegetables grown in the orchards and gardens is given in Table III. 2. Ginger and Turmeric are mostly for sale. The Lushai are fond of fresh meat. Along with pigs, goats and fowls they rear cows as well. The 28 households that we interviewed have 12 pigs, 44 cows and 20 goats. Except 2 families, all of them rear chicken (Chapter II). These domestic animals are raised mainly for self consumption. About this Woodthrope<sup>2</sup> wrote more than hundred years ago "...the domestic animals found in Lushai villages are the Metuia, a very handsome animal of the bovine race, the goat remarkable for his very long hair, pigs which are fattened

\* Food item that can be saved throughout the year.

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1. Shakespear..... Op. cit., p. 22.
  2. Woodthrope..... Op. cit., p. 87.



up to a great size and fowls.”

Now-a-days, eggs and cow-milk are consumed regularly among the rich population. It should also be noted that the Lushai households with poor economic condition can only afford to eat meat once or twice a month.

**Table-III.2**  
**FOOD ITEMS COLLECTED FROM ORCHARD/GARDEN/  
DOMESTIC ANIMALS**

<b>(i) FRUITS: (Thei)</b>		
<b>Bengali</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Lushai</b>
Kamala	Orange	Serthlum
Lebu	Lemon	Serthur
Jambura	Grapefruit	Serpui
Kala	Banana	Balhla
Tut	Mulberry	Theihmec
Am	Mango	Theihai
Anaras	Pineapple	Lukhuihthei
Pepey	Papaya	Nuhnum
Tetul	Tamarind	Tengtere
<b>(ii) VEGETABLES/Others</b>		
Sim	Beans	Bepui
Sorisa Phul	Mustard flower	Antampar
Lai Phul	Lai flower	-
Cha	Tea	Thingpui
<b>(iii) DOMESTIC ANIMALS/PRODUCTS</b>		
Panthar mangso	Goat meat	Kelsa
Sukar mangso	Pork	Vawksa
Go-mangso	Beef	Bawngsa
Hansh	Duck	Varak
Murgi	Hen	Ar
Dim	Egg	Artui/Varaktui
Dudh	Milk	Bawnghnute

Source: c) From the local market/ Fair Price Shop

In Chapter II, it is mentioned that only 3 out of the total 28 families are self sufficient in the production of rice; the rest have to buy additional amount of rice to meet their consumption needed. The sources of purchase are the ration shop, the local market and the markets in nearby villages. Moreover, since only a few vegetables from Jhum cultivation can be saved for whole the year, the villagers who can afford to buy vegetables that are brought to them by vendors. In addition, the relatively rich people also buy some food items which are used by the Bengalee of the plain. Table III. 3 gives a list of the food stuffs, the villagers buy from the local market and Fair Price Shop. It is noteworthy that previously the Lushai had a self-subsistence economy. They used to buy only salt from outside.

**Table III. 3.**

**FOOD ITEMS BOUGHT FROM MARKET/FAIR PRICE SHOP**

<b>Bengali</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Lushai</b>
Chawl *	Rice	Buh
Dal	Lentil	Dailuah
Peyaj	Onions	Purun
Rasun	Garlic	Purunvar
Alu	Potato	Alu
Mula	Raddish	Mula
Kopi	Cauliflower	Parbawr
Bandha Kobi	Cabbage	Zikhlum
Motor	Peas	Motor
Chini *	Sugar	Chini
Nun *	Salt	Chi
Gur	Jaggery	Kurtai
Garam Masala	All Spice	Masala
Jira	Cumin	Jir
Sidol	Dry Fish	Nghathu
Late Sutki	Dry Fish	Sufi (Sangha rep)

**Source : d) Collection from forest**

Shakespear <sup>1</sup> wrote – “besides the grains and herbs which he grows in his Jhum, the Lushai finds many edible roots and herbs in the jungle”. In another place he wrote - “all the hill men are very fond of fresh meat..... Pheasants, jungle fowl get snared. Porcupines are killed by a bamboo spear..... Dear,

wild cats are caught in shares". Woodthrope <sup>2</sup> also noted "The Lushais are mighty hunters and they are great eaters of flesh, and the supplies depend a great deal upon the success of their hunting excursion."

In Phuldungsai as described in Chapter I, ".....there is a village forest which provides fire wood, bamboo, various fruits and vegetables and game like deer, wild boars etc. The wild animals are either trapped or hunted with guns. There are some charras and reservoirs where some amount of fishing can be done". Table III. 4. gives a list of wild animals that the Lushai hunt or trap in the jungle for self consumption.

**TABLE - III. 4**

Wild animals hunt or trapped in the forest at present.

<b>Bengali</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Lushai</b>
Harin	Deer	Sakhi
Ban Suor	Wild Boar	Sanghal
Sajaru	Porcupine	Sakuh
Jangali pantha	Wild Goat	Saza
Ban Murgi	Jungle fowl	-
Mach	Fish	-

\* Food item that can be saved throughout the year.

1. Shakespear, Op. cit., p. 33.
2. Woodthrope, Op. cit., p. 77.

Besides meat, the Lushai collect a variety of vegetables and leafy vegetables from the forest for self consumption. One of the villagers took our 3 field helpers to the forest and helped them to collect some of these items. Most of them can not be identified besides by the local names. The names are given in table III. 5. In the table is given also the type of food collected and their availability during various seasons.

**TABLE - III. 5**

Vegetables and fruits collected by the people of Phuldungsai from forest.  
(only Lushai names are given)

<b>Lushai</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Found during</b>
Unkhapui	Vegetable	-
Anpang thuam	Leafy vegetables	Winter
Aidu		March



Chimchak		All season
Kharghu		March-May
Tumzik		
Thingthupui	Leafy vegetable	Feb-May
Phuinam	Vegetable	"
Balkang	Leafy vegetables	All season
Chakawk	Leaves	
Maikli	"	
Barbepui	Fruit	March-June
Muikambu	Leaves	Feb-Sept
Yura	Leaves	Winter
Small	Inner bark portion	All season
Raisaw (Bet)	"	
Theipui	Fruit, Roots	All season
Shamkhakho	Leaves	
Thingsimium	Fruit	
Hmutau	Fruit	
Theisakhi	"	
Theitit	"	
Changkak	"	
Theiria	"	April-May
Sarzuk	"	Summer
Pangkai	"	Summer

## 2. Food Preparation

"The Lushai when speaking of food always means rice. Though he is fond of meat and likes vegetables and seasoning, he only considers them as garnish to his rice". Shakespear <sup>1</sup> wrote the above passage to describe the food of the Lushai. Still now rice is their staple food. Although meat is not available in large quantities, it is still their most favourite food. They use plenty of vegetables as well. The traditional way of preparing meat or vegetables was simply to boil them with salt sometimes flavouring them with herbs or lard.

<sup>2</sup> Now-a-days, several changes in the food preparation have been occurring mostly among the affluent class. The use of mustard oil and various condiments is common. Also varieties of vegetables such as cauliflower, cabbage, potatoes, onions etc. grown in the plain and brought to Phuldungsai

on the market day are used quite frequently specially during the time when availability of Jhum products is limited. Dry fish (sidol) used by the Reang and the rest of the Tripuri tribes is another important addition to their diet. Lentil which is very commonly used by the Bengalee has also been introduced in the Lushai diet. However, it should be noted again here that this change in dietary habit is mostly prevalent among the rich Lushai.

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1. Shakespear, Op. cit., p. 36.

A few ways in which the Lushai prepare their food now-a-days are given below:

### **MEAT PREPARATION**

1. The traditional way is to boil the meat without salt and salt is to be added while eating.
2. Another way is to mix several items with meat such as mustard oil, onion, turmeric, chilli, powder, potato, papaya or lau and other vegetables and then it is to boil with salt. Sometimes they use ginger, garlic; all spices. This preparation undoubtedly is very similar to the Bengali-way of preparing meat. They take both fresh meat and smoked meat.

### **VEGETABLE PREPARATION**

1. 'Bai': This is a preparation without oil. Some water is boiled first, then vegetables like gourd, alkali (Lushai name is 'Chial' like 'Kharpani')

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2. One evening we had the fortune to dine with one of the villagers. I cannot resist the temptation of giving the every detail of the food we ate and the hospitality with which it was served. It was late evening. We were quite hungry and sat around the table with the host. One of his students who apparently had cooked the meal as well served it. Rice was served first. Two kinds of vegetable were there. The first vegetable course was boiled mustard leaves. The water in which the leaves were boiled was also served in a cup to be drunk like soup. The second vegetable course was boiled tender Arhar pods. There was also Lentil preparation for us though we did not eat that as we were interested in a typical Lushai meal. The main course was boiled chicken. This was prepared by boiling in water without salt and then was eaten with salt. None of the preparations was spicy. However, there was ground chilli garnished with herb and garlic which was very hot and tastfull. The food was delicious and we took 3-4 servings of each item. Then we sat around the fire and chatted for some time.

used by Tripuri) and saum are added to it. It is cooked for sometime and eaten with rice.

2. Root vegetable such as Yam (Kachu) is boiled with salt and Langser (a flavouring herb used frequently). This is a common food eaten in-between meals.

3. Leafy vegetables such as Sorisha Shak or Lai Shak are boiled in water with salt. the water in which the vegetables were cooked is then used as soup. the leafy vegetables are, on the other hand, eaten separately (see in page no 56).

4. Now-a-days, vegetables are boiled with various spices and oils such as onions, turmeric, chilli, mustard oil, lengsan and salt. This can be a dry preparation or may be prepared with gravy.

### **DAL (Lentil) PREPARATION**

Dal preparation is very similar to the Bengali-preparation. It is prepared by boiling with mustard oil, onion, turmeric and salt.

### **DRY FISH PREPARATION**

Dry fish is prepared with vegetables somewhat like meat preparation.

### **LUSHAI SWEETS - Chang**

Kaon/Binni rice is soaked in water for a day and mixed with, water to make a soft dowgh. The dowgh is tightly packed by piece of banana leaf, tied and cooked in boiling water. Once it is cooked, it is cut into pieces and eaten with sugar or jaggery. Now those cut pieces are fried in oil, specially to satisfy Bengalee guests such as us.

It is not possible to give a full account of the various food items eaten by the Lushai people. However, one thing is clear that with the advancement of so called civilization their food habits are changing slowly but surely and unfortunately not always to their benefit.

### **3. SPECIAL DIET**

#### **Infant feeding habits:**

Among the women of 22 families that were questioned at Phuldungsai, only six started breast feeding right after birth of the child. Four of them started after 12 hours while another six started after 24 hours, the rest of the families started breast feeding even after 24 hours (4 after 48 hours, 2 after 96 hours). Duration of breast feeding is usually for two years or till the next baby is born. However, introduction of solid food is usually done at about 8 to 9 months of age.



The first supplement given to the infants is well-cooked rice.

**For children:**

In some families cow-milk is given to the children. But this is not common.

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1. Saum is prepared from the fat inside the skin of pig.

The fat is collected and heated for 2-3 hours.

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For pregnant or lactating women no special diet is used. Only in one case the woman is prohibited to eat meat.

For old persons or for those who are suffering from stomach trouble, boiled rice cooked for long time is used.

#### **4. FREQUENCY OF MEAL**

Shakespear mentioned that the Lushai used to eat 3 times a day - "...the breakfast rice", then at noon time, "...there is a meal of rice and herbs", then "...the evening meal", which vary little from the previous ones, but some garnish, a little meat or dried fish or some savoury vegetables is generally added.<sup>1</sup> We found that this routine is still being followed and they eat three times a day. In the morning, specially those who go to the Jhum eat rice at home. Then they carry cooked rice packed in banana leaves to the field and around noontime, cook their vegetable in earthen ware pots. They get back home by 3.00-4.00 PM and eat their evening meal around 5.00 PM and this is their main meal.

Those who do not go to the Jhum, eat only two times a day - in the morning and in the evening. At noontime they eat some dry food like boiled Yam or Lushai sweets.

#### **5. DRINKING HABIT**

Shakespear wrote,<sup>2</sup> "...As regard his drinks, the Lushai has very simple tastes. With his meals he drinks nothing but the water in which the food has been boiled, which he sips sparingly washing the meal down with a draught of cold water".

This is still true with the Lushai of Phuldungsai. In addition, tea drinking is quite common in the village now. There are at least 3 tea stalls in the village which are quite busy during the morning and afternoon hours.

Regarding alcohol consumption by the Lushai, Shakespear wrote<sup>3</sup> "...intoxicating drinks he only takes when he has full leisures to enjoy them and in company with a party of friends". However, after Christianity

spread among the Lushai, alcohol consumption practically ceased to exist. But recently it appears that the drinking habit has been revived among the youths. They buy home-made liquor from the neighbouring Reang but do not drink publicly.

### **SMOKING HABIT**

Smoking is very common among the Lushai. They use a strong brand of tobacco-vailow-grown in the Jhum and make their own cigarettes with this. The women, specially the older ones, still use a special type of pipe to smoke tobacco that they use it traditionally. Woodthrope<sup>1</sup> wrote in the Lushai Expedition 1871-72 "...men, women and children, from the age at which they can hold a pipe, smoke almost incessantly. The men's

- 
1. Shapewear, Op. cit., p. 18.
  2. Shapewear, Op. cit., p. 37.
  3. Loc cit.
  4. Woodthrope, Op. cit, p. 76.

pipes are made sometimes of brass rudely ornamented but generally of a small piece of bamboo lined with copper or iron, a very fine bamboo being let in near the knot as a mouth piece. The bowl of the women's pipe is of clay and is fitted with a bamboo receptacle for water". Shapewear wrote<sup>1</sup> in 1912, about 30 years later, "...His pipe is generally in his mouth; it consists of a bowl made out of a particularly hard kind of bamboo..... With a long stem made of a reed like variety of the same plant" ..... (See figure-3).

Apart from traditional smoking habit they also smoke bidis which are bought from the local tea/stationary shops.

### **6. FOOD STORAGE/PRESERVATION**

Paddy is stored in large bamboo basket locally known as 'Zem', similar to the baskets used in the plain.

Vegetables like pumpkin, ash gourds etc. are stored either on the wooden floor or on the bamboo shelves. Red-chillies are strung through some creeper and hung over the hearth. Quite a few gourd vessels of various sizes stand on the bamboo shelves over the hearth with odds and ends.

Meat is sometimes stored after smoking. It is smoked over the fire for days and used from time to time.

### **7. UTENSILS USED FOR COOKING, STORING AND SERVING FOOD, BASKETRY FOR CARRYING AND STORING FOOD**

Very few traditional utensils are found in the kitchen. Shakespear<sup>2</sup> wrote about household utensils – "...earthen ware cooking pots and bamboo spoons complete the utensils used inside the house". However, now, aluminium pots and pans are extensively used for cooking as well as for serving (see figure-2). In richer households, aluminium pressure cookers are used. In the relatively poor houses, on the other hand, earthenware pots are used for cooking rice or vegetables. For grinding chillies they use wooden mortar and bamboo pestle/pounder. They use modern cups and saucer and plates for drinking tea and eating rice. Frequently, however, they eat on banana leaves, specially in the Jhum field. Traditionally the whole family used to eat from a big plate; one villager still possesses such a plate.

For storing various things the Lushai use an ingenious technique. A better variety of gourd is dried and the inside is cleaned. This gives a hollow vessel that can be used for collecting water (Harpui), storing saum and other things (Thuithawl)<sup>3</sup> (See figure-3). The Lushai still use a small bamboo spoon to take out saum.

For carrying Jhum products or free collections like wood, vegetables from forest the women carry on their back various types of baskets - one of them is "...the 'thul' with four short legs, about 12 inches square at the bottom, widening till the mouth is a circle with a diameter of about 30 inches" <sup>1</sup> (See figure-3) - "the 'deron', a truncated cone, 30 to 36 inches

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1. Shakespear, Op. cit., p. 9.
  2. Shakespear, Op. cit., p. 28.
  3. One of the villagers presented two of these gourd Vessels to us.

long,..... the 'em' similar to deron but about half the size". Similar types of baskets are still used at Phuldungsai for similar purposes. As described in Chapter I, water pots are also carried in the baskets and the baskets are strapped around their forehead. Paddy they store in big baskets known as 'Zem' which is similar to the baskets used by Bengalee villagers.

## **B. NUTRITIONAL AND HEALTH ASPECTS OF DIET**

### **1. Nutrient intake**

In the second part of Chapter III, the nutritional aspect of the food consumed by the Lushai of Phuldungsai is discussed first and their physical stature and health status are discussed in later part. Food contains substances known as nutrients. The nutrients include protein, fat,



carbohydrate, vitamin and mineral salt. They are present in almost all foods in varying proportions (oil provides mostly fat, while sugar is purely carbohydrate). Protein, fat and carbohydrate provide energy (expressed in terms of calorie) for various activities of life. Vitamin and mineral do not supply energy but they play an important role in the utilisation of protein, fat and carbohydrate, the energy yielding components of food. A well balanced diet should contain all these factors in correct proportion. Therefore, merely knowing dietary habits is not enough; one must know the nutritional values of the diet as well. If the diet is not balanced this would surely reflect on the health and consequently on the physical and mental development of the people.

Extensive diet surveys carried out in our country have shown that the diets of good proportion of our population who belong to the poor income group are inadequate. The consumption of such inadequate diets is reflected in the wide prevalence of signs of malnutrition among them. The most vulnerable segments of the population are pregnant women, infants, children and lactating mothers who require additional protein etc. for normal growth and development. However, the high incidence of malnutrition seen among children is due to deficiency of both proteins and calories, commonly known as protein calorie malnutrition. The major causes for this sorry state of affairs are poverty, ignorance and prejudice or they are both economic and sociological.

The exact evaluation of the nutritional status of the Lushai of Phuldungsai is beyond the scope of this monograph. However, attempts are made first of all to get an estimate of the calorie intake from rice which is their staple food. 23 out of 28 Lushai families were accessible for questioning. Total intake of rice in grams per day for each family is determined. Then daily intake per family unit for each family is calculated according to a scale suggested for practical nutrition work in India. The daily intake of rice in grams and calorie-consumed per family unit is shown in column 4 and 5 respectively of Table III 6.

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1. Shapspear, Op. cit., p. 29.
  2. C. Gopalan, R. V. Ramsastri and S. C. Balasubramanian in 'Nutrition value of Indian Foods' - p. 10.

The calorie consumption of an average adult male doing sedentary work is taken as one unit and the other co-efficients are worked out on the basis of

the calorie requirements.

**Table — III.6**  
**Caloric intake per family unit per day from rice**

Sl. No.	Family No.	Family Intake of Rice, gm/ day	Family Unit	Rice intake per family unit, gm/day	Caloric intake unit per
1	3	2,000	4.7	426	1474
2	4	3,000	5.3	566	1958*
3	5	5,000	10.5	476	1648
4	7	2,500	5.9	424	1466
5	8	2,000	4.3	465	1609
6	10	3,000	5.8	517	1790
7	11	1,000	2.8	357	1235
8	12	3,000	5.8	517	1790
9	13	3,500	5.5	636	2202*
10	14	1,500	4.6	326	1128
11	15	2,500	4.5	555	1922*
12	16	1,500	2.5	600	2076*
13	17	3,000	3.9	769	2662*
14	18	3,500	7.7	455	1573
15	19	2,500	4.8	521	1802*
16	20	2,000	3.8	526	1821*
17	21	1,500	4.2	351	1236
18	23	3,000	2.9	690	2386*
19	24	3,000	5.1	588	2035*
20	25	3,000	5.2	577	1996*
21	26	4,000	6.5	615	2129*
22	27	1,000	2.1	476	1648
23	28	2,000	4.1	488	1688
Mean = 1795					
*> Mean Value					

The calorie value per gram of rice intake is calculated from the Food Composition Table<sup>1</sup> in which the calorie-value per 100 grams of raw, hand-pounded rice is given as 346 calories<sup>4</sup>. The mean calorie intake (per family unit per day) has been found to be 1795 calories, among the Lushai families of Phuldung sai with a range of 1128 calories as minimum and 2662 calories as maximum, the difference being 1534 calories. This difference appears to

be quite high which indicates that there are at least two different groups among the Lushai families, one group with larger calorie intake and other with smaller calorie intake. The division is made arbitrarily taking 1795 calories which is the mean calorie intake per family unit per day for the sample population as the cut off point. The families with calorie intake above this value are taken to one group (Group A) and the families with calorie intake below this value are taken to the other group (Group B). Among the 23 households studied 11 belong to Group A and 12 belong to Group B (Table III. 7). The mean value of calorie intake among Group A families is 2090 calories whereas for Group B families it is 1514 calories. It is a well known fact that people from poor condition acquire as much as 90-95% of their calorie from rice/ cereal source.

Therefore, it is thought to be worth while to check whether by and large, families falling in Group A are poorer than the families falling in Group B. According to the criteria used in chapter II, it is found that among the 11 Lushai families belonging to Group A, 6 families belong to the lower income group (P), 3 belong to middle income group (M) and only 2 belong to the higher income group (R). On the otherhand, among the 12 families belonging to Group B, 6 belong to the higher income Group (R) 5 to the middle income group (M) and only 1 family belongs to the lower income group (P) (Table-III. 7). Therefore, it is quite clear that among the Lushai also as among other populations in India the families belonging to the poor income group depend mainly on rice to satisfy most of their calorie

Adult Male	(Sedentary Worker)		1.0
Adult Male	(Moderate Worker)		1.2
Adult Male	(Heavy Worker)		1.6
Adult Female	(Sedentary Worker)		0.8
Adult Female	(Moderate Worker)		0.9
Adult Female	(Heavy Worker)		1.2
Adolescents-	12 to 21 years	—	1.0
Children	9 to 12 years	—	0.8
Children	7 to 9 years	—	0.7
Childern	5 to 7 years	—	0.6
Childern	3 to 5 years	—	0.5
Childern	1 to 3 years	—	0.4

3. Ibid, Op.cit., p 60.

4. e.g. 426 gm of rice = 426gm X 346 c!lorie / 100 gm = 1474 calorie.



requirements. The intake of food items other than rice of the 23 families also reveals certain interesting features which are given below:

**Table — III.7**  
Caloric-intake per family unit per day from rice - (2)

Group-A				Group-B			
Sl. No.	Family No.	Caloric intake from rice	Economic Classification	Sl. No.	Family No.	Caloric intake from rice	Economic Classification
1.	4	1958	R	1.	3	1414	R
2.	13	2202	P	2.	5	1648	R
3.	15	1022	M	3.	7	1466	M
4.	16	2076	R	4.	8	1609	R
5.	17	2662	P	5.	10	1709	P
6.	19	1802	P	6.	11	1235	M
7.	20	1821	P	7.	12	1790	M
8.	23	2386	P	8.	14	1128	R
9.	24	2035	M	9.	18	1573	R
10.	25	1996	P	10.	21	1236	M
11.	26	2129	M	11.	27	1648	M
				12.	28	1648	R
Mean = 2090				Mean = 1514			

Ten out of the 12 families that belong to group B consume meat 4 or more times per month whereas 2 out of the 11 families belonging to group A consume meat with similar frequency. Consumption of milk and eggs are also common among them. This shows that the better off families can afford to consume high quality animal proteins more often than their poorer counterparts. Poorer families on the other hand have a tendency to consume dry fish more often than the better off families. This custom they have borrowed from the Reang and other Tripuri tribes and use this as substitution for meat eating.

All families studied, consume vegetables that they have grown in Jhum and stored in their houses such as pumpkin, gourd etc. and all of them collect a varieties of leafy vegetables and other vegetables from forest. However, the collection is more common among lower and middle income group. As it is revealed from the health status, the Lushai do not suffer from any deficiency diseases that originate from lack of vitamins and minerals as they consume plenty of vegetables and fresh fruits which are generally rich in vitamins and minerals.

Another important observation is that most of the families that belong to higher income group consume lentil and vegetables like cauliflowers, cabbages, potatoes, onions etc. that they purchase from local market. All families consume oil in some form. However it appears that the higher income group consumes mustard oil more than the other group. Thus, it is quite evident that although changes are coming in the food habits of Lushai, the changes are occurring mostly at the households of higher income group.

## 2. Anthropometry

Woodthrope <sup>1</sup> wrote about Lushai men and women in 1872: "...both men and women are well made and very muscular, the average height of the former appeared to be about five feet six inches <sup>2</sup>, and of the women, five feet four inches. <sup>3</sup> The men are all sturdy fellows, thickest as to the neck and shoulders, body light and active, arms and legs muscular and well developed". In the present study the average heights of 29 adult Males and 36 adult Females are found to be 161 centimeters and 151 centimeters respectively, a bit less than what Woodthrope had found. The average weights of the same Males and Females are found to be 52 kilograms and 46 kilograms respectively. These values are quite comparable to the rural/tribal populations of India as shown in Table III-8.

Anthropometry is extensively used for assessment of nutritional status among children. Body weight has been by far the most frequently used index to grade nutritional status provided that it is related to the correct age of the individual. If a child does not get sufficient food he cannot grow at a normal rate. In some communities, however, knowing the exact age of the child is almost impossible. Among the Lushai this is less of a problem. In table III-9 the body weights of the Lushai children are compared with body weights of other children of the same age group of different communities. It is quite clear from the table that although the Lushai children are a little behind the growth rate of the children that belong to well-off Indian families, they are much better off than rural children.

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1. Woodthrope, Op. cit., P. 72.
  2. Five feet Six inches = 165 cm.
  3. Five feet four inches = 160 cm.~

**Table — III.8**  
**Heights and weights of adult population (>21 year)**

	Male		Female	
	Ht. (cm)	Wt. (kg)	Ht. (cm)	Wt. (kg)
Lushai <sup>1</sup>	161	52	151	46
Tripuri <sup>2</sup>	160	46	144	36
Jamatia <sup>2</sup>	159	49	151	43
Onge <sup>1</sup>	150	43	140	43
Rural <sup>4</sup>	162	45	148	40
Average Indian <sup>5</sup>	168	61	152	50

**Table — III.9**  
**Children's (1-16 year) Weight in kilograms.**

Year (Lushai)	Present Study group Boys 6	Low-income Boys 7	High-income
1	9.92 (6)	8.05	10.5
2	9.00 (1)	9.4	12.5
3	13.33 (3)	11.1	14.8
4	14.00 (4)	12.6	17.1
5	14.00 (2)	13.5	19.33
6	15.00 (2)	15.16	22.14
7	17.87 (4)	16.96	24.46
8	19.80 (4)	18.38	26.42
9	21.00 (1)	28.28	30.00
10	25.23 (3)	22.32	32.39
11	24.00 (1)	23.76	35.26
12	23.50 (4)	25.98	38.78
13	29.5 (2)	28.68	42.88
14	48.75 (2)	30.61	48.26
15	44.50 (3)	37.32	52.15
16	51.50 (2)	40.01	55.14

1. Present Study.
2. Author's own work.
3. Swaminathan et al Ind. J. Med Res. 59: 1136, 1971.
4. Jyothi et al Trop. Geogr. Med. 15; 403, 1963.
5. ICMR special Report No. 38, 1961.
6. N. Pralhad Rao et al. Ind. J. Med. Res. 57; II, 1969.
7. D. Hanumantha Rao total Ind. J. Med Res. 66; 6, 1977.



### **3. HEALTH AND HYGIENE**

In general the Lushai of Phuldungsai are a healthy group of people. However, during the rainy season children do suffer from diarrhoea and dysentery. As a precautionary measures, almost 70% the Lushai families boil their drinking water, some of them even filter it. The Lushai are fairly health-conscious and take good care of their personal hygiene. They use modern medicines but often without doctor's prescriptions. Only in case of mild diarrhoea they still use one medicinal plant locally known as 'Thingthupui'. It has been found that only about 6-7 persons are suffering from some diseases none of which originates (directly) from malnutrition. Only one thing is worth mentioning that 3 cases of goitre, a disease characterised by swelling of the Thyroid gland in the neck, were found'. All 3 affected persons were female and over 50 years of age.

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1. The prevalence of goitre in the Sub-Himalayan region of India due to deficiency of iodine in the diets is quite well known. The daily requirement for iodine has been reported to be about 100 to 150 miligrams, but most food stuffs are poor in iodine content. The iodine required by the body appears to be obtained mainly through the drinking water and low iodine content in drinking water would be the main reason for iodine deficiency. The steps that are taken to improve the iodine intake by persons in such goitre regions include fortification of common salt with iodine.

# CHAPTER – IV

## Salient Aspects of the Life and Culture of Lushai of Phuldungsel Village

The additional information gathered about the Lushai on the basis of informal discussions and our observations is given in this chapter.

### **Lushai Houses**

The houses belong to the relatively affluent Lushai families in the village are made of timber but most of the Lushai houses in the village have timber frames and walls made of bamboo matting. Almost 80% of the Lushai houses in the village have tin roofs. In the relatively affluent Lushai homes, unvarnished wooden furnitures are used. In every Lushai home, the kitchen is the centre of activity of the household and is popularly known as the “Mizo Office”. A hearth is made of earth stands against one of the outer walls of the house. Its design has not changed much since 1912 when Shakespear wrote his book on the Lushai Kuki clans and noted that ‘...there are villages of people very closely connected with the Lusheis, on the southern borders of Sylhet, in Tipperah and in the North Cachar Hills’.<sup>1</sup> His description of the Lushai hearth though it is about seventy years old, fits the Lushai hearth of today at least in Phuldugsei village almost exactly :

“...In the centre of.....(the hearth of earth) three stones.... are fixed on which the cooking pot rests. The earth is kept in place by, three pieces of wood, that in front being a wide plank with the top carefully smoothed, which forms a favourite seat during cold weather. The earth is put in wet and well kneaded, and eventually becomes as hard as brick. Along the wall an earthen shelf serves the double purpose of keeping the fire from the wall and affording a resting place for the pots. Over the hearth are hung two bamboo shelves, one above the other, on which tomorrow’s supply of paddy is dried, and various odds and ends are stored. These shelves also serve to keep the sparks from reaching the roof.”<sup>2</sup>

The loin loom at which the women of the house work inbetween their chores in the kitchen is usually placed in one corner of the kitchen. Grains and vegetables are also stored in bamboo and cane baskets of various sizes in the kitchen. The kitchen also has shelves for pots and pans, plates and bowls and platforms for storing Jhum vegetables and gourds and water pots. At the back of the kitchen is a platform made of bamboos where the washing is done. Since the floor of this platform has slots, the refuse falls

on the ground below and is immediately devoured by the pigs. In almost every house, religious pictures are hung at the walls, doors and windows are curtained and the Missionary influence is quite discernible in the lifestyle of the Lushai. In the relatively affluent homes, sewing machines, pressure cookers, battery-operated transistor-radios and tape recorders are a common sight and they are usually kept in the kitchen where the families spend the long evenings after it gets dark by chatting and singing with family members and friends around the woodfire in the hearth. The photographs on page 78 show Lushai houses.

### **Lushai clothes**

At the dresses of the Lushai of Phuldungsai also, the interaction of tradition and modernity can be observed. The pachhras that are woven at home by the women in their spare time are worn by the older women and by the Lushai men when they lounge at home. Though from Lt. Col. Shakespear's account we find that the typical Lushai dress for men consisted "of a single cloth about 7 feet long and 5 wide..... In cold weather, one or more clothes are worn, one over the other, and also a white coat, reaching well down the thigh but only fastened at the throat. These coats are ornamented on the sleeves with bands of red and white of various patterns."

There has been a considerable change in the attire of the Lushai males since then. The young men of Phuldungsai are smartly turned out in casual western clothes which find their way into Phuldungsel via Mizoram and Bangladesh. The very young girls also wear western clothes while the young girls wear blouses or sweaters, pachhras and shawls. The pachhras which are worn on special occasions have beautifully woven borders, the designs of which are usually copied from western embroidery. The threads for weaving pachhras are bought from the market. For weaving the shawls, yarn is usually obtained by ripping out second-hand woollen garments. More often than not they are woven in chequered patterns or in striped designs. Jewellery is hardly ever worn by the Lushai women of Phuldungsai. The young women wear their hair short and the hairstyles of both the men and the women seem to be copied from the latest western fashions. The married women, however, wear their hair long. It is made into a bun at the nape of their neck. Their shawls are wrapped around their bodies to make a hummock at the back for their babies to sleep in. It seems that even the very young married women take less care of their looks than their unmarried counterparts.



### **Lushai Marriages:**

Marriages at Phuldungsai frequently take place between men and women from the village itself. Nobody seems get married very young in the village. This is true both for the Lushai men and women. Marriages between Lushai men and Reang girls are not that uncommon in the village and mixed marriages are not looked down by the village society. A Bengali school teacher living in the village has married a Lushai lady from the village and he is so well accepted by the Lushai of the village that he has almost become an 'honorary Mizo' according to the Lushai who have nicknamed him as 'Zoi Mangaiha' or ' Lover of the Mizo'. If mixed marriages are not uncommon at Phuldungsai, neither are divorces, at least among the Lushai and if the man turns the woman out for no fault he must pay up her full price as the custom among the Lushai about which Lt. Col. Shakespear wrote about seventy years ago.

### **Lushai Language:**

Although it is generally believed that English is widely used by the Lushai of the Jampul Hills area as a result of the influence of the western missionaries among them, this has been hardly proved to be the case at Phuldungsai atleast. Very few people of Lushai origin in the village understand or speak any language other than the Mizo language. English is spoken and understood by a few of the relatively young and better educated Lushai men of the village while Bengali is spoken or understood by a handful of the Lushai men and women of the village who have been exposed to the Bengali culture and the Bengalee people. Researchers without a good grounding in the Mizo language have no alternative but to use the services of local interpreters if they want to get any information from the Lushai families for most of the cases.

### **The Church, Music, Festivals:-**

However, the missionary influence on the life of the Lushai area is obvious that the Church exerts over their life. <sup>1</sup> Service is held thrice a week, on Sunday, Wednesday and Thursday at the two Lushai Churches of Phuldungsai. The service is conducted in the Mizo language and is preceded by the beating of drums in a monotonous tone. Religious songs are sung in the Church by the entire congregation to the accompaniment of drumbeats which to the uninitiated atleast, sound like gongs which follow their own pattern and not that of the songs. Likewise, the songs sound like monotonous chanting to those not familiar with this style of singing. It

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1. Shakespear, 6 Op. cit., p. .55

seems possible that the religious music of the Lushai has been modelled on their indigenous songs before they were converted to Christianity because Lt. Col. Shakespear's description of the drum used by the Lushai in circa. 1912 as '...sections of trees hollowed out..... (their) ends being covered with..... hide caps laced together' is apt for the drums used by the Lushai of Phuldungsai village even today. He had also described the music of the Lushai as 'dull and monotonous' although he did not admit that probably his unfamiliarity with their music made it so to him. However, the secular songs which are sung by the young Lushai people have lively western tunes and are sung beautifully to the accompaniment of drum and guitar. Although the social life of the Lushai of the village is centered around the Church, the service seems to be attended mainly by the very young, the old and the women. However, the festivals of the village which are Church-oriented are attended by the entire Lushai population of the village. The three main festivals celebrated by the Lushai are Christmas, Good Friday and Easter. On Christmas Day, a big feast is held in the village by all members of the congregation of the NZBM Church. Each family provides some meat or money for buying the pig and buffalo that are slaughtered for

1. The overriding importance of the Church in the social life of the Lushai can be gauged from the fact that when the villagers were consulted about the best possible use to which the solar energy operated battery could be put in the village, they unanimously agreed that the largest Church, the NZBM Church of the village should be electrified. The feast. <sup>1</sup> The rice is cooked in individual households, wrapped up in leaves and brought to the picnic spot nearby the water point. A huge fire is built there and the meat is boiled and eaten with the rice brought from home by the picnic party. The young men of the village take part in the cooking and the feast is followed by community singing. Home-brewed drinks were a great favourite among the Lushai at one time as reported by the villagers and also by Shakespear and Woodthorpe in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century but the influence of missionaries has made them discontinue this habit. However, the older people complain that drinking is again becoming a problem among the young boys of the village and even though this practice is looked down by the older generation, they are helpless in checking this onslaught of 'modern civilization'.

Along with the Church, the youth club forms the hub of the social life of the village. Every villager, whatever be his age, is a member of the youth club but the younger people of the village are the more active members

of this club. Singing secular songs, cleaning up the village and doing other kinds of social work are the main activities of the youth club. Its popularity among the young people of the village far outshines that of the Church.

1. Last year for road construction work by the Public Works Department (PWD) in the village, the labour was provided by the adult male members of the congregatron of the NZBM Church and the money earned was pooled together for celebrating the communal feast. Again ginger grown with the voluntary labour of the congregation is sold and the sale proceed are used for the renovation of the Church.



# APPENDIX - I

## Lushai Families Canvassed at Phuldungsai Village Names of the Heads of Households.

1. Ngurdingluaia Sailo
2. Thantiluanga
3. L. T. Hlima
4. Sangthrunng Luaia
5. Thanghuava
6. Ramliana
7. Sap Thanga
8. M. K. Gupta (Zoi Mangaiha)
9. Baikmaunia
10. Lalmawaia
11. Laikumi
12. Vanlalliana
13. Chana
14. Ralthanga
15. S. T. Chawma
16. Sangliana Thanga
17. Zangami
18. V. L. Thanga
19. Chhanthanga
20. Rosanga
21. P. C. Ngura
22. Thaisanga
23. Chalthangi
24. Thangmawia
25. Tlangzika
26. Swak Thuama
27. Denga
28. Rochungnunga

## APPENDIX – II

### THE LUSHAI IN THE PAST AND PRESENT: SOME ASPECTS OF THEIR LIFE AND CULTURE

A study undertaken by Dr. Mahadev Chakravarti, Dr. M. Das Gupta and Dr. Bithi Sircar of the Calcutta University Post Graduate Centre, Agartala and funded by the Directorate of Tribal Research, Government of Tripura, Agartala.

#### Part-II. Economic Aspects

1. Name of the Head of the Household
2. Village
3. Father's (a) Occupation (b) Economic Status
4. Family Particulars:

(a)

Sl No.	Sex	Age	Edu	Skill	Rel	Occupations		Indiv. Y		Memb Coop.	Posn. of power
						Primary	Second	Souc.	Amt.		

(b) Joint family income Sources: Amount Cost of Production

(c) Assets owned by household excluding land other than homestead land

(d)

Land:	Tila		Lunga			Other	
	Irr.	Unirr.	Inr.	Unirr.	Irr.	Unirr.	Type
Owned							
L. Out							
L. In							
Used not o.							
Total used							
Use pattern							

(e) Land used with the help of own or family labour/agricultural labour/ other labourers.

(f) Government Assistance received by family in last five years

(g) Items sold      Amount sold      Price      To whom sold      Problem

(h) Items bought      Amount      Price      From whom bought      Problem

(i) Saving      (a) Form      (b) Use

(j) Indebtedness

Purpose	Source	Amt. borrowed	Amt. outstanding	Interest charges	
				Terms	percent

(k) Employees

Tribe of employer	Nature of work done	Hrs. of work	Term of n	pay			Credit from employer			
				Cash	Kind	Other benefits	Purpose	Amount	Interest	
									From	%



# APPENDIX-III

## Part-II, Socio-economic aspects of diet/anthropometry/health

### HOUSEHOLD LEVEL SCHEDULE

Household No. :

1. Name of Head of the Household:

2. Address:

Vill.....

Gaon Sabha .....

P.O.....

3. Religion:

4. Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/Others:

5. a. Family particulars:

Sl No.	Name	Sex	Age	Weight (kg)	Height (cm)	Education	Clinical symptoms	Medical history

6. a. Medical Facilities available  
Health Centre/ Hospital/ Private Doctor/ Quacks/ Ojhas/ Others (Specify).
7. a. Source of drinking water:  
River/ Tank/ Deep tube well/ Tube well/ Ring well/ Other (Specify)
- b. Way of purifying water:  
Boiled/ Filtered/ Medicated/ None
- c. Where is water stored:
- d. Ways of cleaning utensils:
8. Defecation Habit: Sanitary/ Pit/ Open air
9. Weaning pattern:
  - a. Time of introduction of breast Feeding after birth.....
  - b. Duration of breast feeding.....
  - c. Time of introduction of other food : .....
  - d. Time of introduction of solid food (weaning) .....
  - e. Cause of early, delayed weaning.....
10. Food preparation and Utensils used for cooking:
11. Food preference/ Food bans
12. Food storage and preservation procedure:
13. Special diet for:
  - i) Children:
  - ii) Pregnant women:
  - iii) Lactating mother:

iv) Old person:

v) Diseased (specify) :

14. Alcohol consumption/ pattern/ amount

15. a) Festival food:

b) Frequency of meals:

c) Special feature:

16. Medicinal plants - use of:

(Socio-Cultural Aspect of Diet)

1. Food Types (Seasonal): Availability

	Various Types	Source	Amount consumed	eaten in all seasons	Past history (comments)
1. Cereals					
2. Pulses					
3. Root vegetable					
4. Leafy vegetable					
5. Other vegetable					
6. Fat & Oils					
7: Milk & Milk product					
8. Flesh food					
9. Fruits & nuts					
10. Sugar & Jaggery					
11. Condiments					
12. Other					

1. Market (M), 2. Self grown (S.g.), 3. Free collection (F.c.), 4. other (O).

Dated

Signature of Investigator