

SYNOPSIS OF THE PROJECT:  
DOCUMENTATION AND DIGITAL DATA CREATION OF THE  
MAO INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

**a) Introduction**

The Maos call themselves *Imemai*, and inhabit the northern most part of Manipur's Senapati district. The Maos are indigenous to the land and have different cultural practices and belief system. There are relics, megaliths, sacred stones, trees and places that accounts for the rich oral heritage of the people. The other interesting aspect of the Mao oral literature is the tangible elements in the land of the Mao community that is the source of intangible oral literature and added to that is the different genres of folklore (oral literature) that encompass the whole oral literature scenario of the people. Linguistically, Maos falls under the Naga group of languages of the Tibeto-Burman language family.

**b) Mao Oral Literature**

The Mao community has a rich tradition of intangible cultural heritage. The intangible cultural heritages of the Maos are based upon a wide range of cultural practices, and traditions that have been handed down from generation to generation through the ages. In the absence of written documents of the past, the origin of the Mao community is traced on the basis of folklore. The folklore genres are categorized in accordance with their purpose, occasion and usages. Folklore of the community is accorded a position of importance in serving as a template to the ways of the community. In other words, they bear testimony to the legacy and larger cultural attributes of the people. In the past folk song and folk tales are the common outlet for the people while engaged in agrarian work, during festive occasions, religious ceremonies, funeral, or simply during common gatherings. The oral literature also contributes towards maintaining the oral history of the people.

The Mao community is undergoing a stage of transition due to the influence of western culture. This is causing neglect to the ethos of traditional cultural and intangible cultural values and heritage. The research project is on 'Documentation and Digital data creation of the Mao intangible Cultural Heritage'. Many folklore practices are of unknown authorship, transmitted orally, originating from the beliefs and customs of the folk.

This research proposes to look into the oral folklore of the Mao community. The guiding aspects would be translation, semantics, and aesthetics. These parameters of analysis will help to cull out the relative significance that is embedded and embalmed in the intangible cultural heritage of the Mao community.

**c) Objectives**

No effort has been made to retrieve, document or disseminate this wealth of oral literature. Therefore it will be worthwhile to undertake this research for the generations to come and

for posterity. The Mao community has a good repository of intangible cultural heritage in the repertoire of the older generations that stands unattended and in neglect. Therefore it is important that the oral literature is looked into for its cultural importance. The objectives of this project are;

- i) Documentation and digital data creation.
- ii) Culling out the intangible from the tangible forms through knowledgeable individuals.
- iii) Future publication of the document in book form is a target.

**d) Implementation**

The research and documentation is carried out in my individual capacity with help from the local community.

**e) Timeframe**

The timeframe for carrying out the project is for duration of 12 months (*which could lapse due to unavailability of the knowledgeable few*).

**f) Specific Area of the State where Art(s) is practice; geographical, typological etc.**

The project is located in the Mao area of Senapati district of Manipur

**g) Photos (Preliminary Level)**

Photos and video clips will accompany the write-up (*Video Clips will be sent separately through postal service as the files are too large*).

**h) Conclusion Of The Project As You Have Envisioned**

The project is going on as planned. Some refinement will be done on the write-up. Free translation is done on the narration of the video clips. The video clips will undergo more editing for the final submission.



**Scheme for “Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India”**  
**Form for National Inventory Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage of India**

A. Name of the State

*Manipur*

B. Name of the Element/Cultural Tradition (in English);

*Documentation and Digital Data Creation of the Mao Intangible Cultural Heritage*

B.1. Name of the element in the language and script of the community

Concerned, if applicable

*Imemai Opfu-Ope Kohrü Ko (Roman script)*

C. Name of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned (Identify clearly either of these concerned with the practice of the said element/cultural tradition)

*The Mao community*

D. Geographical location and range of the element/cultural tradition (Please write about the other states in which the said element/tradition is present)

*Mao Area, in the Senapati district of Manipur.*

E. Identification and definition of the element/cultural tradition of the India

(Write “Yes” in one or more boxes to identify the domain(s) of intangible cultural heritage manifested by the element. If you tick ‘others’, specify the domain(s) in brackets.)

- i. (Yes) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage
- ii. ( ) performing arts
- iii. ( ) social practices, rituals and festive events
- iv. (Yes) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe
- v. ( ) traditional craftsmanship
- vi. Other(s) ( )

F. Provide a brief summary description of the element that can introduce it to readers who have never seen or experienced it

*The intangible cultural heritages or the oral literature of the Maos are based upon a wide range of cultural practices, and traditions that have been handed down from generation to generation through the ages. Folklore of the community is accorded a position of importance*

*in serving as a template to the ways of the community. In other words, they bear testimony to the legacy and larger cultural attributes of the people. In the past folk song and folk tales are the common outlet for the people while engaging in agrarian work, during festive occasions, religious ceremonies, funeral, or simply during common gatherings. The oral literature also contributes towards maintaining the oral history of the people.*

- G. Who are the bearers and practitioners of the element/Cultural Traditions? Are there any specific roles or categories of persons with special responsibilities for the practice and transmission of it? If yes, who are they and what are their responsibilities?

*The Mao community are the practitioners but as it is not organised it is dying. Today there are far too few who knows the oral lore of the people. None*

- H. How are the knowledge and skills related to the element transmitted today?

*The dissemination is oral, but today the youths are least interested and not keen to learn. Therefore the lore of the people is facing extinction.*

- I. What social functions and cultural meanings do the element/cultural tradition have today for its community?

*It is the source of oral history of the people. The oral lore traces the oneness of the people and thereby bonding them as one community.*

- J. Is there any part of the element that is not compatible with existing international human rights instruments or with the requirement of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, or with sustainable development? I.e. describe any aspect of the element/cultural tradition that may be unacceptable to Law of the country or may be in opposition to practicing community's harmony with others.

*None*

- K. Your Project's contribution to ensuring visibility, awareness and encouraging dialogue related to the element/cultural tradition

*The digital data if archived will be an added source of information for the future generation and ensure visibility of the community in the days to come.*

- L. Information about the safeguarding measures that may protect or promote the element/cultural tradition

*There are no measures undertaken till date but if an awareness of importance is created and an institute is established it will go a long way in safeguarding this vanishing oral lore.*

a. (Write "Yes" in one or more boxes to identify the safeguarding measures that have been and are currently being taken by the communities, groups or individuals concerned)

i. ( ) transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education

ii. (Yes) identification, documentation, research

iii. ( ) preservation, protection

iv. ( ) promotion, enhancement

v. ( ) revitalization

b. Write about the measures taken at local, state and national level by the Authorities to safeguard the element/cultural tradition?

*Fencing of some tangible elements has been done at the ground level but no other measure has been initiated at any level.*

M. Write about the threats, if any, to the element/cultural tradition related to its practice, visibility and future longevity. Give facts and relevant reasons based on the current scenario.

*Dissemination of the oral knowledge has become almost a thing of the past. Awareness like holding a seminar and workshop on the oral lore of the community would enhance its importance and longevity.*

N. Safeguarding measures proposed

(This section should identify and describe safeguarding measures to protect and promote the element/cultural tradition. Such measures should be concrete and can be implemented to formulate future cultural policy for safeguarding and promoting the element/cultural tradition in the state)

*Establish a formal or informal agency to coordinate in imparting the oral knowledge at the local level, or in collaboration with an institute at the local level. Proper concrete fencing for the tangible elements will also safeguard the intangible lore. Beautification of 'place lore' would go a long way in the promotion and propagation of the oral literature of the community.*

O. Community Participation

(Write about the participation of communities, groups and individuals related to the element/cultural tradition in formulation of your project)

*It is my individual effort with a few knowledgeable individuals as informants.*

P. Concerned community organization(s) or representative(s)

(Provide detailed contact information for each community organization or representative or other non-governmental organization that is concerned with the element such as associations, organizations, clubs, guilds, steering committees, etc.)

*None*

- i. Name of the entity
- ii. Name and title of the contact person
- iii. Address
- iv. Telephone number
- v. E-mail
- vi. Other relevant information

Q. Give information of any Inventory, database or data creation centre (local/state/national) that you may be aware of or of any office, agency, organisation or body involved in the maintenance of the said inventory etc.

*None*

R. Principal published references or documentation available on the element/cultural tradition

(Books, articles, audio-visual materials, names and addresses of reference libraries, museums, private endeavours of artistes/individuals for preservation of the said element, publications or websites)

*One book;*

Nipuni. K., 2013: *Opfu-Opelo; The Poetry and Lore of the Mao Naga* (unpublished Ph.D thesis), North-Eastern Hill University. Shillong

Salew. N., 2014: *A brief history of Makhrai Rabu Hrü (Makhel Race)* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Makhrai

*(Several research papers by the scholar himself)*

Signature: .....

Name & Designation: Dr. K. Nipuni Mao  
Independent Researcher

Name of Institution (If applicable): .....

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## DOCUMENTATION AND DIGITAL DATA CREATION OF THE MAO INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

### THE STONES SPEAKS

The unique Charasü Marabu<sup>1</sup> is the harbinger of the tales that are associated in the oral tradition of the Mao community. The folklore of the local community has that life of the first human began at this very place. Hereafter, the many tangible elements within and on the outskirts of the Makhrai Rabu village<sup>2</sup> are the result of this heritage. A good number of stone monoliths tell tales and take us back to the pre literate days of different significance. The stone elements of this place play a significant role towards sustaining and rejuvenating the intangible oral literature and the belief system of the community. To this day the mere presence of these monoliths around this mystic village continues to churn out the tales of the forefathers of the long bygone eras. The tales continues to be handed down verbally and continues to circulate to generations after generation. Tales of the stone monoliths will continue to be disseminated through word of mouth for as long as they are judiciously preserved. The tales relate to us the simple daily life, their belief system and the different facets of life of the early simple folks.

‘Stone’ one of the most available and inert natural resource of the land seems to have a special bond with the ritualistic tradition conscious Maos. Stone is used for different purposes, from using it as landmarks to using it for rituals, in burial and using it as monoliths and raising stone-platforms. The stone culture of the Maos does make a statement. The Stones speaks in the Mao culture and do narrate a story, of pride and achievement, memory of persons of consequence, of myth and legends and the like. The themes upon which monoliths and stone-platforms are raised at different locations in the land of the Maos are testimony of the culture of the local folks. Stone culture is therefore ethnocentric to the Mao culture. Some of the stone monoliths that relates to us and upon which the Mao oral literature is built upon is been testified in the following pages.

### ORA TUBO TTU



**Fig. No. 1. Ora Tubo Ttu**

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<sup>1</sup> Meaning the mystic or sacred banyan tree in the local language

<sup>2</sup> The earliest known village of the Nagas

The oral literature of the Maos says that the place where the present Makhrai village is located is the navel of the earth. Thus, the inhabitants of this small hamlet pride themselves as been from the navel of the earth and evokes a sense of importance from their village been the navel or centre of the earth. And thus Ora Tubo ttu<sup>3</sup> a special stone is believed to be placed on the navel of the earth and this particular stone is located in the middle of the Makhrai village. The stone evokes further importance due to its utility in the performance of the divination ritual of Ora Tubo. **(Video Clip 2)**

There are two rituals associated with Ora Tubo and both are associated with agricultural cycle of harvest and the later integrated with aligning to the welfare of the people as well. These rituals are performed year after year during the lunar calendar month of *Onu*<sup>4</sup>. The rituals are performed post paddy transplantation. The rituals are divinations to determine the weather condition during harvest season of that year. The chief of the village perform these rituals. The ritual is a performance where the Supreme Being (the spirit world) is invoked by man (the human world), and the fowl and the calf (the animal world) acting as sacrificial intermediaries between the spirit and man. Thus, conjugating the three worlds on one stage, at the navel of the earth and hosted by the Ora Tubo stone.

The first ritual is performed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of the lunar calendar of the community. In the first ritual, a young small fowl (chicken) is killed and hung on a 'Y' shaped twig. This is placed at the foot of the Ora Tubo. Here the eyes of the fowl are observed and if evidence of tears is found in the eyes, it is foretold that there is imminence of rain during harvest season. And in the course of killing the chick if it sheds feather(s) it is foretold that there is imminence of hailstone during harvest season of that year. This ritual is performed to ascertain the weather and when found unfavourable people are warned to take preventive measures during the harvest season.

The second ritual is performed on the 28<sup>th</sup> day of the lunar calendar of the local community. On this day, in the early hour of the morning the village chief places 30 gourd-jars of rice-beer on the western side of the main or pole pillar of his house. Thereafter the chief goes out of his house and go and tie an unblemished calf on the Ora Tubo prior to preparing his morning meal. The villagers would gather around in the course of tying the calf. Thereafter the people would wait for omens from the young calf. The omens are thus, usually thunder would be heard on this day and that is a good omen. In the course of the thunder if the calf moo making strange unnatural sound, it is foretold that misfortune would befall the inhabitants of the direction where the calf faces at the time of mooing. If the calf fails to produce any sound it is considered to be a bad omen. If the sound of thunder is accompanied by the normal mooing of the calf it is considered as a good sign and that the harvest would be plentiful. Thereafter the calf is set free by mid noon.

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<sup>3</sup> It is the name of a stone in the Makhrai village upon which a calf is tied once in a year for divination ritual

<sup>4</sup> The local lunar month which is around the second part of August to first part of September



## ZHEKHIO AND CHOROWU TTU



**Fig. No. 2. Zhekhio Ttu**



**Fig. No. 3. Chorowu Ttu**

The legends of Zhekhio and Chorowu are well known in the annals of oral folklore of the local community. The two flat stones unlike the other several elevated stones in the village courtyard are said to be their stones from where they are said to have ascended into the sky alive. The brothers were much loved and admired by the people as much for their mannerism and kind hearted attitude. The brothers were said to be special with extraordinary gifts and looks. The brothers Zhekhio and Chorowu are said to have befriended the gods, who gifted them with extraordinary talent. Often they are spoken about of being sighted at different places simultaneously at a given time. Their visitations to the girl's dormitories and simultaneous presence in different dormitories at a given time became the talk of young maidens and created a stir in the village. On their visitations to the female dormitories of Koide village because of their mysterious presence at different locations at a given time bewildered the village folks. This was construed as a threat to the security of the village and therefore the man folks of Koide village plotted to eliminate the brothers. On several occasions the brothers were cornered but they always found a way to escaped. On one such circumstance Zhekhio and Chorowu jumped over the village gate<sup>5</sup> which was quite extraordinary and unexpected and escaped. Thereafter the village folks stood guarding every entry point to the village and at one place a guard said that he sighted the brothers and threw his spear and claimed that the job was done and the guards retired for the night. The next day when the guards came out to see the claim of the previous night to the consternation of the guard and the village folks it was found that the spear struck a half-burnt firewood-stump. After this incident the brothers never returned to Koide village. What followed next was worst for the Koide people. Natural calamity struck Koide people where their paddy fields were struck by hailstone. It is said that two white birds hovered in the sky and marked out the fields of the Makhrai and Charanho villagers and the unmarked fields of Koide people were struck by hailstone and it was sever. Thereafter sever famine ensued for seven long years in the land of the Koide people. This was believed to be the punishment meted out to the Koide folks for their irrational and inhumane treatment of the brothers Zhekhio and Chorowu. **(Video Clip 4)**

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<sup>5</sup> Normally the village gates are 10 – 15ft high

## KHUBU REDZÜ TTU



**Fig. No. 4. Khubu Redzü Ttu**

The literal translation of the name Khubu<sup>6</sup> Redzü<sup>7</sup> ttu<sup>8</sup> means a male or masculine gun stone. Khubu Redzü is believed to be buried and covered with this big flat stone so that no man can take possession of this divine or miraculous weapon. The gun was a gift to Khephio the progenitor of man from his grandfather Ranorü Kahekacheu. The gun possessed a divine power and operated on the order of the possessor, so says the folklore of the Maos. The gun was used by the people for defence against enemies, it would hit the intended target anywhere and after fulfilling the mission the bullet would return to the possessor of the gun awaiting the next mission. The weapon was said to be so effective that fear of annihilating the human race became a reality and so in their better sense of judgment the people buried the weapon and covered it with a stone slab, which today is known as the Khubu Redzü ttu. **(Video Clip 6)**

## TOLU REKRÜ AND REDZÜ TTU



**Fig. No. 5. Tolu Rekrü Ttu**



**Fig. No. 6. Tolu Redzü Ttu**

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<sup>6</sup> Local term for gun

<sup>7</sup> Local term for male or masculine

<sup>8</sup> Local term for stone

These stones are called *Tolu Rekrü*<sup>9</sup> and *Tolu Redzü*<sup>10</sup> stones. A folk tale relates that the parents of two young eagles were killed by a Tthakrü-krü<sup>11</sup> snake. Therefore in order to avenge the killing of their parents, to settle score for the bird Lisie<sup>12</sup> and to go to war against the earthlings, the young eagles were set a parameter by the birds of the sky to lift these stones. When the young Eagles were fully grown to test their strength and skill, they were asked to lift these stones. They did it and they were able to do with ease. Seeing that the young eagles were ready, war was pronounced against the reptiles. The folk tale recounts;

One day the bird Lisie said to Shikripaipfucha-a<sup>13</sup> 'do take care of my eggs, I want to go and look for food.' Shikripaipfucha-a replied 'okay I will take good care.' So the Lisie bird flew off to look for food. As Lisie bird flew off, Shikripaipfucha-a gobbled up the eggs. After some hours the Lisie flew back to her nest and to her horror she found Shikripaipfucha-a, head covered with the shells of her eggs. Words failed Lisie for some time, gathering her wits and courage Lisie asked Shikripaipfucha-a what had happen? Shikripaipfucha-a did not answer but just ran off without talking to Lisie. Seeing the shell of her eggs made Lesie very sad. So Lesie thought over of what to do. She approached the birds of the sky and told of the incident that had taken place between she and Shikripaipfucha-a. She requested the birds of the sky to sent emissaries and settle the matter between she and Shikripaipfucha-a. So the bird's council was summoned and the matter put forth by Lisie was deliberated. They all agreed that Lisie was wronged by Shikripaipfucha-a and so they agreed to take up the matter with their counterparts, the earthlings (reptiles and small creatures of the earth). When they took the matter to their counterparts, their counterparts paid no attention. This enraged the birds of the sky which hastened them to say that war was the only solution to the impending settlement.

After heated verbal exchanges both the side concluded that war was the only solution to resolve the problem and thus parted. Preparation for the war started in earnest. The birds of the sky searched for ones who would be at the forefront of the war. The eagle couple took it upon themselves to be in the forefront of the war for the birds of the sky. While for the earthlings they chose the big snake Tthakrü-krü to be at the forefront of the war.

On the day of the war the birds of the sky flew across the breadth of the sky. And the earthlings filled the spacious breadth of the earth. The war was pronounced and soon the eagle couple in all their swiftness made a dash one for the head and the other for the tail of the Tthakrü-krü. Tthakrü-krü reacted with equal alacrity and managed to ward off the attack of the eagle couple and at the same time caught the

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<sup>9</sup> The local term for female Eagle

<sup>10</sup> The local term for male Eagle

<sup>11</sup> The local term for one variety of Snakes

<sup>12</sup> The local term for one small type of birds

<sup>13</sup> A small lizard with smooth exterior

eagle couple and ate them. The earthlings rejoiced and praised the Tthakrü-krü. And on the other hand the birds of the sky were stunned and as if their spirit has gone out of them they remain mute and speechless. And that is how the first war of the birds of the sky and the earthlings came to an abrupt end.

The eagle couple had two young eaglets, a male and a female. As their parents were devoured by the Tthakrü-krü they became orphans. The council of the birds was summoned to discuss and choose as to who would care for the young eaglets. They discussed over and over again yet no one came forward to take the responsibility for the orphaned eaglets. So the birds of the sky forced the Crow to take care of the young eaglets. For a long time the Crow refused but the persisting pressure made the Crow relent and accept the responsibility. The Crow said 'fine, if no one is there to take care of the eaglets I will, I will do my best to take care of them.' So the council asked the Crow with what he would feed the eaglets. To this the Crow replied 'to the up forested land I go, a bag of dung, and to the down furlong I go, a bag of dung.' The whole council rose in unison and said 'disgusting, disgusting' and in great commotion the whole council spit on the Crow.<sup>14</sup>

Once more the search for the care-taker for the eaglets began, yet no one dared to accept the responsibility to care for the young orphaned eaglets. Now Khebo<sup>15</sup> was forced to accept the responsibility to look after the eaglets but Khebo refused. Yet the council forced on Khebo to take care of the eaglets. So Khebo accepted with great reluctance. The council asked Khebo with what he would feed the eaglets. To this Khebo replied 'to the up forested jungle I go, a bag of butterflies, and to the down furlong I go, a bag of butterflies.' To this the council commented that it was not that bad. Thus Khebo started taking care of the orphaned eaglets.

Khebo started in all earnest to take good care of the eaglets, yet there was not much seeable improvement in the well being of the eaglets. So with concern the birds of the sky sat again to discuss the well-being of the eaglets and what was the reason that the health of the eaglets were not improving as much? Khebo said to them 'because of the wideness of my mouth the butterflies dropped off and thus I could not feed much the young eaglets. That is the reason the health of the eaglets were not improving.' The council was greatly angered and so they all hit Khebo on the head.<sup>16</sup>

The birds of the sky could not think as to who could be the best suited person to take care of the orphaned eaglets. They mulled over and over again and at last concluded that

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<sup>14</sup> It is said that in the beginning the Crow was white, but due to the birds spiting on the crow it turned black

<sup>15</sup> The local term for a wide mouth bird

<sup>16</sup> It is the result of the hitting by the council of birds that Khebo's head became flat

Süde<sup>17</sup> would be the best to care for the eaglets. The council entrusted Woodpecker to take care of the eaglets and asked with what he would feed the eaglets? The Woodpecker replied 'though I declined to care for the eaglets I am forced upon with the responsibility. And so, for the eaglets, to the up forested land I go, a bag of woodworms, and to the down furlong I go, a bag of woodworms, that is how I will feed the eaglets' he said. The birds of the sky were at last happy with the assurance the Woodpecker gave and they all repeated saying 'that's it, that's it' and praised the Woodpecker and they all patted the head of the Woodpecker and smoothed it.<sup>18</sup>

The care taken by the Woodpecker started showing on the eaglets soon after. It grew and matured so fast and exactly turned out to be like its deceased parents. Soon after learning the fate of their parents, the now fully grown eagles started preparing to avenge the death of their parents. They were a sight to behold. They were asked to lift the stone to test their strength and skill in their flight and this the young eagles did it with great ease. So once again the birds of the sky challenged the earthlings to war. Having conquered the first war, the earthlings accepted the challenge without much botheration.

For the second time the earthlings chose Tthakrü-krü to be in the forefront in the war against the birds of the sky. On the appointed day the birds of the sky were hovering in the sky in full strength, so were the earthlings all across the face of the earth. The two young eagles too were hovering up in the sky and eyeing to attack the earthlings. The war was pronounced, and seeing that Tthakrü-krü was leading the charge of the earthlings the eagles dashed forth for the Tthakrü-krü snake. The young eagles caught Tthakrü-rü one by the head and one by the tail and carried it up to the sky and killed it.

This was how the birds of the sky avenged Lisie's lose as well as the death of their parents.

### OKHE, ORA AND OMAI TTU



**Fig. No. 7. Okhe Ttu**

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<sup>17</sup> The local term for Woodpecker

<sup>18</sup> It is thus said that Woodpecker's head became flat and smooth because of the patting by the birds





**Fig. No. 8. Ora Ttu**



**Fig. No. 9. Omai Ttu**

The three stones represent *Okhe*<sup>19</sup>, *Ora*<sup>20</sup> and *Omai*<sup>21</sup>. The myth of origin of the people state that it was from this place that the brothers went their separate ways. It is said that at this place they competed against each other to determine who would inherit their parental home and who would move out. The myth of origin relates thus (Extract from the folktale);

“... All the three brothers wanted to inherit their parents’ home. They all tried to force out the other, but no one left their home. So, they tried to solve the problem. Omai the youngest said to his elder brothers, ‘none of us should inherit our parents’ home easily. We shall have to prove our worthiness to inherit our parents’ home, we

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<sup>19</sup> The local term for Tiger

<sup>20</sup> The local term for god / spirit

<sup>21</sup> The local term for man / human

shall compete in a game and the winner shall inherit our parents' home. And the losers shall have to leave, the elder brothers agreed to the proposal. So, Omai told his brothers that they should make a Prodzü<sup>22</sup>. They made the Prodzü and installed it at a distance on the upper ridge of the land. Omai said, 'he who first touches the Prodzü shall inherit our parents' home.' They run to touch the Prodzü, Ora let out his spirit and touched the Prodzü before Okhe and Omai could reach. Omai was left far behind and he was not happy with the outcome and so he told his brothers that they should do it again, Ora and Okhe agreed. Ora felt pity for Omai the youngest brother. So, Ora made a Catapult for Omai and told him to hit the Prodzü before Okhe could reach. They stood at the starting point once again. When they started for the second time Omai did not run but shot the Prodzü with the catapult and shouted, 'I touched'. Ora and Okhe raised no objection and as agreed, Omai the youngest of the brothers inherited their parents' home. But before they departed, the brothers erected a stone each as a sign of their co-habitation at a place called Chazhelophi<sup>23</sup> where the stones stand to this day."

The stone monoliths are erected in a line. The stone representing Tiger is laid on the floor of the earth and prohibited to be erected upright, as it is foretold that if the stone is upright the population of tiger would increase by manifold and that man's population would decrease leading to tigers endangering the lives of man, that is why the stone representing the tiger is thus laid on the floor of the earth. Whereas the stones representing Spirit and Man stands erected upright at Chazhelophi. **(Video Clip 10 & 12 )**

#### OTUU NOBI TTU



**Fig. No. 10. Otuu Nobi Ttu**

This stone is located at Otuu<sup>24</sup> Nobi<sup>25</sup> that is, the name of the place is derived from this stone. How this stone came to be here is extraordinary. It is said that in the long bygone

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<sup>22</sup> Plants tied together into a ball shape and erected on a pole as a sign of promise and ownership

<sup>23</sup> The name of the place where the monoliths of tiger, god/spirit and man/human stands to this day

<sup>24</sup> The local term for Cow

days a man was carrying the ear of a cow in his bag. He found that the cow's ear was getting heavier and heavier by the hour. Upon reaching this place he could no longer carry and it was no longer a cow's ear but a block of a stone and thus he left it at this place. As it turned out the significance of this stone is unprecedented.

The Otuu Nobi turned into a charmed stone. In the past when rain failed during summer paddy transplantation season or when people are in need of rain, they would invariably go and touch or overturn the stone and that would produce rain even on a clear sky day. And at times a small bit of the stone would be broken off and then rain would follow within an hour or so. But in the past few decades or so excessive violation of the stone seems to have undone the charm of the Otuu Nobi as well as making the stone comprehensively small in size. Today the Otuu Nobi still exist but desolate upon a small heap of stones as can be seen in the photo above (**Video Clip 14**)

### OCHU CHUJI KOSÜ TTU



**Fig. No. 11. The Ochu Chuji Kosü Stone**

The Ochu Chuji Kosü<sup>26</sup> is a charmed stone. It was gifted with the divine power to endow a person with wisdom and knowledge when it is seek out. This stone is located at a place called *Pfuruttu Mate*. The significance of this stone is in times of dispute and want of wisdom and knowledge people come to this stone and pay obeisance and indulged it with rice-beer, then people were blessed with clear-thinking, wisdom and knowledge to settle their disputes and differences and further acquire knowledge. It was also seek out during times of imminent war. The people would come to the Ochu Chuji Kosü stone and ask for guidance and wisdom and they would be blessed with better understanding of their fate to

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<sup>25</sup> The local term for ear

<sup>26</sup> The local name of a stone that is gifted with the power to enhanced wisdom and knowledge of man



come. Thus the people avoided any unnecessary intermittent war or headhunting. This is why the people come to the Ochu Chuji Kosü stone to solve their unresolved issues due to lack of understanding. **(Video Clip 16)**

PINI KOSÜ TTU



**Fig. No. 12. Pini Kosü Ttu**

The Pini kosü<sup>27</sup> stone stands alongside the Ochu Chuji kosü stone. It is said that even if a child is rendered orphaned, a child can survive on his/her own with or without the support of elders or another person when he/she attains the height of this stone. The height of this stone is set as the parameter for one to be able to survive on his/her self or need to be still cared by the elders. Till the time a child is of the height of this stone he/she has to be taken care and not be left for the child to fend for him/her survival. The community thus has a norm to follow under unfortunate circumstances to care for the children. **(Video Clip 16)**

OTUU KHU KOSÜ TTU

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<sup>27</sup> The local name of a stone whose height is set as a parameter to be able to live by oneself



**Fig. No. 13. Otuu Khu Kosü Ttu**

The Otuu khu kosü<sup>28</sup> stone is located at a place call Pe Sani ebvü. It is believed that a person cannot be a cowherd till he/she grows up to be the height of this stone. But when a person reaches the height of this stone and considering his/ her physical structure, he or she would be able to tend the cows and buffalos properly without the help of a second person. Therefore the forefathers have set a parameter to be a cowherd which is important, so that a young child would not be burdened with the onerous task of tending the domestic animals in the jungle. In the past this kind of strictures were necessary as there were cases of unfortunate orphans who were often burdened with chores that were far beyond their ability. And the Otuu khu kosü stone is one such that keeps the people within the tenets of daily life of the community. **(Video Clip 18)**

### HUDZÜ MOTUU TTU



**Fig. No. 14. Hudzü Motuu Ttu**

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<sup>28</sup> The local name of a stone whose height is set as a parameter to be able to be a cowherd all by oneself

The Hudzü Motuu<sup>29</sup> stone is located at a place known as Pekokho Ettu. The name of this stone can be translated as Cock's comb stone. In the past there was no availability of salt, but the brine water was used as substitute for salt. Towards the west of this stone lies some 7–8 brine wells, which is nature endowed and also said to contain medicinal properties. In the headhunting days enemies would hide behind this stone and people were head hunted as they approach towards the brine wells. To avoid this misfortune the people going to draw the brine water, would call out to Hudzü Motuu stone to ascertain the presence or absence of enemy warriors behind the stone. The people who are out to draw the brine water would call out aloud from afar to Hudzü Motuu stone to interact. When called out and if the enemies lay in wait to head hunt they would respond to the calling assuming that Hudzü Motuu monolith interacted thereby revealing their presence. This allowed the people from proceeding further and avoid been killed. But when called and if there is no response it acknowledges that no enemies lay in wait, and thus the people proceeded to the brine wells and draw the brine water for their needs (The brine wells can be seen in the later part of the video clip. **(Video Clip 20)**)

#### OTTU RIDZÜ



**Fig. No. 15. Ottu Ridzü Ttu**

The Ridzü<sup>30</sup> stone is located at a place known as Süpfukre Kohrü to this day. The name of the stone literally means a male or masculine stone. Male stones are rare and hard to find. The importance or significance of the male stone is that the people possessing such a male stone seldom lost in war. In the past in the head hunting days our forefathers possessing such a stone was a treasure for the people. Knowing the importance of the stone the Maram tribesman tried to take possession of this stone by night from the land of the Makhrü people. With great difficulty they pulled it away yet the weight of this stone was unlike any other stone and so they could not proceed further and they left it at a place called *Likhrü*. In

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<sup>29</sup> The local name of a stone monolith which translated would mean 'the cock's comb stone'

<sup>30</sup> It is the name of a stone which actually means male or masculine



order to bring back the Ridzū stone the Makhrai villagers too went in the night and as they are few in number they went lighting torches of pine all along their path all the way to Likhrü, to camouflage their small number from anybody. As they tag the stone they hollered to a non-verbal phonetic sound. Some Maram tribesman saw this and wanted to chase down the Makhrai people but some others wanted to listen to the hollering tune and the assumed fear of the big number of lighted torches of the Makhrai people. Thus lighting the pine-torches all along the way did the trick for their small number. This feared assumption on the part of the Maram tribesman allowed the Makhrai people to tag away the Ridzū stone and bring it back to the vicinity of their village. Thereafter the Maram tribesmen never try to venture to reclaim the Ridzū stone again. And thus to this day the Ridzū stone remain located in the vicinity of the Makhrai village. **(Video Clip 22)**

### NAPFUTTO KOHRÜ TTU



**Fig. No. 16. Napfutto Kohrū Ttu**

The Napfutto Kohrū<sup>31</sup> stone monolith tested the athleticism of the males of the community. The name of the place is also named after the stone Napfutto Kohrū ttu which when translated literally means the ‘Stone to beget male child’. The name of the stone is so for want of a male child in a patriarchal Mao community. It is foretold and believed by the people that any man who can run up to the peak of the monolith without the support of their hand and perform an ululation at the top would beget up to seven sons. So to test their athleticism and also to fulfill their desire for a male offspring, the males from the

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<sup>31</sup> It is the name of a stone when a person is able to run up to the top is believed to beget a male child

community would try to run up to the peak of the stone monolith without the support of their hand. The male members of the community participated with great enthusiasm and with great prestige attached to it. It is said that many tried but very few succeeded in their attempt to ascend to the top. To this day the Napfutto Kohrü stone stand posing a challenge to the young males of the community who seek for a male child. **(Video Clip 24)**

### CHAKHETTU



**Fig. No. 17. Chakhettu**

The Chakhettu<sup>32</sup> stone is located towards the north-east of Charanho village in the Mao land. What is special about this stone is never known to the people, what the people knew is that in the past it is known to heal or mend itself of any breakage by external force. Today the stone's middle is small whereas the head and bottom portion is huge comparatively. A tale relates that in the long past during the old headhunting days the Maram<sup>33</sup> tribesmen warriors tried to cut off the upper portion of this stone and take possession of it. They would cut the middle of the stone night after night, but each time before succeeding to decapitate it dawn would break forcing them to abandon before completing the task. But each time on their return to their surprise and consternation they would find that the stone has mended itself and in its original shape, as if no harm has been done the previous night. Thus the Maram tribesmen warriors failed to take away the Chakhettu stone. To this day the stone stands still in its original place with spearing marks openly visible and its middle tightened as can be viewed in the video clip. **(Video Clip 28)**

### OTTU TUPHA CHAVA

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<sup>32</sup> Literal meaning is the 'good mannered stone'

<sup>33</sup> One of the Naga tribe inhabiting the northern part of Senapati District of Manipur



**Fig. No. 18. Tupha Chava**

The *Tupha*<sup>34</sup> *Chava*<sup>35</sup> stone, semi-circle and flat in shape is located on the outskirts of the Tobufü village in the Mao country. This is a charmed stone believed to possess magical powers of multiplying paddy till an unfortunate incident devoid it of its magical powers. The people of Tobufü would bask their paddy on the Tupha Chava and in return the inhabitants of the village were blessed with paddy wealth beyond their need. And this gift of wealth enabled the village folks to provide food and drink to weary travelers who pass by their village. The basking of paddy on the stone was taken on turns amongst the village folks. This made all the households in the village equally plentiful in food and drink. But as fate would have, on an uneventful day a quarrel ensued between a woman and her daughter-in-law. The quarreled was, both claiming their turn to bask their paddy. The impasse was not immediately resolved and the woman got so angry with her daughter-in-law for denying her right to bask her paddy on her rightful day. And so the woman did the most undesirable and outrageous that anybody would comprehend the action. The woman removed her undergarment and struck the stone slab with it. This outrageous act of indecency and angst brought the downfall of the magical powers of the Tupha Chava. And from that day the stone failed to ever multiply. **(Video Clip 30)**

## **FOLKTALES**

***Narrator: Mrs. Athisü Chisa***

### **OVO NO ORU AMORU**

Pilo sü okru ba reitto timai se, dzüro leno. Alilei ovo sü no Pilo ru moru pi timai se, alilei Pilo süno zhe kaka te khru Kobopa-e vu timai se. Ali Kobopa süno Okhro nobi le arei lote timai se. Okhro nobi arei lo li-e Okhro süno pfü-a bukhraha pfü asu asua tua Manitto tto kali nhetha-a timai se. Alili Manipfü süno tsü vu timai se, Okhro ni adai vano atto tto yi nhe thae? te, ai Kobopa no anobi le aria lokolu vano aya pfüa bu khraha tu-a sühe-a süduno nhe

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<sup>34</sup> The abbreviated term for *ottu thopha* in the local language which means 'flat stone'

<sup>35</sup> The local term for charm or miraculous

thae. Ai attotto yi sa-a koro müdai tto koa shetto letta sa-a aproa kili ni nhe thae tili süno, Manipfü süno Kobopa ni adaiso Okhro nobi le arei lolie tta süku timai se. Alilie Kobopa süno aila arania araikromoe, on-e Pilo no khru ayi vuchu vano arei krotie tili-e sü Pilo ni adai vano khru Kobopa yi sü vue? Te, ayi ala khru vunia vumoe ovo no aru moru chu vano pfüa bu khrahroa khru vute, tili-i Ovo ni adai vano Pilo rusü morue? te, on on tikitta Ovo süno ozha le nepho lote. Mani süno muhru tiua kokharü tolie timai se.

*(Video Clip 32; Narrator: Mrs. Athisü Chisa)*

### **Translation**

A wild fowl was once picking and eating the *ekru*<sup>36</sup> vegetable. Then a crab came and tickled the bottom of the wild fowl. The wild fowl then flew up and landed on the flowering bamboo plant. As it did so the flower of the bamboo fell and entered the ear of a sleeping deer on the ground. The deer, startled started running around uneasily and in doing so the deer trampled to death a young wild pig. So the mother of the young wild pig started inquiring as to how her offspring was killed. She asks the deer why it trampled to death her young offspring. The deer replied that it was because of the uneasiness as a bamboo flower felt into her ear and so it was in that state it trampled to death the offspring of the wild pig. The wild pig said I was taking out my offspring to eat some of the new grass growth but you trampled it to death. Then the wild pig went and enquired from the bamboo flower why it felt into the ear of the deer. The bamboo flower responded and said that it was not on its account that it felt into the ear of the deer, but because of the wild fowl landing on the branch of the flowering bamboo abruptly that it felt into the ear of the deer. So the wild pig enquired of the wild fowl why it landed abruptly on the branch of the flowering bamboo. To this the wild fowl responded saying that it did not go and hit upon the branch of the flowering bamboo on purpose but it was because of the crab who tickled its bottom that out of uneasiness it went and hit the branch flowering bamboo plant. So the wild pig went and asked the crab why it tickled the bottom of the wild fowl. The crab has no answer and so it just mumbled and mumbled and run inside its hole, at this the wild pig darted out the mud and ate the crab.

### **CHEKHE YE JÜKHE ORI KOSO**

Lisie sü idzü dzü-e timai se, Lisie sü dzü dzülili-e on Lisie süno Shikripaihuca-e no ni adzü khuluda ai dzü pfüle nhie tto tatie timai se. Sülilei eatto Lisie dzü sü khua bue Shikripeihuca süno Lisie dzü sü mütolia opi rücho tia bute timai se. Sülili Lisie ye Shikripaihuca sü kozü pratei timai se. Kozü prali ni adaivano adzü mütolia tta kozü pralie süno Shikripaihuca pfonhie sü orü sole orü kozüle te prale timai se. Sülilie nia rahu li kohrü kulu ayia khenho li kohrü sü kulule tta ku savu timai se. Ku savu-e süno okhenho li kohrü sü adai enho no djie okhenho li kohrü sü takrü no djie, rahu li kohrü sü adai rahu no djie, rahu li kohrü sü tolu luchu no djie tta, savu kusavu kitoa orü sü kozü le tto, kozü chusü tolu luchu rükrü ridzü sü ottotto kanhai ko kittai te rikrü kali ridzü kali. Süno rache no zhe athupfo kokro sü takrü rikrü

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<sup>36</sup> A wild vegetable which is eaten by man, animal and bird alike

ridzü no so tthae timai se tolu lochu rikrü ridzü yi sü. So ttha wuli-i rahu khrumai sü kra-eh-a ta ye kenho rumai sü khro-eh-a ta.

Tithe ti ichu-u tolu lochu ttotto nhie hi athino mokule athi pano mokule te, kholo ni mokuu te ie mokuma daikia. Ni adaiyi no moku le? Kashi khroe bo khobo, eve khroe bo khobo tilie rahuli kohrü no kholo yi sü mosü vua kholo sü tai te timai se charei krae. Süli ichu tithe athi peno moku le te, on Khebo ni mokuu te, ie mokuma daikia. Ni adaiyi no moku le te? Kashi kroae laphe khobo eve khroe laphe khobo te, ie sü ni mokuu tta moku kilie chapei oneh ayi ni pfovue laphe süno taimo le süno azhi phopho pfo zhepfo tatu tutie mokulu shite tili rahu li kohrü no khebo pi sü kopha pia süvano khebo pi sü thopha tie timai se. Alili titheti thi pano mokule tto kakrü ke. Sülili Süde ni moku te, ie mokumo dei kia te. Ni adai no mokule te? Kashi kroe kholiri khobo eve khroe kholiri khobo, süse te süse tto rahuli kohrü sü Süde pi sü konhöpi süduno Südepi sü modzüyi timai se.

Asüno orü sü so kile tta tolu luchu tolu ye rahu ti kakhei sü kusavu kelu, the khenho li kohrü sü kusavu kelu, thakrü krü rikrü ridzü sü, the tolu luchu ottotto nhei süno apfü mokhu phole te rikrü süno, ridzü süno apfo mokhu phole, tta orusü sochusü chapei sü thakrü rikrü ridzü sü tolu locho ttotto nhei süno athukro rache no athukro kakre pfolia sotthalia pfokhru chapei sü khenho thakrü korei sü pfokru rache ki rapie timai se. Rache ki rapie the, titheti sü rahuli kohrü peno hihhi vudu le, hi vudu lu chumai sü peno movule tilie ie tto, rashu piki süno khru vudu no khaita-a racheno khru opi sü shulekro kewua kroke, aino movule te ne nipi no kitie adai so movule tto pano movu bo. Sülili titheti athipano movuole tta bueli, Popo movuu popo movuu ttamai khruno omutta kali sü tsü-tsü tsü-tsü so li vudu mosho sü vudua movuo la timai sü. Süva süno echuu movuu chisü sole, rahuli kohrü müe paipio te, ie tta rahuli kohrü sü omü paipi pia Ohra no amai no yilai ayi paipi-u mottho tili ni onhöno odzü krüvü vü-a bua chi shua ne racheno khoa chida tta rahuli kohrü no ichau, athi koribo se ayi amü no yiloe paipiu motho te ni korü leno chisa mazha lichu djüno vaku prali rahuli kohrü no niye mosüvu ledö tta mosü vu timai se. (Süsü no okhai se). **(Video Clip 34)**

### Translation

One day the bird Lisie said to Shikripaipfucha-a ‘do take care of my eggs, I will go and fetch water.’ Shikripaipfucha-a replied ‘okay I will’. Lisie flew off to fetch water, by then Shikripaipfucha-a gobbled up the eggs and covered its head with the shell of the eggs. Upon Lisie’s return she found Shikripaipfucha-a’s head covered with the shells of the eggs. At this a verbal fight ensued between them and they concluded that war between their likes would be fought to settle the matter. Lesie approached the birds of the sky and Shikripaipfucha-a approached the reptiles of the earth to prepare for the war.

The birds of the sky searched for ones who would be at the forefront of the war. The eagle couple volunteered to be in the forefront for the birds. While the earthlings chose the big snake Tthakrü-krü to be at the forefront. As the war started the eagle couple in all their swiftness made a dash one for the head and the other for the tail of the Tthakrü-krü. But the



equally agile Tthakrü-krü managed to ward off the attack and at the same time caught the eagles and devoured them. The earthlings rejoiced but the birds of the sky were stunned into cries of despair. That is how the first war of the birds of the sky and the earthlings came to an abrupt end.

The eagle couple had two young eaglets, a male and a female. As their parents were devoured by the Tthakrü-krü they became orphans. The council of the birds was summoned to discuss and choose a caretaker for the young eaglets. The birds asked the Crow to take care of the young eaglets, the Crow agreed. The crow was asked with what he would feed the eaglets? To this the Crow replied 'to the up forested land I go, a bag of dung, and to the down furlong I go, a bag of dung.' The birds' council rouses in unison and said 'disgusting, disgusting' and in great commotion the whole council spit on the Crow, turning the crow into black in colour.<sup>37</sup> The search for the caretaker for the eaglets continued and the council entrusted the Khebo<sup>38</sup> to take care of the young eaglets. The council asked Khebo with what he would feed the eaglets. Khebo replied 'to the up forested jungle I go, a bag of butterflies, and to the down furlong I go, a bag of butterflies.' To this the council commented that it was not bad. Khebo started in all earnest to take good care of the eaglets yet there was no noticeable improvement in the well being of the eaglets. So with concern the birds sat again to discuss why the health of the eaglets was not improving? Khebo said to them 'it is due to the wideness of my mouth the butterflies dropped off and so the health of the eaglets was not improving.' The council was angered greatly and out of anger they all hit Khebo on the head.<sup>39</sup> Now the council of the birds asked *Süde* (Woodpecker) to take care of the eaglets. They then asked *Süde* with what he would feed the eaglets? *Süde* replied 'to the up forest I go, a bag of woodworms, and to the down furlong I go, a bag of woodworms'. The birds of the sky were at last happy and they all repeated 'that's it, that's it' and they all patted the head of the *Süde* and smoothen it.<sup>40</sup>

The care taken by the Woodpecker started showing on the eaglets soon after. The fully grown eagles started preparing to avenge the death of their parents. So once again the birds of the sky challenged the earthlings to war. The earthlings accepted the challenge. For the second time the earthlings chose Tthakrü-krü to be in the forefront of the war. The eagles came to the fore for the birds. The war was pronounced, and seeing Tthakrü-krü moving forth the eagles within no time dash for the Tthakrü-krü. The young eagles caught Tthakrü-rü by the head and the tail and carried it up to the sky and killed it there and hung the intestine up and across the sky.

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<sup>37</sup> It is said that because of the spit of the birds the white crow became black in colour

<sup>38</sup> A wide mouth bird

<sup>39</sup> As a result of the hitting by the bird's council that Khebo's head turned flat

<sup>40</sup> As a result *Süde's* head became flat and smooth

The bird does not have a king, so they agreed that whoever manages to snapped the intestine of the Tthakrü-krü would be acknowledged as the king of the birds. The *Rashu* (Vulture) wanted to be the king of the birds. He flew up and struck the intestine with great force but could not entirely snap the intestine and at the same time because of the force he employed he went and struck his head on the roof of the sky and the skin of his head felt off making him bald. The *Rashu* made his claim for the kingship, but the birds rejected his claim saying that a bald bird cannot be accepted as the king. After *Rashu*, came the *Popo*, one group of a small bird, flew up and struck the intestine of the Tthakrü-krü and snapped the intestine totally. So the *Popo* bird became the king of the birds and thereafter came to be known as *Popomovu-u* or *Popo the King*.

Now all the birds were asked to give a feather each to build the nest of the King of birds. Yet, the birds *Ohra* and *Koribo* objected to this decision. *Ohra* said ‘my feathers are very red and beautiful therefore I will not shed my feather’. Hearing *Ohra*’s reply the other birds curse *Ohra* and said ‘though the river may flow in full or the pond fill to the brim by your side, you will not get to drink the water of the earth. Only when it rain you will look to the sky, open your mouth and you will drink the raindrops’. This is how *Ohra* was cursed by the birds of the sky.<sup>41</sup> Next *Koribo* too was questioned why he does not want to shed his feather for the king of the birds. *Koribo* replied, ‘my feathers are very black and beautiful therefore I cannot shed my feather for others.’ Hearing this reply the birds of the sky cursed and said ‘may you never get to come to dry land, the day you come to dry land all the birds will chase and curse you and may you forever live in the gorges of the earth’.<sup>42</sup>

To this day the two birds continue to live in the places designated by the curse of the other birds. And as agreed by the entire birds of the sky to this day *Popo* continue to be the King of the birds and when it build its nest every birds of the sky shed a feather for the king. And that is how it builds its nest.<sup>43</sup>

END

## **FOLKSONG**

**SINGERS; Mrs. Akha-a**

**Mrs. Athisü Chisa**

### **1. ODO LO – APRO IKHRU-U**

Ni no the rai ni khu-a pro tsü komosa bu kra-a

Aino the rai akhu-a pro tsü komosa bu kra-a

Ni no the rai li kozü-e ti la loshi chobonho ikhro-e no bu aiye khu-o

Aino the rai li kozü-e ti la lemo chobonho ikhro-e no bu niye khule

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<sup>41</sup> True to the curse it is said that *Ohra* never get to drink the water of the earth to this day

<sup>42</sup> *Koribo* is never found on dry land and if it comes to dry land the other birds chirp and chase after it

<sup>43</sup> Through the feathers in the nest of the *Popomovu-u* birds are identified and know if any of the bird has become extinct.

Nino the rai djübvü khudei mozhu kadei ka-a dei-o  
Aino the rai djübvü khudei mozhu kadei ka-e deile  
Apro-o ikhru-u makei mocho moho mocho pfa-a vukroa se vunhoa sü-e  
Kanhüe mai pfü pfu padai sü adai ti-e  
Kanhüe pfüpfu mai padai sü one choma kakhe chiji pfü-a bu kra-e  
Sütto lili adai soa-a vu kro-a-e vu nho-a-e  
Ide le ti kanhüe chacho tino khro-e tidu tino aliluhra vu kroaji vu nhoaji.

*(Video Clip 36; Singer; Mrs. Akha-a)*

### **Summary of the song**

The folksong is literarily about the friendship of a man and a woman. The rapport between them is such that even upon death they want to wait for the other too so that they can together go to the land of the death. They want their grave to be alongside the other and the also to keep on lamenting and crying for the other till the grave is filled with new grass growth. The man ululates and shouts out in restlessness on his way to and from the field. What about the parents the songstress asks, in the same breath it is responded that they too kept on beating their chest and crying. If that is the case why has he to go to the field and again it is responded that because of the promise of their life time together.

## **2. KHOLIRO LO**

Aruna mai sale ni ko so mani-a nholo  
Nholo mai-a lozhe ia lo lu le tto  
Atto zhu sü mai lona kore ino bu hrü  
Bu hrü le he ozhi pih khelo bu ko pepra  
Pepra ko madaï yi-a no pepra  
Pepra ano lu le tta aba kothe moko-e mareï chisa adai izhei vute isü eno he tto  
He tto apfü karei pai maiva do he komo  
Komo apfü kono pai maiva do hezü adai sota vuko süle  
Süle apfü karei pai maiva do hezü malei-o leji  
Leji apfü kono paiva do hezü adai so ta vu ko süle  
Ale apfü apfu zho-o mareï chisa adai izhei vu te-e sü ino hetto  
Kholiro chisa sü adai chisa adai izhü vu te techu  
Techu nipro nivo nipo nikhra-e komü wuano vu kro asa  
Asa fü-e ni sa ikhru iloa hrü  
Ehrü kothu hi mareï chisa prü thu opo-okhra komüo wuno vu tu cho pfü soru ro  
Ero pfu ni süa ikhruo ilo hrü  
Hrü kapra hi mara chisa phri thu opo-okhra ye komü wuno vu tucho pfu soru ro  
Kholiro chisa sü malai da ino hrü thu niba kha pima beile wuno  
Apfuno sütto khelie adzü asa adzü sü pa-a kasamai nhü rülo  
Rülo masaokha pfü pei hraisüa no  
Eno chikhrü mothu-e kothe ko kothe khrucho  
Echo chikrü mothu tala boa mothu

Mothu hukhe karei nhidae hukhe kono bukhe  
Bhukhe kotttho loli opfu soru mai makei mada kohru sata  
Sata pfue idu nichu yi do nila yi asü  
Theni thu-e nichu krü do nila krü do eno  
Eno pfu anhai ozhe yi kolai lai leshe apfu anhai  
Anhai chara ozhe nihi hre-e ti kochu lisü ayi lulu chisa mai kokhei pi-o da chara ozhe  
Ozhe chibu no marü mapepe oji chokrü mai nho  
Nho koda pfuthu apfu soru mai ba-a ti koda thopio da  
Oda chara ozhe nihi hr-e ti kochu lisü chisa lulu azü Kholia kokhai pioda  
Oda pfu-u chuhu no shu-e ti chobo ano charai no shu-e ti chobo ano  
Ano masaokha pfü chu kozümai sü chisa yi peno nizü Kholia kokhai sao kovu so oda  
Oda Kholiro nipfü phe pai ayizhu lo do-a ino zho ayi nizhu tto koa ayi mani oda  
Apfuno sü tto keli apfüphe pai ayi zhu lo do-a ino zhoa le azhu ttoko niyi mani le  
Apfu kanhie chino oka no dori ophi no so  
No so zho oso orü abai kocho le vu ko-o da  
Oda kanhie chi koro khru ti vupra lizü vupra  
Vupra nhiedzü tto ko mazhe kro chisa mai vuhri pio da pfu soruo  
Oruo le titheti ora pfüpfu yihi krele ho masaokha pfü pai hi krele  
Ai titheti ora pfüpfu yihi krelemo masaokha pfüpai hi krele mangai krethele ora pfüpfu

*(Video Clip 38; Singer: Mrs. Akha-a)*

### **Summary of the song**

The song relate to us about the unfortunate relationship between the daughter Kholiro on one side and her father and stepmother on the other. The young maiden's bangle slipped out of her hand and into the lake when she stretched her hand out to pluck the *Olobu* (a wild fibrous plant) that grew by the edge of the lake. With heavy heart she faces her parents and as feared her step-mother accuses her of not losing but of gifting it to some lover boy. But her father believed her and assured her that he would buy a new one for her and she was comforted. But the stepmother would not rest for the night and forced on the man to go look for the bangle. When the cocks started crowing one after the other the father wakes up his daughter to go and find the bangle. The daughter responds by saying 'father, last night your words were good and comforting'. They go to the lake to find out the truth. Upon reaching the lake Kholiro asks the charmed lake to return the bangle into the hands of her father and take her instead. The wind blew in from the south and returns the bangle and swept Kholiro into the lake. The father pleads with the lake to return his daughter and take the bangle. But his daughter chides him saying that she asked him not to do this from before and says that he who obeys his wife should be happy to return with the bangle instead of his loving daughter. The father pleads with his daughter to allow him to have a final glimpse of her face and to this she obliges and show him her face and she also advices him, that their house is far and to return when the enemy warriors are still at home. She requests her father to shed some tears and wet the bangle and make it lively upon reaching their village

gate. The father laments in despair and asks in despair who is to blame, his wife or god for his predicament and he self respond saying, god is not to blame but his wife.

### 3. LOTTA KADE LO

Napfümai no obele ttho she thu pfule shi mare-e ttoji  
Mare vu-u ti oro kama kro-e kromo-e  
Napfümai no obele ttho she thu pfule shi mare-e ttoji  
Mare vu-o ti oro kama krotu re sü  
Esü obu no phere kama nola  
Nola chide pfü vu ale chinhü onhi kayi lesü shu tole-e  
Pfo shu ko-o ti oro mitto kro-e kro moa-e  
Pfo shu ko-o ti oro mitto kro oke pfücha  
Pfücha nichu ikhru-e achi ilo sü  
Losü oshu mikri-e deni okhu kayi hrü ku krü  
Kukrü kilie ale chihe onhü kayi lesü sie ttole-e  
Le-e othe khru lie ozha khru kilie sü  
Esü otto du thu-e ozha le tho  
Letho ko-o ti okhe ttho vudu ttholi ama?  
Ama othe khru lie ozha khru kilie sü  
Esü otto du thu-e ozha le ttho  
Letho ko-o ti okhe ttho vudu ttho lie sü  
Esü ni chikhru mai no ba pio da  
Oda achi ilomai no ti the leno sü koku lule re  
Lehre chihra modzü-e chihra pha prali  
Prali zho-o le othe khaiwua akua mohru  
Mohru osa ko solu oro koso pfüta  
Pfüta achi ilomai je pfü lia the phrü-a vupra  
Vupra lehe kratsü-e liji onhi kayi le the phrü vuchorei  
Thephrü kovu zho tino kanhie okha tta savuluni cho  
Sütto kolu komo shiro-i adai amü komo sole pro-o khrumai  
Khrumai amai-e khro-e bu-e kono khro li-e sü  
Esü amai chaka chithu nio khro jivu  
Jivu prali-e io shue vu tile leshi ama pro khrumai

*(Video Clip 40; Singer: Mrs. Athisü Chisa)*

#### **Summary of the song**

The song tells us about the stages of agrarian cycle and how a young woman relates her fate of the days to come. The song starts with how the paddy saplings are sowed. And who it is transplanted on a fertile field and how the paddy starts bearing the paddy seeds. At harvest time a spot is prepared and a mat is laid to harvest and store the paddy. The paddy is covered by the brothers and the sisters pull it through from the back. And at lunch time they leave the *othe* and have lunch together. Thereafter the loads are made and the man pick up

the load and the woman carried the back-basket load and walk back along. The songstress continues to dwell on the day of wonderful companionship and the yearning to be called a couple that would have been wonderful. But it was not possible and so it was so unfulfilling. And she says that next month would be a new month and a new year and she would be married off to a new land.

#### 4. *Arijü ye Akajü (Mahrapfu Akajü)*

Mahra Khruno ichua Akajü mai yiure te kakrü ttojü  
Chizhi Khruno Arijü-o mai yiure te kakrü ttojü  
Ttojü ikhrumai Arijü-o Akajü-o  
Jü-o nia nianipau sashuu da  
Oh da ayi-a apa sachu lemo  
Kanhie kashi kaka heno anhie,  
Anhie osü rethu ojü masaa anhie nhopfule shie  
Le sütto molili ni nittomai yi nopfümai tile.  
Tile lehe ikhrumai Akajü mada bvü-o  
Bvü-o ochikhru mai kosü salo profüli khai koku khai ttano  
Ttano zo-o Arijüo mai kre ke tie esü  
Esü zo-o Arijüo maisü izhu ttojü  
Ttojü le he ilomai kapaini mahe kono  
Kono aproo Arijüo sosü vadu vanhü  
Vanhü tthu pfulushi shina sano dupfu  
Dupfu ihe chopfotto ohrü kashi ko tini mohochu  
Hochu ihe chopfutto ohrü kashi koli  
Koli apro Arijüo mokhu pholu lere  
Lere oshu Mahramai lokhroo kroa kro monhüe  
Monhüe shu Mahramai lokhro kro li mape pio da  
Aru lokhro okhro kakre lokhro kro modo eno  
Eno zhoo khroenü khkana  
Khkana chini koso oruleno bulo lokhro kro chore lo khroo sü  
Esü Mahra khrusü nholo raikara so, solu kopfü iku chodo eno  
Eno lehe ilomai Kapaini mai sado tiko mape shu cho-e  
Apfu zho-o mikrideni okhu kayi hrü kokrü pio da  
Kapaini nisü mikrideni okhu kayi hrü kokri pfüe adaie sole ne  
Leni apro Arijüoo mokhu pholu lere  
Lere ashuro kayi sü efüshe no duni  
Duni lehe Mahrapfü sado onga kayi nasü hruba pfotta  
Pfotta Mahra khrusü nholo raikaraso, solu kopfü iku chodo eno  
Eno shushu dzü maipfü dai hrü-o so lai-e  
Lai-e ichahrühra e-so modo eno  
Mahra khruno ichua Akajü mai yi tili phonho mokru leta rehu laijü

Kodzü koli ikhrumai Akajü pfüpfu nholo  
Nholo shushu dzü maipfü daihri-u solai-e  
Lai-e ichahri hra eso modo eno  
Mahra khruno ichua Akajü mai yi tili phonho mokru letta rehu laijü  
Laijü zho-o mai kakri Akajü no hore azhü Akajü ohrü kashi-u ekhubu sa  
Esa ochi koro he pra lizü hoa  
Hoa lehe inhora tokhu kodu esü prabu lejü  
Lejü ochi koro he pra lizü hoa  
Hoa lehe inhora tokhu kodu esü prabu chore  
Chore oshu shujümai pfü dai hrü-u solai -e  
Lai-e ichahrü hra eso modo eno  
Mahra khruno ichua Akajü mai yi tili phonho mokru letta rehu laijü  
Laijü chinu mainu lai atumai tulai esü  
Esü lehe ikhrumai Akajü ohrü kashi-u ekubvusü ihe sama  
Akajü chino bu kanhie ekhru loa okre so leho  
Leho oruno mare okre sole-u kanhie  
Kanhie chino bu kanhie khru-lo okre so lemo  
Lemo lehe Mahra khru khru lo-o krebu leno lo okre sole-e  
Akajü khala durai leho maizheo raile-e  
Le-e khala du sü noa no maizheo raile-e  
Akajü nepfü bvü ihe ozü leno ichili shu-e ne  
Aku kothu mikrideni okhu kayi sü kokrigri ttojü  
Ttojü ezho chanitto maio odo shi na ilo  
Hoa lehe ikhrumai Akajü othu kashi-o sü-e sü djino  
Djino lehe ilomai Kapaini othu kashi-o isü chomo  
Kodzü koli ikhrumai Akajü ifü sü hrapho-a ttojü  
Ttojü ezho marü phe kre phe vepfü ano  
Ano opi du tthu ashuro lesü ttho pfüa ta  
Ata Mahra khru sü vulo raikaraso, solu kopfü eku chodo eno  
Eno lehe ikhrumai Akajü nihie sü kade nhi ama  
Ama lehe ikhrumai Akajü anhie sü kade shu sano  
Sano izho o-chanitto maino karano pfü-e sü  
Esü pra kali khrono rehu mokru letta kapea jü Akajü anhie  
Kodzü koli ekhrumai Akajü pfüpfu vupra  
Vupra ezho azü Akajü nihie sü kade nhi ama  
Ama ezho nizü Akajü anhie sü kade shu sano  
Sano ezho chanitto maino karano pfü-e sü  
Esü pra kali khrono rehu mokru letta kape-a jü Akajü anhie  
Anhie lehe apro-u Akajü bavu nodjü  
Nodjü oshi pidu tthu-a ashuro lesü thopia yi pfü laire  
Laire oshu Mahra maimaidjü do-azhu kochu more

Kodzü koli Mahra pfü kothupai kono vupra  
Vupra lehe Mahra pfü kothupai kono azhu kochu locho  
Locho izho-o chanittomai zhu athi tiwe ilo  
Ilo ezho-o chanitto mai-o odo shina ilo  
Mahra khru nithe hino eno lai nhi hoke  
Hoke nino no eno mashe she na  
Mahrakhru athi heno eno modo eno  
Eno ino no eno mashe she jü  
Ashe ashekha kono amazhe koso ichuno ivu khru nhi  
Hoa lehe ikhrumai Akajü pfüpfumai no  
Mai no chino pho-e pho moho talo  
Talo lehe Mahra khru khru lo kre buleno lo kolai kai to-u  
Tto-e lehe chizhipfü Kapaini phuduhrüa ihe moha  
Mahramai kayi mai sü-o  
Süo lehe inholi heno hru kolai shu-e sü  
Akajüoo nino Arüjüo mai zü molie sü  
Esü ino nehruzümai malai-u ne nhoha machi-u le-e  
Le-e nino Arüjüo mai ezü keu sü  
Esü nihe tthu ezü ke-u kochu  
Kochu nino alukho-e somozhu-e sü  
Esü lehe inholi heno hru kolai shu-e sü  
Akajü zho chopfutto maino züli-e sü  
Esü lehe inholi no khro shuwua orinhü nhüle  
Nhüle ezho chanitto maino züli-e sü  
Laphra kapri koso makhri pfülai  
Pfülai ohashi eno chanitto mai zho mape ttojü Akajüo  
Jüo achi koro he prali zü ho-a  
Hoa apro kotsüo no lo ripi pfulo te  
Ete ezho adai soripi kele pfu chokhru pi sama  
Sama apro totsüo no lo ripi pfulu te  
Ete ezho adai soripi kele pfu chokhrupi sama  
Sama apro nono-u no lo ripi pfulie esü  
Esü izho ochopfutto maino züli esü  
Esü izho otu phudu raso hu dale do eno  
Eno izho chanitto maino züli esü  
Esü izho otu tulo raso hu dale do eno  
Ano soshu ti shu shivü tishu ano  
Orü pra-e ti shuno-e ilomai Kapaini phuduhrüa khiu shu ttabo.

*(Video Clip 42; Singer: Mrs. Athisü Chisa)*

**Summary of the song**



This song narrates a tale of courage, pride, treachery, revenge, arrogance and downfall of the main characters. The song begins with men who want to be known for their bravery and skills of fight. But it was treachery that overpowers this courageous challenge of a duel between two feisty well known warriors of the day. This treachery leads to more treachery and the yearning for revenge. And this came from the most unexpected quarters, a girl who dare seek revenge for the death of her brother who was killed by a treacherous bigoted male warrior who refused to play by the rule. She is been questioned from all quarters for what she is to undertake or when she is out to fulfill her task or even when she has fulfilled her desire to avenge her brother. The task was arduous but the determined girl of character shows her courage and goes on to achieve the impossible which her male siblings would not dare to undertake, but when she achieve the impossible be it by whatever way, her head hunting and achievement is undermined and ridiculed as an amorous act. Her act is not celebrated as would have been done in the case of victorious males, where a feast is held and praises heaped upon the victor. But in this case the whole act is been hushed up as the victor is a female and even the victor meat distributed is to be termed as the gift of a boyish girl and thus her achievement is not adequately acknowledged.