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PART VI

VILLAGE SURVEY MONOGRAPH

21—THANGJING CHIRU

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LIST OF VILLAGES SELECTED FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY

Name of Village	Name of Sub-division
1 Aimol	Churachandpur
2 Bisenmual	—do—
3 Bungmol	—do—
4 Chairén	Thoubal
5 Dumsaomual	Churachandpur
6 Hundung	Ukhrul
7 Ithing	Bishenpur
8 Keisamthong	Imphal West
9 Khousabung	Churachandpur
10 Konpui	—do—
11 Lmakang Khullen	Tengnoupal
12 Liwachangning	—do—
13 Longa Koireng	Mao and Sadar Hills
14 Minuthong	Imphal West
15 Ningel	Thoubal
16 Pherzawl	Churachandpur
17 Phunan Sambum	Tengnoupal
18 Purum Khullen	—do—
19 Sekmai	Imphal West
20 Tarao Laimanai	Tengnoupal
21 Thangjing Chiru*	Mao and Sadar Hills
22 Thingkangphai	Churachandpur
23 Toupokpi	Tengnoupal
24 Tuitengphai	Churachandpur
25 Unapal	Tengnoupal

* The present volume (No. 21 of the series)

FOREWORD

Apart from laying the foundations of demography in this subcontinent, a hundred years of the Indian Census has also produced 'elaborate and scholarly accounts of the variegated phenomena of Indian life—sometimes with no statistics attached, but usually with just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to their conclusions'. In a country, largely illiterate, where statistical or numerical comprehension of even such a simple thing as age was liable to be inaccurate, an understanding of the social structure was essential. It was more necessary to attain a broad understanding of what was happening around oneself than to warp oneself up in 'statistical ingenuity' or 'mathematical manipulation'. This explains why the Indian Census came to be interested in 'many by-paths' and 'nearly every branch of scholarship, from anthropology and sociology to geography and religion'.

In the last few decades the Census has increasingly turned its efforts to the presentation of village statistics. This suits the temper of the times as well as our political and economic structure. For even as we have a great deal of centralization on the one hand and decentralization on the other, my colleagues thought it would be a welcome continuation of the Census tradition to try to invest the dry bones of village statistics with flesh-and-blood accounts of social structure and social change. It was accordingly decided to select a few villages in every State for special study, where personal observation would be brought to bear on the interpretation of statistics to find out how much of a village was static and yet changing and how fast the winds of change were blowing and from where.

Randomness of selection was, therefore, eschewed. There was no intention to build up a picture for the whole State in quantitative terms on the basis of villages selected statistically at random. The selection was avowedly purposive : the object being as much to find out what was happening and how fast to those villages which had fewer reasons to choose change and more to remain lodged in the past as to discover how the more 'normal' types of villages were changing. They were to be primarily type studies which, by virtue of their number and distribution, would also give the reader a 'feel' of what was going on and some kind of a map of the country.

A brief account of the tests of selection will help to explain. A minimum of thirty-five villages was to be chosen with great care to represent adequately geographical, occupational and even ethnic diversity. Of this minimum of thirty-five, the distribution was to be as follows :

(a) At least eight villages were to be so selected that each of them would contain one dominant community with one predominating occupation, *e.g.*, fisherman, forest workers, jhum cultivators, potters, weavers, salt-makers, quarry workers, *etc.* A village should have a minimum population of 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.

(b) At least seven villages were to be of numerically prominent Scheduled Tribes of the State. Each village could represent a particular tribe. The minimum population should be 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.

(c) The third group of villages should each be of fair size, of an old and settled character and contain variegated occupations and be, if possible, multi-ethnic in composition. By fair size was meant a population of 500-700 persons or more. The village should mainly depend on agriculture and be sufficiently away from the

major sources of modern communication such as the district administrative headquarters and business centres. It would be roughly a day's journey from the above places. The villages were to be selected with an eye to variation in terms of size, proximity to city and other means of modern communication, nearness to hills, jungles and major rivers. Thus there was to be a regional distribution throughout the State of this category of villages. If, however, a particular district contained significant ecological variations within its area, more than one village in the district might be selected to study the special adjustments to them.

It is a unique feature of these village surveys that they rapidly outgrew their original terms of reference, as my colleagues warmed up to their work. This proved for them an absorbing voyage of discovery and their infectious enthusiasm compelled me to enlarge the inquiry's scope again and again. It was just as well cautiously to feel one's way about at first and then venture further a field, and although it accounts to some extent for a certain unevenness in the quality and coverage of the monographs, it served to compensate the purely honorary and extra-mural rigours of the task. For, the Survey, along with its many ancillaries like the survey of fairs and festivals, of small and rural industry and others, was an 'extra', over and above the crushing load of the 1961 Census.

It might be of interest to recount briefly the stages by which the Survey enlarged its scope. At the first Census Conference in September, 1959 the Survey set itself the task of what might be called a record in *situ* of material traits, like settlement patterns of the village; house types; diet; dress; ornaments and foot-wear; furniture and storing vessels; common means of transport of goods and passengers; domestication of animals and birds; markets attended; worship of deities, festivals and fairs. There were to be recordings, of course, of cultural and social traits and occupational mobility. This was followed up in March 1960 by two specimen schedules, one for each household, the other for the village as a whole, which, apart from spelling out the mode of inquiry suggested in the September, 1959 conference, introduced groups of questions aimed at sensing changes in attitude and behaviour in such fields as marriage, inheritance, moveable and immoveable property, industry, indebtedness, education, community life and collective activity, social disabilities, forums of appeal over disputes, village leadership, and organisation of cultural life. It was now plainly the intention to provide adequate statistical support to empirical 'feel', to approach qualitative change through statistical quantities. It had been difficult to give thought to the importance of 'just enough statistics to give empirical underpinning to conclusion'; at a time when my colleagues were straining themselves to the utmost for the success of the main Census operations, but once the census count itself was left behind in March, 1961, a series of three regional seminars in Trivandrum (May, 1961), Darjeeling and Srinagar (June 1961) restored their attention to this field and the importance of tracing social change through a number of well-devised statistical tables was once again recognised. This itself presupposed a fresh survey of villages already done, but it was worth the trouble in view of the possibilities that a close analysis of statistics offered, and also because the 'consanguinity' schedule remained to be canvassed. By November, 1961, however, more was expected of these surveys than ever before. There was dissatisfaction on the one hand with too many general statements and a growing desire on the other to draw conclusions from statistics, to regard social and economic data as interrelated processes, and finally to examine the social and economic processes set in motion

through land reforms and other laws, legislative and administrative measures, technological and cultural change. Finally, a study camp was organised in the last week of December, 1961 when the whole field was carefully gone through over again and a programme worked out closely knitting the various aims of the Survey together. The Social Studies Section of the Census Commission rendered assistance to State Superintendents by way of scrutiny and technical comment on the frame of Survey and presentation of results.

This gradual unfolding of the aims of the Survey prevented my colleagues from adopting as many villages as they had originally intended to. But I believe that what may have been lost in quantity has been more than made up for in quality. This is perhaps, for the first time that such a Survey has been conducted in any country, and that purely as a labour of love. It has succeeded in attaining what is set out to achieve: to construct a map of village India's social structure. One hopes that the volumes of this Survey will help to retain for the Indian Census its title to 'the most fruitful single source of information about the country'. Apart from other features, it will perhaps be conceded that the Survey has set up a new Census standard in pictorial and graphic documentation. The schedules finally adopted for this monograph have been printed in an appendix.

New Delhi,
July 30, 1964.

Asok Mitra
Registrar General, India.

PREFACE

The monographs on the selected villages of Manipur which constitute a 'by-work' of the 1961 Census Operations, are a part of the attempt at what may be described as documentational mapping of some of the less developed villages of India. In selecting the villages of Manipur, the criteria laid down by the Registrar General have been generally followed and care also was taken to see that the major tribes inhabiting the hill areas are represented in the present series of survey. It is rather unfortunate that on account of the unhappy law and order situation in the Sub-divisions of Tamenglong and the Mao-Maram area, it was not possible to include any village from these two places. This does not, however, detract from the broadly representative character of the villages under survey.

Some of the villages selected for the present survey are situated in the interior hill areas, with very poor communication facilities. The field work in some cases, therefore, involved strenuous marches from the headquarters of a Sub-division. Language difficulty was also one of the factors that stood in the way of smooth eliciting of information in the case of some of the interior tribal villages. The credit for the commendable field work on which the present series of survey are based should go to the two Investigators, Sarvashri S. Achouba Singh and Q. M. Qutabuddin.

The present monograph and the others in the series are the result of a 'labour of love', as the Registrar General aptly put it and if they are of any use to those who are engaged in the number ONE task of raising the level of living in village India, those of us who applied ourselves to the preparation of these monographs with some assiduousness will have the lasting satisfaction that ours has not been a case of 'love's labour's lost'.

I am grateful to Shri A. Mitra, I. C. S., Registrar General and *ex-Officio* Census Commissioner of India for his unfailing advice and guidance. I am also grateful to Dr. B. K. Roy Burman, Officer on Special Duty in the Office of the Registrar General for valuable suggestions he made in the preparation of this monograph. On Dr. K.B. Singh who was associated with the work at the later stage, has fallen the burden of preparing the draft of this monograph and of verifying the information and statistics already collected by personal visits to the spot and I am much obliged to him for the keen interest he has taken in the task entrusted to him.

Imphal,
June 25, 1966.

R. K. Birendra Singh

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CHAPTER I

THE VILLAGE

Introducing the village :—Thangjing Chiru is a small tribal village of Manipur inhabited by the Chirus, a Scheduled Tribe of Manipur.

Location :—The village lies at a distance of about 11 miles to the west of Imphal. The village is located on a small hill, and it comes under the administrative jurisdiction of the Mao and Sadar Hills Sub-division. The village is bounded on the east by Sangaitheh village, on the south by Longa Koireng village, on the west by the Thanglon hill and the Heipurok stream, and on the north by the Waikhurok stream. Within the village there is no market place, but at Sangaitheh village which lies at a distance of about two furlongs to the east there is a small market.

Size of village and number of households :—The area of the village as a whole is 140 acres. The area covered by the residential sites is not available. The number of households is eleven.

Communication :—The village is connected with Imphal and the rest of Manipur by a branch of the New Cachar Road. This branch, known popularly as Maklang Road, bifurcates from the parent road from near Patsoi village. This road, running westward, goes straight upto Thangjing Chiru. This road, some portion of which is metalled and some laid with boulders, is motorable throughout the year. Since the village lies on the Thangjing hill and the road leading upto the entrance is a little steep and rough, heavy vehicles cannot enter beyond about two hundred yards from the village-entrance. Though the village is not far from the motorable road, the inhabitants of this village did not have the facilities of any bus services until a private bus service plying twice daily from Sangaitheh to Imphal was introduced during November, 1965. At the time of the last survey by the end of 1965 the inhabitants of this village were found to possess three bicycles.

Physical aspects :—Being located on a low hill, one gets a panoramic view of the valley of Manipur from this village. The soil of this village cannot be said to be fertile. During the rainy season, water drains down towards the foot of the hill.

Residential pattern :—Houses are irregularly distributed without forming any rows but they do not lie scattered all over the area. Houses are built facing either the east or the south with a view to get more light depending upon the situation of the house-plot. Since there are only 11 households, and the houses are built not far away from one another, the area occupied by the houses is not big. Though no area figure of the residential sites is available, the lengthwise distance of it which runs from east to west will be almost three hundred feet while the breadth of the village from north to south will be approximately seventy feet. As one enters the village from the front entrance, to one's right there is the house of the village headman locally known as Khullakpa.

Public places :—There is no important public place excepting the one where an *uyung* tree (*quercus*) grows which is regarded as the seat of Pathel, the communal god of the Chirus.

Flora and fauna :—The village is poor in flora and fauna. Besides domestic animals like cattle, goat, pig, and fowl, the village is devoid of wild animals. Occasionally wild animals like jackal, deer, and tiger frequent the outskirts of the village.

The flora of the village consists mainly of the commonest species found in the valley. *Imom* (*impera cylindrica*), *singnang* (*phragmites karka*), *yongchak* (*parkai roxburghii*), *heikha-malhei* (*prunus* spp.), *sahi-kuhi* (*castanopsis* species), *tumilla* (*litsaea-monopetala*), *heining* (*spondius mangifera*), *uyung* (*quercus*) and *yebum* (a kind of plant whose leaves are edible when cooked) are found growing in the neighbourhood of the village.

Burial ground :—Common burial ground of the inhabitants is located near the entrance of the village. Its distance from the habitation area is about eighty feet.

Village origin :—From the Khullakpa (village headman) it is learnt that the inhabitants of this village migrated from Thangjing Hill which is situated near Moirang village about 28 miles to the south-west of Imphal. No information is available

as to the exact time when the migration took place. The exact reason for migration is not known, but we are told that the idea of getting better agricultural land prompted them to leave their ancestral home and settle at the present site. The village is named after original place of settlement Thangjing.

All the eleven households did not settle together at one time. They came at different periods and the majority of them settled here one generation ago. The following table shows the number of generations for which the households have been living in this village. The chief reason for migration is to find suitable and abundant land for agriculture.

Table No. 1

Comimunity	Total No. of households	Number of households settled				
		Before 5 generations	Between 4-5 generations	Between 2-4 generations	One generation	Present generation
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CHIRU	11	1	1	4	5	..

There is no case of migration into the village during the present generation.

Monuments, etc:—There are no important monuments or relics worth mentioning.

Source of water:—The Waikhurok stream is the main source of water of the inhabitants of this village. It lies about one hundred yards to the north of the residential area.

Welfare and administrative institutions:—The village does not have any institutions like clubs, pancha-

yat, etc. For the maintenance of order within the village the headman called Khullakpa and other senior male members of the village take the responsibility of maintaining peace and security within the village.

Markets:—Within the village there is no market where the villagers can sell or buy things. Imphal is the main market and other small markets on the way to Imphal are Sangaithel Bazar, Maklang Bazar (2 miles), Khamnam Bazar (8 miles), and Tera Bazar (9 miles).

CHAPTER II

PEOPLE AND THEIR MATERIAL EQUIPMENT

Ethnic composition:—The inhabitants of this village are the Chirus—a Scheduled Tribe of Manipur. The population of the village is divided into four exogamous clans, *viz.* Chongdur, Dingthoi, Danla, and Rhaja. Living in close proximity with the Meitei villages and coming in frequent contact with the Meiteis, the Chirus of this village have assimilated Meitei manners to a considerable extent. They have identified their clans with the Meitei clans. Their clan Chongdur is identified with the Meitei clan Angom, Danla with Ningthouja, Dingthoi with Khumal, and Rhaja with Luwang.

The centres of habitation of the Chirus are confined more or less in the Sadar Hills Sub-division of Manipur. In the 1951 Census, the total population of the Chirus in Manipur was 1,079 persons consisting of 440 males and 639 females,¹ whereas in the Census of 1961, the Chiru population rose upto 1,809 persons consisting of 908 males and 901 females.² These figures are taken on the basis of data relating to the Chiru language.

Coming back to Thangjing Chiru, the inhabitants of this village represent a small section of the Chiru tribe of Manipur. In the year 1951, there were eight households with a total population of 44 persons consisting of 21 males and 23 females. After eleven years, *i.e.* in the year 1962 when the village was surveyed the number of households rose to 11 followed by an increase of population from 44 persons in 1951 to 45 persons in 1962. The difference of one person in eleven years' time may not be considered an increase in population when we keep in mind the rise in the number of households. In view of the increase in the number of households, the population of Thangjing Chiru may be considered to have been stagnant during the past eleven years (1951-1962).

The distribution of the households and male and female populations under each clan is shown below:

Table No 2

Name of clan	Number of households	Number of population		
		Males	Females	Total
Danla	3	7	4	11
Dingthoi	4	12	7	19
Chongdur	2	4	4	8
Rhaja	2	2	5	7

The headman or Khullakpa of the village informed that every clan is divided into sub-clans. On the basis of the information furnished by him the names of the sub-clans under each clan and the number of households under each sub-clan are shown below:

Table No 3

Clan	Sub-clan	Number of households under each sub-clan	
Chongdur	Sampar, Khumulen, Droi, Samusampar	Khumulen	2
Danla	Thanglen, Thanga, Tubung, Nikhum	Nikhum	3
Dingthoi	Mingboi, Thoibehe, Thoiri, Thoitak	Thoitak	4
Rhaja	Jatung, Jajing, Koroja, Nisumpu, Pherpui	Koroja	2

Among the clans, clan-hierarchy does not exist. All are equal in all matters of socio economic intercourse. No clan occupies a definite portion of the village. The Chiru clans are exogamous and they are sociologically important as marriage units. At the time of any communal event, all the inhabitants, irrespective of clan-divisions, join together. Mutual help in time of need is the general feature of interpersonal relationship within the village. The inhabitants of this village are peaceful and hardworking.

Language:—The language spoken in the village is Chiru. The inhabitants are conversant with Manipuri which is for all practical purposes their second language.

Housing:—It has already been stated that the houses in the village do not lie scattered all over the area. The houses have invariably rectangular bases and gabled roofs. Out of the 11 houses, 7 are built on low earthen plinth and the remaining 4 on the surface of the hill itself after being levelled down to form the floor. All are thatched houses and except for the materials used for the wall, all houses are more or less similar to one another in constructional

1. Census of India 1951 : State Census Handbook Vol. I, Manipur, p. 58.

2. Census of India 1961, Vol. I, Part II-C (ii), Language Tables, p. 135.

design. Both bamboo and wood are used for the skeleton of the house. No house is built solely with bamboo or wood. The average size of the house is about 15'x25', and all the houses have the rear portion a little lower than the front portion. The minimum

height of the eaves at the rear of the house from the ground is about four feet. The distribution of households with reference to dwelling structures is shown below :

Table No. 4

Type of wall	Type of roof	No. of Household	Size of Household	Income
1	2	3	4	5
Reed wall	Thatched	1	3 Persons	Between 40 to 60 rupees
do	do	3	4 persons	do
do	do	1	5 persons	do
do	do	1	8 persons	do
Bamboo Wattled	do	4	3 persons	do
do	do	1	5 persons	do

Every house has a verandah of about one-fifth or one-sixth the size of the floor area. The interior of the house is not partitioned by any inner wall. Near the centre of the house the hearth (cooking place) is located while beds for the inmates of the house are spread at the rear and sides of the room. Other belongings of the household are kept at any vacant place inside the house. If enough space is not available on the floor, bamboo racks are made within the house for keeping household articles. Near the interior middle of the house 4 or 5 small bamboos are tied together and posted like a pillar. The place where these bamboos are posted is supposed to be the seat of *Sanamahi*—the household god of the Chirus. No household builds bath and latrine. Any secluded place serves as latrine, and the pigs do the "scavenging". Households having domestic animals like cattle, pigs, fowls, etc., build thatched huts close to the rear or side of the dwelling house in order to accommodate them.*

Practically there is no structural difference between the houses of this village. All look alike in appearance too, except for the walls which are made of either wattled bamboos or reeds. The names of the different parts of a house are given below followed by a sketch showing the main portions of a house.

Chiru	English equivalent
Sungkung	.. Verandah
abang	.. wall
makot	.. door
indung	.. sleeping place
inphu	.. roof
chafi	.. pillar

Mention has been made of the materials used in plinth, wall, roof, etc. These are obtained from the hill forest around the village free of cost.

The householder builds his own house. If he wants to complete the house quickly, he may approach his neighbours to assist him. There is a strong sense of brotherhood among the villagers who are ready to help their own folks in case of difficulty and hardship without asking for reward. Thus the house-holder readily receives help from his neighbours in the construction of his house, and out of gratitude he offers them drinks (rice-beer) and smoke (bidi) according to his means.

Selection of house-site is determined to a great extent by the nature of the ground. Level ground is preferred. In the absence of level ground any such ground is preferred which will require minimum labour in levelling. With regard to direction there is no specific rule. All the houses face the south, west or the east according to convenience. The village-path runs from east to west towards the southern part of the residential area.

Since the villagers build their own houses, and as all of them are not skilled in house-building, the technique of construction too is simple. Levelling the ground or making the plinth forms the first stage of construction. Next, the pillars are erected. If there is more than one builder, roof-trellis and wall are constructed simultaneously. Construction of the door and roofing are done at the final stage.

The sizes of the floor-space are not equal, We may roughly estimate the average size of the floor to be 15'x25'. There are two slopes on the roof. The size of the door is small and in most houses one has to stop a little while passing through the door, average size is about 5'x3'. Two houses have one window each and one house has two windows at the side and rear walls. The size of each window is about 2'x1½'.

Decorations etc.—There are no decorations and embellishments on the house.

Privacy.—In the absence of partitioned rooms, the question of privacy does not arise.

Hygienic conditions.—All the houses are not in good hygienic condition in the modern sense of the term. Cleaning of the house and sweeping of the compound are seldom done.

Ceremony connected with house-construction.—Monday and Wednesday are considered to be auspicious days for the commencement of house-building and house-entering. At the completion of a house, the village priest, known as the *Thempu*, performs house-entering ceremony by sacrificing a pig and a hen to *Pathel*—the all-embracing god of the Chirus. The owner of the house offers a feast consisting of rice, rice-beer, and meat to all who help in the construction of his house.

DRESS:—

Upper garment for male.—Children below the age of about 4 or 5 years are not particular about wearing any dress. Most of the time they remain naked. During cold days they wear tailored shirts or vests purchased from the market at Imphal. Grownup men wear vests and tailored shirts purchased from the same market.

Lower garment for male.—Tailored pants—both short and long are worn by males now-a-days as they are comfortable and convenient. Besides, pants provide an 'urban-look' which the villagers like. Besides pants, they also wear loin-cloth called *kutei*. The cloth is about 8 feet long and 2½ feet wide, and is worn in the dhoti style. Pants and *kutei* are purchased from the market at Imphal. *kutei* is available in different colours and qualities.

Upper garment for female.—Vests and tailored blouses are worn by the women. These are bought from Imphal.

Lower garment for female.—Women wear a cloth known as *Panbe* for the lower part of the body. *Panbe* is the Chiru word for Manipuri *Phanek*. It is about six feet long three and a half feet wide. It consists of two pieces of clothes of identical size and colour which are stitched together lengthwise. This cloth is available in a number of designs and qualities and it is purchased from Imphal. *Panbe* is worn either around the waist or over the breast. Married and elderly women generally wear *panbe* over the breasts, and seldom around the waist, but unmarried girls are seen wearing it in both the ways.

There is no tailor in the village. As mentioned already, tailored clothes as well as other clothes are purchased from Imphal. If a household wants to weave they purchase yarn from Imphal and they weave the cloth required. Now-a-days weaving is almost neglected because cloths required by the villagers are easily available at Imphal within the price they could afford. If a household weaves any piece of cloth, it is meant for domestic use only. In this connection mention may be made of the national cloth known as *Panchai*. Every household possesses at least one piece of this cloth and it is woven by the households themselves. *Panchai* is used by both men and women as an upper garment in all social functions. This cloth is made up of two equal pieces stitched together lengthwise. The size is about 40"x72". It is a white cloth, and at each border along the breadth run the three stripes—red, black and red—each stripe being about one inch broad. Between the stripes there is a space of about one inch.

Men and women seldom use footwear. Some grown-up boys are seen wearing rubber sandal locally known as 'Hawai Sandle'

There is no difference in dress between ethnic groups or between economic status groups, or between persons of different ages. Married, unmarried and widowed persons do not necessarily wear any specific dress in order to be distinguished from one another. Men and women do not wear headgear.

Ornaments and body decoration.—The menfolk do not use ornaments now-a-days. Women wear ornaments on the neck, wrist, finger and ear. Local terms for these ornaments are *rithei* (necklace), *har* or *mulok* (armlet), *khuli* (bangle), *sumke* (ring), and *rukor* (ear ring). These ornaments are seldom made of gold, they are made mostly of cheap

stones, glass-beads and gilded metals. Such ornaments are purchased from Imphal. Ear-plug (also called *rukor*) which is made up of a small wooden pipe of about two inches long and one-sixth of an inch in diameter is also worn by elderly women. The girls, however, prefer imported gilded ornaments to old wooden ear-plugs. According to the Chirus, this wooden ornament is considered to be the seat of paddy (i.e., wealth).

Nowadays, menfolk cut their hair in the modern style. Women keep their hair long. They generally divide the hair by combing in the middle and make a knot at the back of the neck. There is no professional barber in this village. Hair cutting is performed free of cost by any person who knows the art. The Chiru males used to wear *Samche* which is a thin rope made of hair of horse-tail around the head. Along with *Samche* cane fillet was also worn, but nowadays such kind of head-dress is not commonly worn by the menfolk.

Household Goods:—The households of this village are not rich in items of furniture. Two households possess one wooden chair each and another two households have one torch-light each. Everyhousehold has at least one wooden stool. There are four households possessing one mat each. Every household has one bedstead and one hurricane lantern. During the year 1965, three households had purchased one bicycle each.

Cooking utensils:—Earthen pots, brass and aluminium utensils are used for household purposes. Tin bucket (*balti*) is also used filling and storing water. For keeping cooked food while eating, cups and dishes made of brass and aluminium are also used. All these household utensils are purchased from the market. Utensil used for cooking rice is called *bibe* and utensil used for cooking meat and vegetables is known as *albe*. Chiru word for dish is *rangmei* or *kheng* and for cup, *Khengkam* or *kuri*.

Food and drinks:—All the households are non-vegetarians. The staple diet consists of rice, vegetables and meat. Different types of vegetables which are available from time to time are taken. For example, cabbage, cauliflower, mustard, *yongchak* (Parkai roxburghii) are available during winter. Arum, beans, gourd, pumpkin, etc., are available during summer.

Generally two meals are taken in a day, one in the morning and the other in the evening. In both

the meals the items of food taken are more or less similar. Boiling the food in water is the general method of preparing food. Salt is put for taste. Oil and spices are seldom used.

Rice-beer is also often taken by the villagers. Tea drinking is a new habit acquired by the villagers. If a household wishes to take tea, it is prepared with or without milk. But generally tea is taken outside the village, that is at the road-side tea stalls along the main road leading to Imphal.

As has been pointed out above, they take two meals a day, and the preparations in both the meals are practically the same. During the cultivating season, in addition to the usual two meals, in the morning and the evening, a mid-day meal is also taken generally in the field. Tea drinking is not a common practice in this village and the inhabitants do not take it daily or regularly.

Birth custom:—The birth of a son is more welcome than the birth of a daughter because a son is a permanent member within the house and is of immense help in the agricultural operation which is the chief means of livelihood of the inhabitants of this village.

During the time of pregnancy, the woman is free to do her usual routine work at home and in the field. The only restriction she generally observes is with regard to her diet which should not consist of rotten vegetables, meat, and fish. *Yongchak* (Parkai roxburghii) should also not be taken. Such restriction on food lasts till two or three months after the birth of the child. During this period, fresh vegetables including plantain, cabbage, cauliflower, mustard, peas etc., and meat are generally taken. When the pregnancy is eight or nine months old, the woman offers prayer to the domestic deity *Sanamahi* and the all powerful god *Pathel* for safe delivery. No sacrifice follows the prayer which is known as *thouniba*.

Delivery of the child takes place inside the house only and on a mat and not on the usual sleeping bed. The village *dai* (locally known as *maibi*) or any woman who is an expert in child-birth assists the pregnant woman. There is no customary regulation that the *maibi* should belong to the same clan as that of the pregnant woman. The *maibi* does not receive any amount of money for her services but she is generally entertained with rice-beer by the household.

When a child is born, the *maibi* cuts the umbilical cord with the sharp stem of a bamboo. She puts after-birth inside a small earthen pot and then the pot is filled with paddy-husk. This pot containing the after-birth is buried by the *maibi* at the rear side of the house and for this burial, the father of the newly born baby does the digging and he is usually debarred from normal hard work for five days after the birth of the child.

At the birth of a child, the household in which the child is born observes pollution and the period of pollution varies from clan to clan. Danla and Dingthoi clans observe pollution for five days while Chongdur and Rhaja observe the same for three-days. The village priest (Thempu) necessarily performs a purificatory rite when the period of pollution is over so that the family may be free from pollution. The purificatory rite is performed in the following manner. In the verandah of the house, in the morning, the thempu erects a plant *usoi* tree (*Schima Wallichii*). After this he sacrifices two hens one after another in the name of all powerful god Pathel, and invokes the god for the peace and prosperity of the family on the arrival of a young life (i.e., the birth of a child). Here the ceremony ends, and the sacrificed hens are cooked and consumed by the family. The Thempu is served with rice-beer for his service. This simple purificatory ceremony, is called *Thawaimi Konba*. After this ceremony on the same day, another simple ceremony known as *Yupanthaba* is performed by the Thempu. Here the Thempu sacrifices a hen and allows a few drops of blood to fall on the forehead of the child and puts a drop of rice-beer between the lips of the child. Prayer is offered to Pathel for the long life of the child. This ends the ceremony, and the family, according to its capacity, offers a feast to all. Meat, rice-beer, and rice are the main items of food offered. On this day of *Yupanthaba* the *maibi* and the Thempu discuss as to which name should be given to the child, and they give an appropriate name to the child which is approved of by the parents of the child.

Suckling and Weaning:—Babies are breast-fed for at least one year. Breast-feeding generally continues upto the second year of the child, and from the later part of the first year of the child, taking of solid food (rice) is encouraged. Babies are weaned after their second year.

Contraceptives and abortions, etc.—The inhabitants of this village do not use contraceptives. They do not practise abortion also. If a person is child-

less, or if still-birth and infant-death take place, one attributes such misfortunes to one's bad luck.

Without any formal ceremony, ear-piercing of the child is performed by an experienced person of the village. Ear-piercing is done on both the ear-lobes with a needle and black thread. The thread is allowed to remain on the ear after making a knot of it. Ear-piercing is generally done for children of both the sexes when they attain the age of about two months.

Marriage—The usual types of marriage prevalent in this village are marriage by service, and marriage by engagement and the latter is more frequent than the former. Cross-cousin marriage is assymetrical and only mother's brother's daughter is preferred. The selection of mates is not confined within the village but extends to any village where there are Chirus.

From our own finding we learn that the Chirus of this village are divided into four clans the names of which have been mentioned already, and the marriages of the heads of the 11 households under our survey take place between dis-similar clans. That is to say, a person belonging to Danla clan does not marry one belonging to Danla. From the following table, the distribution of their spouse's clans can be studied.

Table No. 5

No. of heads (male) of Household	Clan name to which he belongs	Clan name to which his wife belongs
1	2	3
1	Chongdur	Dingthoi
1	„	Rhaja
2	Danla	„
1	„	Chongdur
1	Dingthoi	„
3	„	Danla
1	Rhaja	Dingthoi

Note:—Out of eleven households, only ten households have male heads.

It is discernible from the above table that marriages in this village take place between different clans only. At the time of survey, the Khullakpa explained that though marriages take place between different clans, the clans are not necessarily exogamous. A person can marry among all clans excepting within his own sub-clan. He pointed out

that each sub-clan of which mention has been made already is strictly speaking the exogamous unit of the Chirus. Sub-clan exogamy which may theoretically mean a disintegration of clan structure, is not found in actual practice among the Chirus of this village.

Marriage by engagement:—In order to solemnise the marriage, the Chirus do not perform any elaborate ceremony. The selection of a bride is generally done by the parents of the boy, and the parents of the boy have to go to the girl's house and talk to the parents of the girl. In order to concretise the proposal, the parents of the boy offer gifts consisting of a gong, thick coarse cotton shawl, metal utensils, pots of rice-beer and two rupees. There is no fixed number of utensils but generally a big cup and a dish made of brass are included. Some may give clothes in addition to the cotton shawl. These gifts are collectively known as *mankat*. *Mankat* is paid in lieu of service. The acceptance of *mankat* and verbal approval given by the girl's parents constitute the main feature of the betrothal or, rather, marriage among the Chirus of this village, because subsequent to the payment of *mankat*, no ceremony follows except feasting. On an auspicious day (generally on Monday or Wednesday) the girl is escorted by her parents, friends and relatives to the boy's house and there eating and drinking at the expense of the boy's family follow. After the feast party returns home leaving the girl with the boy's family to be a new member of the household.

Marriage by service:—After the preliminary talks between the parents of the boy and the girl are over, the boy is asked to stay at the girl's house and assist her parents in domestic and agricultural works like tending the cattle, cultivating the field, carrying agricultural produce from the field to the house, etc. This period of service is for three years and during this period the boy has no sexual right over the girl. Giving of *mankat* is not necessary when a boy offers three years' service in the girl's house: rather service is offered in lieu of giving *mankat*. But as a matter of fact giving of clothes, utensils, etc., may take place (though these may not be considered as *mankat*), depending upon the means of the boy's family in order to enhance its prestige and cordial relationship with the girl's family. The gifts may be given when the boy returns home with his bride after the completion of three years' service, and a feast is usually offered by the parents of the boy. The feasting at the house of the boy in which boy's party and girl's party join heralds and concludes the marriage of the boy and the girl.

A point may however be noted here that service is not offered merely on ground of inability to give *mankat*. Offering service for three years or giving *mankat* in lieu of it, are old customary practices, and it is more or less a matter of choice and convenience that a family chooses either of them. To cite conditions; if the would be bride happens to be a cross-cousin of boy and if she is the only child in the family or does not have any grown-up brother, her father (who is also the brother of the boy's mother) would like that the boy (*i.e.* his nephew) should stay with him so that he may help him in agricultural and other household works until he takes the girl in marriage. On the other hands, if a boy is the only child of a family and if his staying away for three years at the house of the girl would mean much loss to his family, such a family would like to give *mankat* in lieu of sending a son to another family.

Attitude towards adultery:—The villagers take a strong attitude towards adultery. According to the custom of the villagers, when a man and a woman commit adultery, the case is brought to the notice of the village headman and elders who ask the man to take the woman to wife, and to pay the father, and not the husband, of the woman a fine consisting of one pig, one brass gong, one brass dish, and four pitchers of rice-beer. These articles are collectively known as *maithi*.

At the time of survey no case of divorce was found. Widow remarriage is allowed but levirate and sororate are not practised. There is no case of polygny in this village.

Age at Marriage—The following table shows the age at marriage of all the evermarried persons in the village:

Table No. 6

Showing the age at marriage

Age at marriage (Years)	Number of ever married persons		
	Males	Females	Total
1	2	3	4
14	..	1	1
15	..	4	4
16	..	3	3
17	1	.	1
18	2	1	3
19	..	1	1
20	5	1	6
21	1	.	1
22	..	..	..
23	..	..	.
24	..	..	.
25	1	..	1

It is seen at a glance that marriage of girls takes place from the age of 14 years. The highest number of marriages of females takes place at the age of 15 years, and the number of marriages at 16 years of age comes second. The number of marriages from 15 to 16 years of age is 7 and they form about 63.6 per cent of the total ever married females. Another 3 cases of marriage between 18 and 20 years of age present about 27.2 per cent of the total. As will be evident from the above Table, no marriage of females takes place beyond the age of 20 years.

Coming to the case of ever-married males, no marriage is found to have taken place before attaining the age of 17 years. All the marriages take place between 17 and 25 years of age. However, no case of marriage is found at the age of 19 and 22 to 24 years. There are 5 marriages at the age of 20 years and this is the highest figure representing 50 per cent of the total. The second highest figure occurs at 18 years of age with 2 representing 20 per cent.

The total number of ever-married persons is 21 consisting of 10 ever-married males and 11 ever-married females, and their percentages are respectively 47.6 and 52.4. Large numbers of marriages of both males and females do not occur within the same age-groups. As for males, the majority of the marriages occur, between 18 and 20 years while for females most of the marriages take place at the ages of 15 and 16 years.

Belief concerning death—People believe that Pathel, the supreme god has the power to reward or punish one during and after one's life time. Diseases and evil spirits are believed to be capable of taking one's life.

Preparing patient for death—A sick person is generally attended to by the *Thempu* (Priest-cum-physician of the village). All attempts to save the dying person are given up when the *Thempu* is confident that the dying person could not be saved, and preparations are made for the funeral.

Disposal of the dead—Death takes place inside the house. *Thempu* and male elders also play important roles. When a person dies, the corpse is bathed with luke-warm water by the members of the house or by the village elders. New clothes are also worn.

The Chirus do not cremate their dead. Inhumation of the dead bodies is the common custom observed by all. The village has a common burial

ground which is situated at the south-east corner of the village and in front of the headman's house at a distance of about 100 feet.

The digging of the grave is done by the villagers specially by the young men. The corpse is placed inside a wooden coffin in a lying position with face upward. The coffin containing the corpse is carried by some three or four men led by the *ningon mawa* (son-in-law of the deceased) while carrying the coffin and burying it, care is taken that the corpse should not turn its head towards its house for fear that death may visit the house again. At the time of putting the corpse inside the grave and filling the grave with earth, all menfolk participate. Purification of the person and not the household of the deceased, is performed by the *Thempu* by sprinkling drops of water with a few leaves of *tairan* (cedrela toona) over the persons who participate at the burial.

Grave goods and sacrifice:—Personal belongings like smoking pipe, may be put in the coffin, but grave goods are not compulsorily put. Depending upon the capacity of the household concerned, sacrifices of pigs and hens are made by the *Thempu* in the house of the deceased and these are offered to their god Pathel. The act of sacrifice is known as *manglathaba*. If a family is too poor to sacrifice a number of animals, only one hen also will do. The family of the deceased offers a feast to all. *Manglathaba* and feasting are done on the day of the burial.

Pollution and ceremony concerning death—At the death of a person, his or her family becomes polluted for five days. The families within the clan of the deceased also become polluted for three days and after the third day become automatically clean. But as for the family of the deceased, a purificatory rite is always performed by the *Thempu* in the following manner. The small bamboos which represented domestic deity *Sanamahi* are removed from inside the house and new bamboos are erected in place of the old ones. After this, the *Thempu* sacrifices one pig and a number of cocks—one cock for each member of the family of the deceased. These sacrifices are offered to Pathel and consumed by the villagers.

Exhumation and secondary disposal:—There are no exhumation and secondary disposal.

Miscellaneous—At *umba* (rind of gourd) containing rice-beer is put upon the grave of the deceased by the *ningon mawa* (husband of daughter or sister) or any other person just after the filling of the grave is over.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMY

The economy of the village is essentially agricultural in character. The general picture of livelihood of the inhabitants of this village is a simple one. Males and females work in the field for the cultivation of food crops. Womenfolk do not use plough. There is no strict sex wise distribution of labour in cultivation.

Economic resources:—Land and livestock are the main economic resources of the inhabitants. The extent of land under cultivation, forest pastures, etc. cannot be assessed accurately for a number of reasons; first, the householders themselves could not give exact amount of land under cultivation, etc., secondly, there are no official records showing areas of land in possession by the households as the agricultural lands in the hills of Manipur are free from taxation; and thirdly, the size of land under cultivation varies from year to year as the households practice shifting cultivation. However, an attempt is made to show the approximate areas of land under cultivation by the households. Figures will be found in a later paragraph.

Factors influencing economic life in the village:—Measures regarding land reforms, land improvements, industrializations, etc., are conspicuous by their absence. The only new development affecting economic life of the villagers is the bus-service recently introduced of which mention has been made already. This has led to the expansion of marketing facility and infiltration of urban influences

Livelihood classes:—According to the 1951 Census 33 persons consisting of 15 males and 18 females were enumerated as cultivators of land wholly or mainly owned. The number of cultivators having no land of their own was 11 consisting of 6 males and 5 females. There has been some change in the classification of livelihood classes in the Census of 1961. According to the classification adopted in 1961 Census, 14 males and 12 females are cultivators and 11 males and 11 females are non-workers. But at the time of survey conducted in the year 1962, 14 males and 9 females are recorded as non-workers. All of them are under 12 years of age. Children above 12 years of age become more or less economically active. No person above

twelve years of age has been recorded as non-worker. The distribution of non-workers under different age-groups is as follows. Under the age-group 0-4 years, there are 3 boys and 4 girls. Under the age-group 5-9 years, there are 9 boys and 3 girls while the next age-group of 10-12 years, is represented by 2 boys and 2 girls.

Ownership of the economic resources:—It has been pointed out earlier that all the households are cultivators. In absence of earlier data no comparison can be made with the present data regarding agricultural land. All the households do not possess agricultural land in the plain area. Only three households possess agricultural land in the plain area and the sizes of their holdings vary from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres. All the households, including the three households possessing land in the plain area, have agricultural land in the hill area. Since the villagers practise shifting cultivation, the size of land under cultivation by a house-hold is liable to differ from year to year. During the year 1965, all the households have agricultural-lands in the hill area more or less of equal size, the approximate size being $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres. This is because, as shifting cultivation is practised, no household owns agricultural land in the hill area permanently but they change their agricultural sites year after year. Thus, every year, while selecting a site, all the households work in union for each household in rotation, and since the amount of labour put at the time of selecting a site for each household is more or less the same, lands cultivated by the households are almost similar in size. The land of the village is under the possession of the village community as a whole and it is not leased to the Chief of the village. The village chief does not have any extraordinary right over the land. In matters of right over the land, all are equal and none need pay any amount in cash or kind to the chief. Besides, the whole land belongs to the whole community, and no areas are marked out to be areas of individual clans or families. The right of the village over the land was acquired through factual possession and not by transfer from another chief.

Primary and secondary occupations:—Agriculture is the primary occupation of the villagers. Rearing of domestic animals (see Livestock) may be regarded as secondary occupation as it provides

some income for the households. No change from the traditional occupation can be recorded.

Practices connected with agriculture:—Paddy is the main crop cultivated both in the plain and the hill. In the hill other crops/vegetables like arum, plantain, chilli, etc., though in small quantity, are also cultivated. Only single cropping per year is practised and the yield of paddy per acre in the plain area is about 10 quintals, and in the hill areas about 6 quintals.

The entire agricultural land lying in the plain area is utilised for the cultivation of paddy. In the hill area, more than ninety percent of the cultivated land are utilised for the cultivation of the paddy. Other crops/vegetables like chilli, banana, ginger, etc., occupy a small fraction of the total cultivated area in the hill. The extent of land under each crop cannot be shown with accurate figures.

As for agricultural land in the plain area, ploughing the field with a pair of bullocks or a buffalo is practised. From the livestock statistics recorded in the 1961 Census survey no draught cattle are found in this village. Thus the households cultivating land in the plain area have to borrow draught cattle from any person of a nearby village known to them in order to cultivate the land. The hiring charge of the cattle is given in terms of paddy, and the charge is approximately 7.2 quintals for a pair of bullocks. As for a buffalo, which can perform the work done by a pair of bullocks, the amount of paddy given may be a little less depending on bargaining.

Though the land is put to the plough from the month of February, repeated ploughing is done in the months of May and June when rainfall becomes heavy and regular so that the soil may be reduced to a state of liquid mud. In June generally paddy seedlings are planted with hands in rows. There is no irrigation system to improve the plants. Paddy is harvested during the months of October and November. In order to remove the paddy from the stalks, a broad bamboo mat is spread over the harvested field, and on this mat paddy stalks are put and thrashed. As for cultivation in the hill areas, no plough and cattle are used. Clearing the hill area by cutting plants and grass is the first step. Dry leaves, grass etc., are left over the field and burnt as to increase fertility of the soil. After this digging with the hoe begins. At the time of sowing the field is dug with a hoe and a few seeds are put

in the place. In this manner seeds are sown over the entire field. Harvesting and thrashing are done in a similar manner described above. In the hill area, the cultivator has to go almost daily to his field clear the field by cutting and removing the grass and look after the field most of the day as far as possible so that wild animals like monkey, wild pig, etc., may not destroy the crop.

In the plain area wooden plough is the main tool used for furrowing the field while in the hill area iron hoe is used for similar purpose. Iron sickle is used for cutting the stalks at the time of harvesting both in the plain and hill areas. Thrashing is done with wooden flail having three or four curved prongs.

Since the extent of land under cultivation by one man is not big enough, he can manage most of the work. If a man has a wife and grownup sons and daughters, all of them would work in order to lighten the work-load. Regarding cultivation in the hill area, it is not uncommon for the villagers to work together in the field belonging to each of them in rotation. Offering of reciprocal aid in this manner is called 'Kutlong' and the person in whose field others work, offers at least *Yu* (rice-beer), if not midday meal to them by way of gratitude.

Utilisation and storage of produce:—The bulk of the agricultural produce is meant for household consumption. Excepting paddy, other products are sold as far as possible in order to get some income. All the agricultural products are stored inside the house or inside a small hut, built close to the house. From the household schedules, the following figures are available regarding the annual quantity of crops produced:

Table No. 7

Name of crop	Annual quantity produced	
	Maunds	Seers
Chilli	6	..
Cotton	..	12
Fruits	21	20
Ginger	3	35
Maize	1	..
Pulse	1	..

From the household schedules complete data regarding the total quantity of paddy and arum are not available. One can, however, estimate an approximate figure regarding quantity of paddy since the amount of land cultivated by each household and

the yield of paddy per acre has already been given in a previous paragraph. Regarding arum, the roots of which serve as a substitute for paddy during the lean season, every household cultivates only a few plants by the side of paddy field in the hill. Annual collection of arum roots per household is estimated at 40 Kgs. at the minimum.

Marketing of produce:—Now that regular bus service is available upto Sangaithel village where there is a small market place, the inhabitants of Thangjing Chiru may either dispose of the agricultural produce at Sangaithel or they can proceed upto Imphal by bus in order to sell the goods. Formerly before the bus-service was introduced, villagers used to carry the goods in baskets on their backs and walked along the main road towards Imphal. Since this road passes through a number of villages, they often came across traders (both men and women) on the way who purchased their goods.

Livestock:—The domestic animals play an important part in the economy of the village. The following table shows the position of livestock in the village:

Table No. 8

Showing the distribution of livestock

Item of livestock	No. of Households	No. of Animals
1	2	3
Milch Cattle	4	5
Goat	3	4
Pigs	7	8
Fowls	7	109

The number of fowls is more than that of any domestic animals reared in this village. Excepting fowls, other domestic animals are few in number. By the end of 1965 there has been some change in livestock position. There were no goats and it was reported that the goats had been sold out as they did much damage to crops and vegetables. All the households were found to be rearing fowls, and one household was found possessing one he-buffalo and two she-buffaloes.

Grazing and feeding etc.:—Domestic animals are let loose around the houses within the village. No special care is taken regarding feeding of the animals. No scientific and improved methods are employed in rearing the animals.

Utilization of produce, marketing etc.:—Regarding utilization of produce, the households prefer selling to consuming the animals in order to earn income.

Bigger animals like cattle are reared mainly for harvesting in the agricultural fields. Fowls bring regular income to the households. Marketing is done during the day time and during any season. Since fowls are not expensive every household can afford to rear the same. Besides fowls multiply within a short period of time too. Thus the problem of finance is almost nil. As for bigger animals like buffaloes, these are purchased only when the household possessing them has sufficient money to spend for them.

Practices connected with fishing:—Fishing is not practised by the households of this village.

Forestry:—All the households are free to utilize the hill forest. They collect dry leaves and branches of trees in order to use as fuel for cooking the daily meal. Long grass (*imperata cylindrica*) grows here & there within the village. During winter this grass attains full growth as is ready to be cut. Since this grass is used for roofing the house, villagers cut it with sickle, bind them into small bundles and sell them in the market. No expenditure is involved since this grass is not planted by any household, No permission of the village headmen is necessary for removing any type of tree from the village forest by the villagers, In case of hunting also no share is required to be paid to the village headman.

Village Industry (Weaving):—Weaving is an important occupation of every woman in the household. All the households have on waist-loom each. The products are cotton clothes only consisting of loin-clothes for females and shawls. The yarn are purchased from the market. The clothes are meant for household consumption only and not for sale. So the quantity of produce depends on domestic requirements. Generally every household weaves one piece of loin-cloth for females and one piece of cotton shawl every year. Since the clothes are meant for domestic use, women weave them during their leisure hours. If a woman starts weaving a cloth, she generally works at the loom for at least one hour daily and completes the cloth (loin cloth or shawl) within about seven or eight days. The womenfolk do not have any special training in weaving but they learn it from their mothers and elder sisters through apprenticeship. The estimated costs of a female loin-cloth and a shawl are respectively Rs. 6.00 and Rs. 8.00 while the estimated market value of the same are Rs. 8.00 and Rs. 10.00 respectively.

Commerce:—There is no commercial establishment within the village. The villagers sell their agricultural produces in the market. Selling of the goods is done during the day time throughout the year. The agricultural commodities like chilli, arum, plain-tain leaves and banana, *yongchak* (*Parkai roxburghii*), etc., are sold out in the market soon after they are collected. It will not be possible to give the exact quantity of these commodities sold in the market, but a rough estimate can be made. About 145 kilos of chilli, 740 kilos of fruits, 120 kilos of ginger, 30 kilos each of maize and pulses, 400 kilos of arum and seven to eight thousand fruits of *yongchak* are sold annually.

Beside tilling the soil, and selling agricultural commodities and domestic animals especially fowl, there is no other occupation worth the name.

Indebtedness:—At the time of first survey in 1962 out of 11 households, 3 households or about 27 per cent were in debt. By the end of 1965 no households was reputed to be in debt, and hence no particulars of families in debt can be furnished.

Co-operation:—There is no co-operative society within the village. The villagers are not served by any outside co-operative society.

Income and expenditure:—It has been stated that, in addition to paddy cultivated for household consumption, other crops and vegetables are also cultivated for consumption as well as for sale. Almost all the agricultural commodities excepting paddy are sold in the market. It will be difficult to assess income derived from the sale of agricultural

commodities separately. Every household derives a minimum income of about forty rupees per month and the maximum reaches upto about sixty. Income of all the households falls within these maximum and minimum amounts for the reason that all the households have more or less equal amount of land under cultivation and the bulk of their income is derived from the sale of agricultural commodities. Rise from the average minimum income is caused mostly by the sale of fowls and eggs though such sales are occasional. Major expenditures are incurred on clothes, baskets, oil, salt tools like hoc, knife, spade etc. As mentioned already three households are able to purchase a bicycle each.

Aspirations:—When asked 'What kind of work would you like your son to do?' Only six households have given a common answer, that is, all of them would like to have their sons in the Government services while the remaining five households have no definite answers to give.

It has further come to our notice that the majority of the households have enough idea as to what industry would be lucrative for the households concerned. Out of the 11 households 7 households have given their choice of occupation which according to them will be beneficial for the village as a whole. Seven households or about 63 per cent of the total are of the opinion that weaving will be a lucrative job. Out of these 7 households, 6 households opine that not only weaving but carpentry also will be a profitable job. Out of these six households, three further add that tailoring too will be lucrative if a machine be installed in this village. The remaining four households did not give any reply.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

Birth and death rates:—We do not get a clear picture regarding birth and death rates of this village though the data collected from our schedules throw some light on this aspect. The following table shows the number of male and female children who died or are alive with reference to the age of their parents:

Table No. 9

Showing births and deaths with reference to the age of parents (head of household)

Age of parents (In years)		Number of children died		Number of children alive	
Father	Mother	Males	Females	Males	Females
51	45	2	1	1	..
30	28	1	..	3	3
26	25	..	..	1	1
21	19	..	..	1	1
29	27	..	..	2	..
..	30	..	..	..	2
30	25	..	1	1	..
27	22	1	1	1	..
40	30	..	..	1	2
50	45	1	4	1	..
30	28	2	..	2	1

It is seen that the total number of children born in all the eleven households is 38 consisting of 21 males and 17 females. In other words, males represent about 55 per cent of the total number of children born. Out of 38 children born 14 children representing about 37 per cent of the total died. Coming to further details, two-thirds of the male children born survived while one-third of them died during their childhood. The percentage of male survivors out of the total male children is 66.6. As for female children, the death-rate is a little higher than that of the male children. Only about 58.8 per cent of the female children survived and 41.2 per cent died. Out of the eleven households, five households have not lost any children, two households have lost male children only, one household one child only, and three households both. Out of 7 boys and 7 girls died, 4 boys and 2 females happened to be first born children.

Statistics regarding age and sex:—Out of the total number of 45 persons, 25 are males and 20 are females items the percentage of males is 55.6 and that of females is 44.4. The following table gives the data regarding the distribution of the village population by sex in various age groups:

Table No. 10

Showing population by age-groups

Age-groups (Years)	Total population		
	Persons	Males	Females
1	2	3	4
All ages	45	25	20
0-4	7	3	4
5-9	12	9	3
10-14	4	2	2
15-19	2	1	1
20-24	2	1	1
25-29	8	3	5
30-34	5	3	2
35-39	..	..	..
40-44	1	1	..
45-49	2	..	2
50-54	2	2	..
55-59	..	..	..
60 & over	..	..	..

From the above Table it will be seen that 23 persons in the age-group 0-14 years form 51 per cent of the entire population in the age-group 5-9 years is the highest and that in the age-groups 25-29 years and 0-4 years come second and third respectively. In the age-group 40-44 no female is found. Another characteristic feature of this village is that it does not have any person beyond the age of 55 years at the time of survey. If we group those who have attained the age of 15 years under adult population on the ground that they are strong enough to work in the field and do many other jobs, the village presents 22 persons as the adult population which consists of equal numbers of males and females. Though the population structure shows a fall from the lower age-group to the higher age-group the decline is irregular and not steeply pyramidal.

The number of males is higher than the number of females. There are 800 females only to every 1,000 males, and this feature does not conform to the general sex-ratio in Manipur where the number

of females is more than that of males. The over-all disparity of the sexes in this village is mainly due to the fact that the number of males born is more than the number of females born though in various age-groups irregularities may be seen. The number of females is higher than that of males in the age-groups of 0-4 years and 25-29 years, while in the age-groups of 5-9 years and 30-34 years, males outnumber females. The excess of male population over that of females in the age-group 5-9 years is so high

that it is responsible for the population disparity between the sexes. In the age-group 15-24 years, males and females are equal in number. In age-groups 40-44 years and 50-54 years only males are found while in the age-group 45-49 years only females are found.

Marital status:—The following table illustrate the marital status of the population according to various age-groups:

Table No. 11

Age and marital status

Age-group (Years)	Total population			Never married		Married		Widowed		Divorced or separated	
	Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
All ages	45	25	20	15	9	10	10	..	1	..	..
0—4	7	3	4	3	4	..	..	..	..	..	..
5—9	12	9	3	9	3	..	..	..	..	..	..
10—14	4	2	2	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
15—19	2	1	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
20—24	2	1	1	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..
25—29	8	3	5	..	..	3	5	..	..	..	..
30—34	5	3	2	..	..	3	1	..	1	..	..
35—39	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
40—44	1	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
45—49	2	..	2	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
50—54	2	2	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..
55—59	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
60 and over	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

It will be seen from the above table that out of 45 persons, 24 persons or 53.3 per cent are unmarried, 20 persons or 44.5 per cent are married, and 1 person or 2.2 per cent is widowed. No person is found to have been divorced or separated at the time of survey. No case of unmarried females is found after the age of 14 years and of unmarried males after 19 years. No male or female is returned in the age-groups 35-39 years, 55 years and above.

The following table shows the percentages of

married persons within the different age-groups :

Table No. 12

Showing percentages of married persons in various age-groups

Age-groups (Years)	Number of persons	Number of married persons	Percentage of married persons within age-group
1	2	3	4
0—14	23	..	..
15—19	2	1	50.00
20—24	2	2	100.00
25—29	8	8	100.00
30—34	5	4	80.00
35—39	..	..	..
40—44	1	1	100.00
45—49	2	2	100.00
50—54	2	2	100.00
55—59	..	..	..
60 & over	..	..	..

The high percentage of married persons in this village is mainly due to the fact that all the households are represented by nuclear families only. The fall in percentage in the age-groups 15-19 and 30-34 is due to the existence of one unmarried male in the

former age-group, and one widow in the latter age-group in the total population.

Size and composition of households:—The following table illustrates the size and composition of the households of this village:

Table No. 13

Size and composition of households

Total No. of households	Size of households having											
	2-3 members			4-6 members			7-9 members			10 members & over		
	Household	Males	Females	Household	Males	Females	Household	Males	Females	Household	Males	Females
11	5	8	7	5	13	9	1	4	4	—	...	..

In this village there is no household consisting of one person only or ten persons and over. Thus all the 11 households have persons whose number ranges from 2 to 9. There are 5 households each in household size of 2-3 members and 4-6 members. There is only one household consisting of 8 persons, which fall under the 7-9 members category. So far as the size of population is concerned, the number of persons in households of 4-6 members each is the highest, and that under 2-3 members each stands a close second.

Types of family:—All the eleven households are of simple families. There is no intermediate or joint type of family.

Literacy and education:—No accurate data are available to show the number of literate or educated persons under different age-groups. It will not be possible to present the position of literacy in this village on the basis of the number of school-going children, though it may reflect some trend of the progress made by the people in the field of education. From the Khullakpa it is also learnt that, with the exception of a few school-going children the rest of the population are practically illiterate. The absence of at least a lower primary school in this village further supports the fact that the inhabitants of this village lag far behind in the field of literacy and education. In 1961, 10 students (8 boys and 2 girls) were reported to be studying at the primary school situated at the entrance of Longa Koireng, a neighbouring village to the south of Thangjing Chiru. By the end of 1965 two boys in Class IV, two boys in Class III and one boy in Class II were reported to be studying in the said school.

Intra-family relationship:—Family plays an important role in the socio-economic life of the people. Generally the oldest person in the family, whether male or female, manages the household affairs till his or her death even though sons and daughters have grown up and attained maturity of judgement. Parents and children maintain uninhabited intimacy, especially during the period of minority of the children. This state of intimacy gradually gives place to that of keeping a respectful distance on the part of the children as they attain the age of majority. A woman maintains respectful distance and avoidance towards her in-laws, particularly her father-in-law. Brothers and sisters are always intimate. Father or the eldest male-member is practically the patriarch of the family and he exercises authority over the other members of his family.

Inheritance of property:—No statutory provisions are in force regarding inheritance of property. Only customary law prevails so far as inheritance of property is concerned and at present they are not guided by the Hindu Succession Act. According to the customary law, only the sons inherit the property after the death of the father. If there is more than one son in a family, the youngest son gets a share greater than that of any of his elder brothers. This is probably because the responsibility of taking care of aged parents rests with the youngest son.

The larger share entitled to the youngest son includes agricultural land, utensils, clothes, etc. The question of sharing the homestead does not arise because land is free and abundant. Besides, familial love and tie are very strong among these people, and partition does not necessarily take place after the

death of a father, If partition takes place at all, a larger share is generally given to the son who is the poorest and who has the largest number of dependants. Hence the customary law is not strictly followed at all times.

Leisure and recreation:—Young boys and girls remain at home or walk around the village talking among themselves. They do not play any game like football or hockey. Men and women also spend their leisure time sitting at home and gossiping with one another. They also drink rice-beer during leisure hours.

Festivals:—The village is poor regarding the number of festivals celebrated by its inhabitants. The festivals celebrated during a year are *Laipusa*, *Lamba kaba*, and *Sikimsa*. Near the middle of the residential area, there is a broad piece of land where the villagers congregate in order to celebrate the festival. In these festivals all the inhabitants join together and celebrate them.

Laipusa:—This is a religious festival performed for two days in the month of *Phairen* (January-February). The main significance of this festival is to bid good-bye to the dead and to pray for prosperity and long life of the living. Sacrifices of pigs and/or fowls are made to the Supreme god Pathel by the village priest called Thempu. The animals to be sacrificed are brought by all the households. They also bring rice-beer, and they eat and drink together. Boys and girls sing and dance in groups.

Lambakaba:—Performed in the month of *Kalen* (May-June) for five days. The occasion of the festival is to express joy and happiness of the year. Grown-up boys and girls sing and dance together. Eating and drinking are the usual items of this festival.

Sikimsa:—Performed for three days in the month of Mera (October-November), the chief purpose of this festival is to observe what is known as 'Phoumi Kouba' (calling corn spirit). In order to solemnise the observance, every family prepares rice-flour by pounding rice grains in the mortar and when this flour bread¹ is prepared all eat together at a common place. Along with this bread they also eat rice and meat and drink rice-beer.

1. The Chirus prepare the bread in a somewhat different manner. The flour is first kneaded in a dough form and it is wrapped up with two or three green leaves of *Leihoura* (a kind of plant resembling *canna indica*). It is then placed inside a pot of rice. The mouth of the pot is fully covered so that the steam within will produce sufficient heat required for baking the bread.

Religion:—The inhabitants are not divided into religious sects. There is no special structure to house their deities. Reference has been made already about Pathel—the supreme god of the Chirus of this village.

The seat of Pathel is located at the foot of an *uyung* tree which grows in the north-east corner of the residential area. A small slab of stone is put to represent this deity. During the annual festivals, the village priest offers sacrifices and prayer to this deity. No financing or expenditure is involved for the maintenance of this deity.

Sanamahi of whom mention has been made already, is the household or domestic gods of the Chirus. There is no image of *Sanamahi*, but this deity is represented by a bunch of small bamboos erected as a pillar near the middle of the interior of the house. Prayers and sometimes sacrifices of fowls *etc.*, are offered to this deity by the village priest in case of sickness of an inmate of the house.

About fifty feet in front of the house of the headman lie two small slabs of stone which represent the seat of *Koubru* who is the Manipuri forest god whose realm is assigned to the north-west direction. The village chief informed that *Koubru* is a secondary god in the village and prayers and sacrifices are seldom offered to this deity.

Community worship:—Laipusa festival, of which mention has already been made may be regarded as a form of community worship because in this festival all the villagers assemble at a common place and the village-priest makes sacrifices and offers prayers to the supreme god Pathel for the welfare of the villagers.

Village organisation:—Since this village is a small one it is not divided into hamlets. So all the inhabitants join together in the affairs of the village.

Panchayat:—There is neither statutory Panchayat nor Caste or Community Panchayat in the village. The headman of the village who is known as the *Khullakpa*, assisted by the village elders, settles disputes, if any, and discusses with the village elders the affairs of the village. *Khullakpaship* is hereditary. After the death of a *Khullakpa*, his younger brother will

become the Khullakpa. In the absence of younger brother, the son of the deceased Khullakpa will become Khullakpa. Khullakpa is a titular head and his responsibility is to maintain law and order within the village. He cannot do anything against the will of the people. There are the village elders with whom he consults regarding any activity of the village. Approval of elders is always necessary. Hence none has challenged his leadership.

Clubs, etc.:—There is no club in the village. The inhabitants of this village are not the members of any club outside the village.

Family planning:—There is no family planning clinic in the village, and no activities have been undertaken in the village for family planning. There

is no indigenous method of prevention of birth of children. No person uses any medicine or appliance for preventing birth of children. Children are considered to be gifts of God, and it is the will of Pathel that a family has a large or small number of children. The general attitude of the inhabitants is to have a son rather than a daughter, because a son will be a permanent member of the family and will be a supporter of the parents when they become old.

Some important informations have been collected in order to ascertain the attitude of the people towards family planning. From these informations it has come to our notice that males and females of this village take different attitudes towards limiting the size of their families. Details are shown in the following tables :

Table No. 14

Information and attitude towards the family planning with reference to the number of sons and daughters in the households

Community	Number aware of family planning centres	Number wanting more children					Number wanting no more children				
		Have more than three sons	Have 1—3 sons	Have no sons	Have no daughters	Have no children	Have more than three sons	Have 1—3 sons	Have no sons	Have no daughters	Have no children
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Chiru	Nil	Nil	7	..	4	..	..	3	1	2	..

Table No. 15

Attitude towards family planning with reference to the age of the heads of the households

Community	Number wanting more children, the ages of the heads of the households being					Number wanting no more children, the ages of the heads of the households being				
	Above 50 years	41—50 years	31—40 years	21—30 years	20 or less years	Above 50 years	41—50 years	31—40 years	21—30 years	20 or less years
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Chiru	Nil	Nil	1	6	Nil	1	1	Nil	2	Nil

Table No. 16

Attitude towards family planning with reference to age of the child-bearing woman

Community	Number wanting more children, the age of the child-bearing women being							Number wanting no more children, the age of the child-bearing women being						
	Above 40 years	36—40 years	31—35 years	26—30 years	21—25 years	16—20 years	Less than 16 years	Above 40 years	30—40 years	31—35 years	26—30 years	21—25 years	16—20 years	Less than 16 years
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Chiru	Nil	Nil	Nil	3	3	1	Nil	2	Nil	Nil	2	Nil	Nil	Nil

Table No. 17

Attitude towards family planning with reference to the duration of marriage

Community	Number wanting more children, the duration of marriage being					Number wanting no more children, the duration of marriage being				
	Over 20 years	16—19 years	11—15 years	6—10 years	5 years or less	Over 20 years	16—19 years	11—15 years	6—10 years	5 years or less
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Chiru	Nil	Nil	2	4	1	2	Nil	1	1	Nil

The number of persons wanting more children than they have at present is higher than the number of persons wanting no more children, 7 persons or about 63.6 per cent want to have more children while the remaining 4 persons do not want to have more children. With reference to the age of the heads of households, out of 7 persons who want to have more children, 6 persons or 85.7 per cent are between 21-30 years of age. In the same age-group there are two persons (or 50 per cent) out of 4 who do not want to have more children. Among heads of households who want to have more children, none was below 20 years of age or above 40 years of age. Out of 11 child-bearing women, 7 or about 63.6 per cent want to have more children and all of them are within the age group 16-30. Out of 4 women who expressed no desire to have children, 2 are above 40 years of age and another 2 are within the age group 26-30 years. The number of persons who want to have more children increases with the increase in the

duration of marriage from "5 or less years" to "6—10 years" period. There is a fifty per cent fall in the number of persons from "6-10 years" to "11-15 years". Out of 4 persons who are reported to have no desire to have children, 2 persons have been married for over 20 years.

Untouchability:—The Chirus of this village are not aware of the idea of untouchability. Among the meiteis of the neighbouring villages as well the idea is fast disappearing. In day-to-day life they mix freely with other non-Chiru people.

Other reform and development measures:—If we compare this village with other hill villages of Manipur it may be said to be still backward. During the last five years or so no reform and development measure worth mentioning have been carried out. This village does not have any school, co-operative society or club. Such institutions are very essential in village development.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

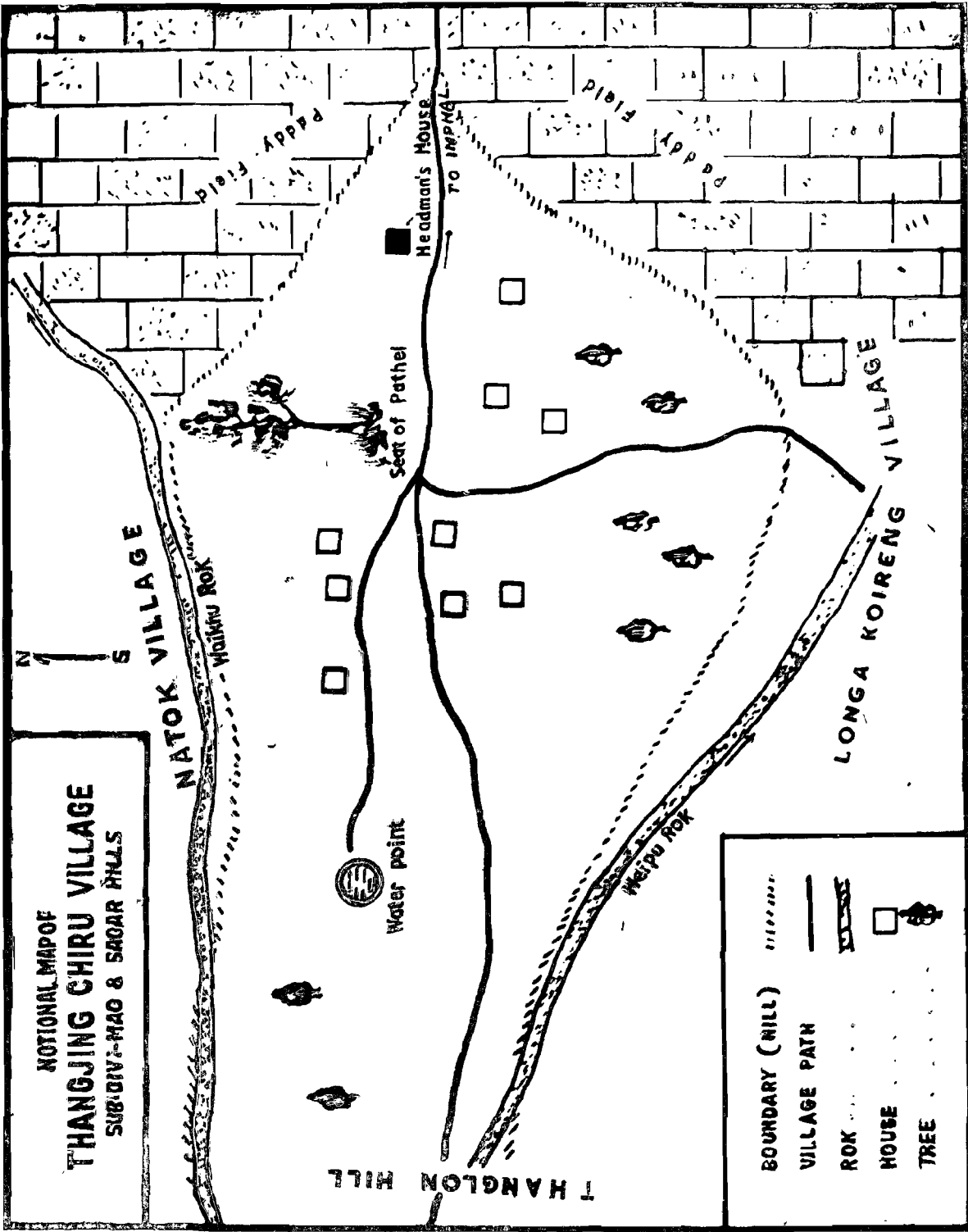
The inhabitants of this village living in a remote area where constant contact with people of urban area rarely takes place, are not well informed of the common daily happenings concerning different parts of Manipur. People of this village do not read newspapers.

Though the village is a small one where the population is below fifty persons, communal life within

the village is a congenial one. They are friendly with one another and ready to help those in distress.

Since the village is close to Sangaitel village where there is also a small market-place, the villagers can bring down the agricultural commodities for sale there and can avoid the difficulty of transport. The people maintain cordial relation with the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages.

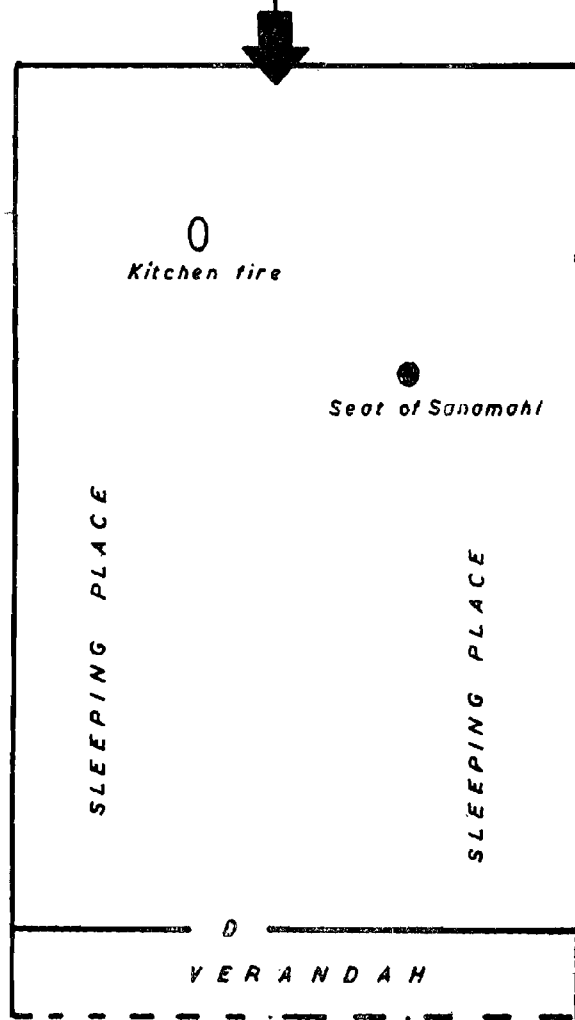
NOTIONAL MAP OF
THANGJING CHIRU VILLAGE
 SUB-DIVISIONS: MAO & SAGAR HILLS



BOUNDARY (MILL)	
VILLAGE PATH	
ROK	
HOUSE	
TREE	

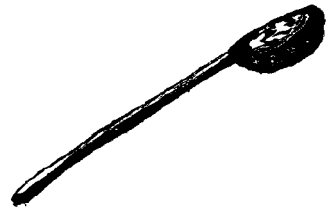
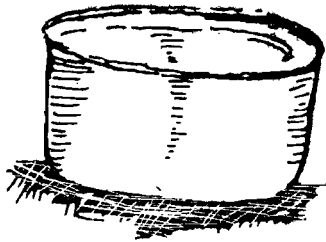
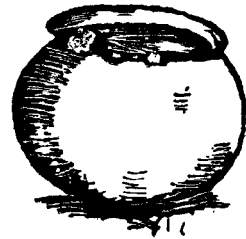
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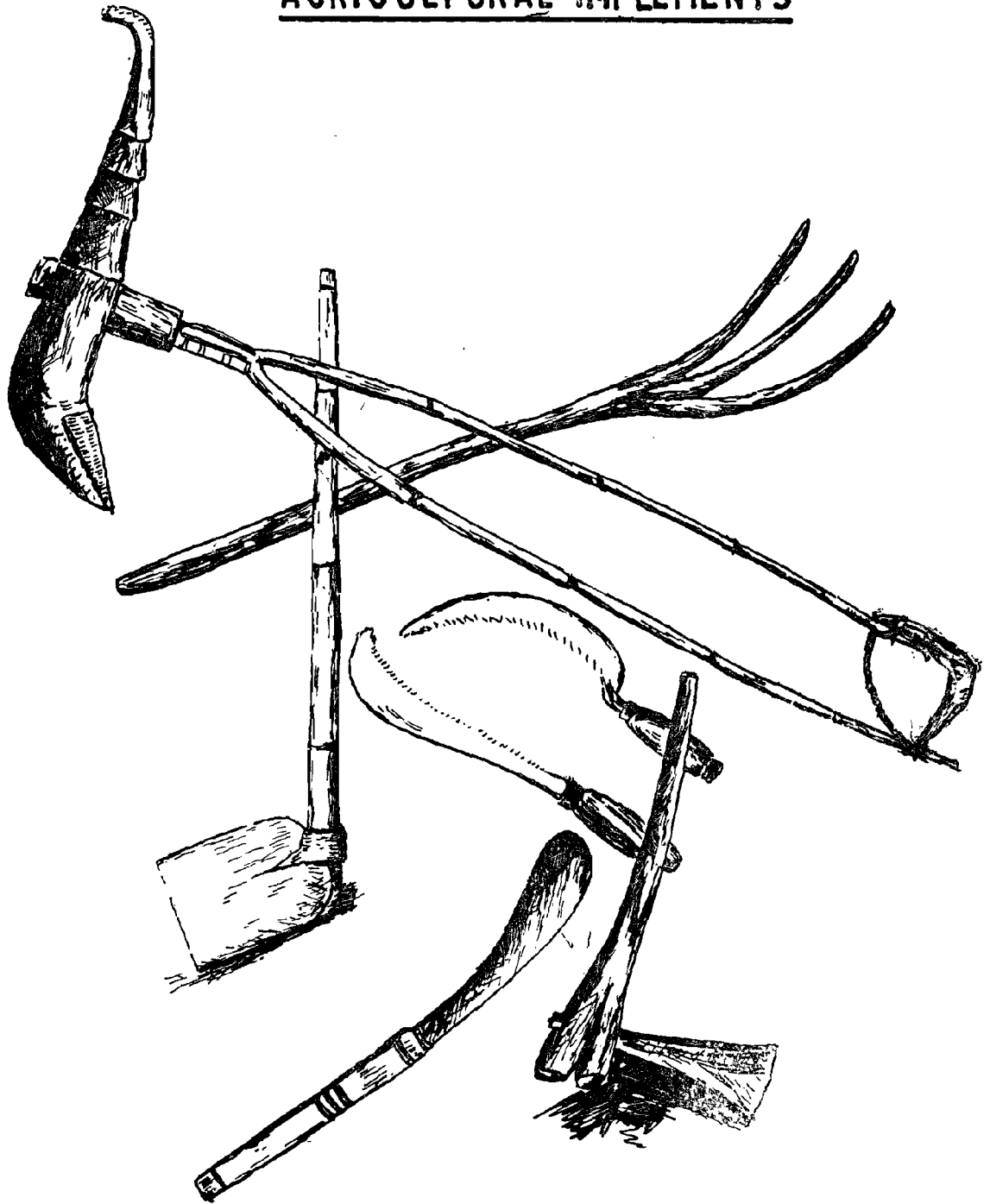


GROUND PLAN OF A TYPICAL
HOUSE

HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS

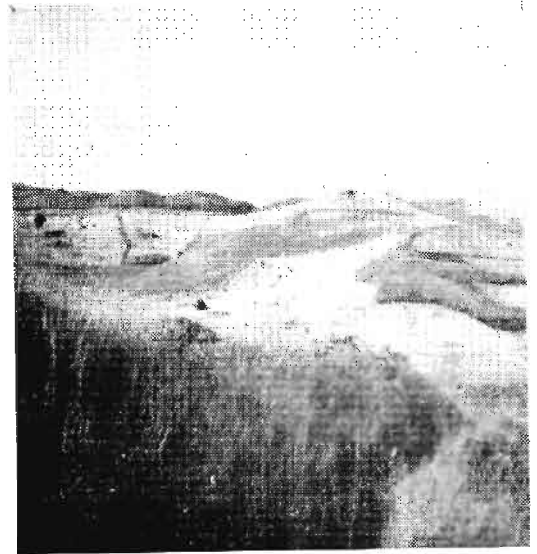


AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS





(Plate 1) Typical Chiru house



Agricultural field (Plate 2)

(Plate 3)
↓



Stones representing the seat of Koubru

(Plate 4)
↓



The village headman and his wife



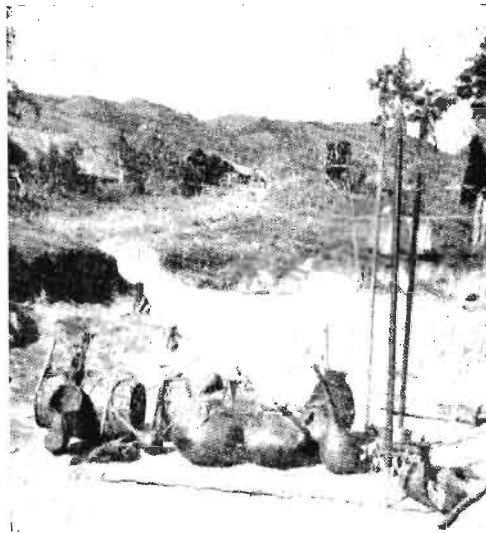
←(Plate 5)

Village girls in their traditional costume



(Plate 6)→

Typical hair-style of Chiru girl



←(Plate 7)

Some of the articles required in
Lambakaba festival



(Plate 8)→

Villagers carrying rice-beer
for the festival



P
L
A
T
E
S

(9 to 12)

Some scenes



from the
Lambakaba Festival

