

**University of Yangon**  
**This Thesis is for M.A.Degree (Anthropology)**

**The Social Organization of the Lachid (Lacid)  
Nationals of  
Madeing Village, Waing – Maw Township,  
Kachin State**

**Submitted by -----Ma Hla Hla Kyi**  
**An- 1**  
**1997 – 1999**

**With utmost reverence to the Five Fold Inifinities in  
particular to my parents U Tun Kyi and Daw Hla Hla  
this thesis is dedicated.**

# **The Social Organization of the Lachid (Lacid) Nationals of Madeing Village, Waing - maw Township, Kachin State.**

## Foreward

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Ma Hla Hla Kyi

An - 1

1997 - 1999

# THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF LACHID (LACID) NATIONALS OF MADEING VILLAGE, WAING-MAW TOWNSHIP, KACHIN STATE

## Contents

<u>No.</u>	<u>Particulars</u>	<u>Page</u>
	<u>Preface</u>	1
<u>Chapter 1.</u>	<u>Location, Climate, Vegetation</u>	3
	(A) Location	3
	(B) Climate, Vegetation	4
	(C) Communication	4
<u>Chapter 2</u>	<u>History, Mode of Dress, Literature</u>	6
	(A) Ancestry	6
	(B) The origin of the World and Human being	9
	(C) Migration in to Myanmar	11
	(D) Population	15
	(E) Physical feature and temperament	15
	(F) Mode of dress	16
	(G) Language and literature	17
<u>Chapter 3</u>	<u>Social organization</u>	20
	(A) The village- structure and Naming	20
	(B) The House- how it is built	22
	(C) The family – the set –up and adoption practices	24
	(D) Kinship	26
	(E) Legacy and inheritance	27
<u>Chapter 4</u>	<u>Social Affairs</u>	28
	(A) Bachelor and Maiden life	28
	(B) Mate selection	30
	(1) Betrothal	30
	(2) Marriage ceremony	31
	(C) Wedded life	33
	(1) Pregnancy and confinement	34
	(2) Naming Ceremony	34
	(3) Child care and educating process	35
	(D) Divorce	36
	(E) Illness and medicare	37



<u>No.</u>	<u>Particulars</u>	<u>Page</u>
	(F)Funeral	38
<u>Chapter 5</u>	<u>Economy</u>	41
	(A)Agriculture	41
	(1)Paddy Farming	41
	(2)Orchard and plantation	50
	(3)Taun-yar/ Hillside cultivation	42
	(4)Ritual sacrifices to the Nats / Spirits	43
	(5)Agricultural folklores	44
	(B)Livestock breeding	44
	(C)Hunting	45
	(D)Domestic crafts	48
	(1)Weaving cloth with loom	48
	(2)Basket weaving	48
	(E)Others occupation	49
	(F)Commerce and trade	50
	(G)Diet	51
<u>Chapter 6</u>	<u>Religious beliefs and tradition.</u>	53
	(A)Traditional beliefs and worship	53
	(B)Adoption of Christianity	56
	(C)Interpreting Portents and Omens	56
	(D)Mana and taboos	57
	(E)Folklores and proverbs	58
	(F)Traditional festivals	59
	(1)The origins of Ma-naw	59
	(2)The Ma-naw Flagmast	61
	(3)House-warming ceremony	65
	(4)The New Harvest festival	67
	(5)Moon-goddess festival	68
	(6)The Cucumber festival	69
	(7)The Taung - yar feast	70
	(8)Longevity Rituals	71
	(9)New year celebrations	71
	(G)Music and dances	71
<u>Chapter 7</u>	<u>Administration</u>	74
	(A)Customary laws and the judiciary	74
	(B)Education	76
<u>Conclusion</u>	<u>Comments</u>	77

## Preface

### Aim

The Union of Myanmar is a country composed of various indigenous races. Therefore, the indigenous races have the responsibility to live in harmony as a united nation. The principal aim of Anthropology is to study comprehensively the various nationalities from every aspect of life.

The expression 'culture', according to Anthropology, brings out a wide spectrum of meanings. The culture of a human society encompasses the organization, constitution, and its laws and legal procedures, ways of thinking and codes of ethics, economics, social affairs, education, religion, welfare, the arts, language, and utilizing of the invented devices, and the mode of dress and attire. The social organization is also part of culture.

Every national race should have records of its history and culture. Only then will the history of one's own race be known, and the urge to preserve it. Thus, each national group will have more respect for the culture of the other, and enhance the unity among the indigenous races of the Union.

It is the responsibility of the anthropologist to study and present the culture and customs of the national races in order to bring about an understanding among the various national races. By studying the culture of a national race, the anthropologists could help promote the preservation of the good traditions of a human society.

The anthropologist can make it obvious through various instances that the difference in culture among the indigenous races reflects the diverse religious beliefs, social behaviors and the residence localities. The field survey work carried out for the compilation of this thesis aimed at supplementing evidences for the future generations in their studies of the traditions and customs of the indigenous races.

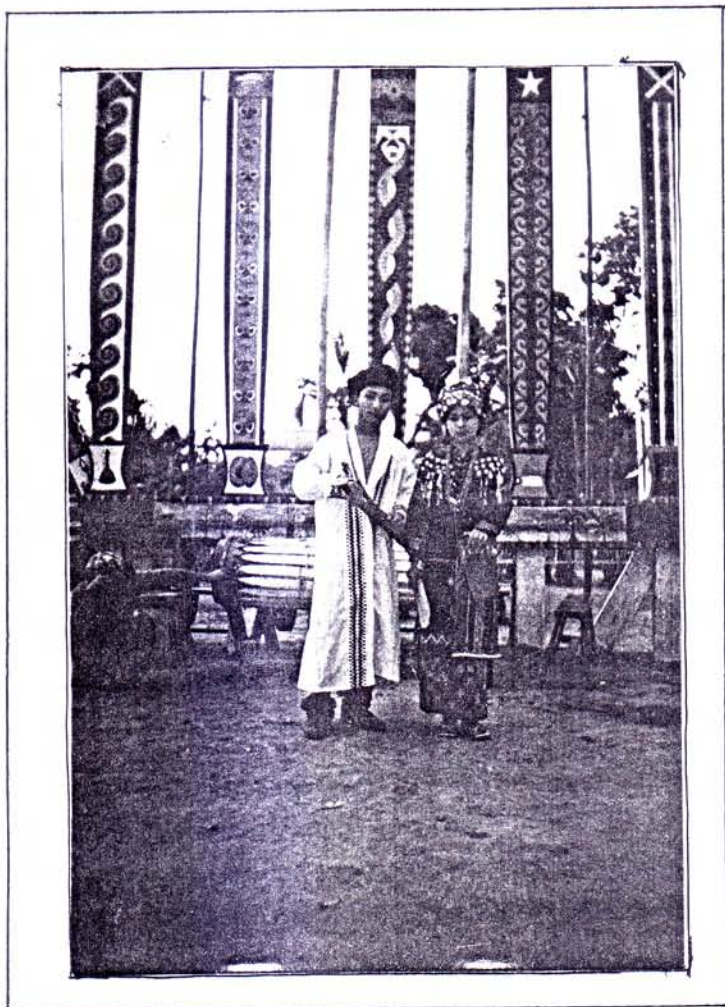
### Topic selection

The selection of the topic, " The Social Organization of the Lacid Nationals of Madeing Village in Waing – maw Township, Kachin State" was made on the following criteria.

Madeing village was founded by the Lacids

2. The traditions and customs of the Lacids presented for the general information of other indigenous races
3. To help implement the Government guide line on unity among all the national races, and

to achieve the above aims, the selection was made after 4 field trips to Madeing Village – one in July 1997, two in January and May 1998 , another in January 1999.



Lacid man and woman

## Chapter 1

### Location, Climate, Vegetation

#### (A) Location

Madeing village is situated in Waing-maw Township; Kachin State. Waing-maw is a township of Kachin, the northernmost and hilly State of the Union of Myanmar. The bearings of the township show it to be between North Latitude 25 22", and East Longitude 97 24", and at a distance of about 730 miles (1168km) to the north of Yangon. It is 481.4 feet above sea level and lies on the eastern bank of the Ayeyarwady River.

During the reign of the Konboun Dynasty AD (1750 – 1885), Waing -maw was a well - known city inhabited by the Shans . The name Waing-maw derived from Shan expression 'Wein-mao'

Wein = wall, fence

Mao = new town

Therefore, Wein-mao can be interpreted as the 'walled new town', and in the course of time, it came to be called 'Waing-maw'. Though Waing-maw existed as a large market town prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, the British Administration had recognized it as a mere village tract in Myitkyina township, and that status lasted until the 30<sup>th</sup> of September, 1965. Beginning 1<sup>st</sup> October , 1965, the administrative status of Waing-maw was amended as a township. There are 41 village tracts and one ward in Waing-maw Township. The Ayeyarwady River separates the Lachin nationals call Waing-maw as 'MEING MHOUG' , Waing-maw and Myitkyina , the capital of Kachin State.

Madeing village is about 2 miles (3.2 km) northeast of Waing- maw . Oblong in shape, there is War-yang in the east, Waing-maw town in the west, open fields in the south, and the Nam - mying Creek in the north. Madeing village has an area of 36 square miles (57.6sq.km).

One U Madeing Zoug Phoo Kho Kei, a descendant of the Madeing tribe founded Madeing village, in 1957. The founding of the village was carried out through the united efforts of all common descendants. Since all were of the Madeing stock, the Headman of the Waing-maw recognized the village as Madeing and made it known formally.

(B) Climate and Vegetation

Madeing village, Waing-maw Township in Kachin State, has a hot and damp climate. The rainy season is from May to October. June and August are the wettest months. The average rainfall is 79.6", and the temperature is between 80° F and 104° F. Monsoon winds blow at an average speed of 18 mph from April to September. Northeastern winds blow at an average speed of 12 mph from October to February. Squalls sometimes visit Madeing with a rate of about 40 mph. Madeing is located in the warm Temperate Zone.

Vegetation

The region, being in warm Temperate Zone, enjoys a mildly warm climate and thus, a mixture of evergreen and deciduous forests abound. The flora include –shorea, sweet chestnut, Eugenia , dalbergia , protium, red silk cotton tree, gmelina , magnolia, dipterocarpus , chukrassia, wild mango, adina cordifolia, cobrais saffron, eagle wood, desmodium, careya, salmalia, myrobalan, homalium, bayan, rain tree, rattan, reed, dimmer pine, baubinia, willow, gardenia, orchid, clematis, garden croton, and gum-kino trees.

(C) Communication

Madeing can be reached from Waing-maw by road. Travellers make use of bicycles or trishaws and sometimes hitch –hike. Myitkyina can be reached from Waing-maw on a river trip along the Ayeyarwady by powerboats. Beginning 6 a.m., the boats leave Waing-maw for Myitkyina carrying market sellers, students, and office employees of the various Government Departments. The return trip is at about 5 p.m. In between 6 a.m. and 5 p.m. , power boats ply the two towns back and forth at every half hours. The fare, in 1997, was Kyats 5 per head, Kyats 15 a motor cycle, and Kyats 5 a bicycle . In 1998, it was Kyats 10 per head ,and in the current year, 1999 it is Kyats 20. The State –owned ferry, M.L Yenagar charged Kyats 5 per head, and the same amount for a bicycle in 1997-98 . Chartering a private motor boat cost around Kyats 1,000. The upstream journey from Waing-maw to Myitkyina takes about 35 minutes, and the downstream journey from Waing-maw to Myitkyina takes about 25 minutes.

The bicycle trip to Myitkyina from Waing-maw takes about half an hour. The road is a bit rough. Although there are tar roads in Waing-maw proper, the road leading to Madeing is just a rough laterite one. Villagers travel to Waing-maw and Myitkyina only on business. The journey on a horse- drawn cart to Madeing from Waing-maw will cost Kyats 75 per head.

## Chapter 2

### History, Mode of dress, Literature

#### (A) Ancestry

There are 135 indigenous races residing in the Union of Myanmar. Of these, Jingphaw, Lawaw (a) Maru, Lashi (a) Lachid (Lacid ) , Ahzee (a) Zaiwa, Lisu and Rawang of the Kachin lineage live mostly in the northern part of Myanmar. The history of the Lacids are as follows.

The history of the Lacid is accepted as authentic according to the verbal narrations of the tribe's sorcerers. The Lacid written language has come out only very recently. It was after the Independence of Myanmar 1948 that the Lacid language obtained its written form. Therefore, in the absence of the development of a written language, the culture was transmitted through verbal narrations handed down from generation to generation.

The Lacids are better known as the **Lashi**. At the Union Day celebrations in Rangoon held on February 12, 1970, **U.G. BOEM Zung**, Chief of Party Affairs of the Kachin State Regional Party Committee, and **U Madeing Zung Kho Yeing**, Senior School Teacher, expressed the wish that their racial group be called "Lacid". Since then the Government had recognized the name 'Lacid' .In fact , the present name 'Lacid ' had been in use since about A.D.800 when Lacids started settling down in the upper reaches of the Maykha River- in such regions as **Cung Dam be Lang ,and Zinwa Kha Shawm**.

The term 'Lacid ' derived from the first generation Lacid Grand Old Man who, although living in the cool northern hemisphere where snow -capped mountains exit, was over conscious for cleanliness and used to wash himself very often. Thus, he was known as "Lacid" the one who washed for beauty and cleanliness. The term 'La' means the one who does practices something , and 'cid' means wash to purify. Therefore the term 'Lacid' means 'an inhabitant of the cool northern region who is cleaner than everyone. "Formerly, they used to call themselves **Xang; Zo; Byu**.



Lacids nationals are known to the Jingphaws as **Lashi**, the Lawaw (Maru) as **Leucid**, the Zaiwar (Ahzee) as **la ci**, the Chinese as **Cha Sham**, and the Lisu as **A Cha**.

The Lacids maintain the traditional belief that the present day human beings descended from **Xang Mung** and wife **Xang Nam** created by **Gyu So**, the Great Creator.

Xang Mung and Xang Nam were the survivors of the Great Floods. The couple bore offspring, the population increased, and in this way, Lacids came into being.

Xang Mung + Xang Nam

Son

Byu Cung "Maug: Son of Xang Mung and Xang Nam

Maug: Mhug' Lom, Son of Byu Cung "Maug

Mhug' Lom Gom: , Son of Maug: Mhug' Lom

Son of Mhug' Lom Gom: 1. Goem Loem Naw. (Dark – skinned)

2. Goem Loem Ba. ( Yellow – skinned)

3. Goem Loem Phi (Fair – skinned)

The descendants of Goem Loem Ba ( the yellow –skinned race ) were as follows.

PO: JHUNG' KYEIG ', Son of Goem Loem Ba

Jung" Kyeig' Yq, son of PO: JHUNG' KYEIG'

YQ AU: SHI ", son of Jhung" Kyeig' Yq

SHI" GYO" YUG, son of YQ AU: SHI

SHI" GYO" YUG, son of YQ AU: SHI"

YUG THU' MAUG, son of SHI " GYO " YUG

MAUG ZO: XANG, son of YUG THU' MAUG

Son of MAUG ZO: XANG 1. Xang : Zoo: Hi (Chinese)

2. Xang: Zoo : Myen (Myanmar)

3. Xang: Zoo : Sam (Shan )

4. Xang: Zoo : Byu (Lacid)

Descendants of Xang : Zoo: Byu (Lacids) –

BYU ZO : TE" , son of ZANG: ZOO: BYU

Sons of BYU ZO: TE" were (1)Ti" Moug Vo (Rawang)

(2) Ti" Moug Zoem (Lisu)

(3) Ti" Moug Youg (Lacid, Law – waw )

(4) Ti" Moug Phug (Jing-phaw)

(5) Ti" Moug Phyaug (Chin)

Descendants of Ti" Moug Youg, or the 5 Lacid indigenous races were

(1)MAYAUG NGO (Lanam group)

(2) MAYAUG PHYAUG: (Galau , Madeing group)

(3) MAYAUG NEI (Jhung Cho- Latong group)

(4) MAYAUG HOB' (Lagwe –lanam group)

(5) MAYAUG TUNG (Bimyen –lanam group)

The above is the traditional belief taken up by all Lacid nationals including those residing at Mading Village. Lacids practice the ancestral lineage naming system.

For instance – KHO" BOM

BOM YEING"

YEING"KHO"

KHO" CANG"

CANG" SAUG:

SAUG: YEING ", etc....

Lacids deeply value their ancestral history. They carefully memorize the ancestry lineage of great great-grandfather, great grandfather, and grandfather etc,...according to each racial grouping. So when introduced to one another, each would inquirer of the other's ancestral lineage. Only after knowing the ancestral history will they declare how they are related to each other. If they are found to be coming from the same racial group, the ancestral levels will be worked out before declaring the exact kinship status such as , elder brother, elder sister, uncle etc...,according to the person's age. Any Lacid who couldn't recount the verbal history of his ancestral lineage from Ti" Moug Youg would lose face in his community. Therefore, each Lacid has to know his ancestral history by heart , which , in a way supports the reliability of the Lacid ancestral history. The well-to-dos usually hold **ZOEM GO**"or the Manaw festival once in a 2/3 -year time as alms giving on which occasion the **JIZEING DAM: SA** were

asked to recount the ancestral history of each family. Each being well-versed in genealogical history, Lacids from far and wide could workout how they are related to each other. This is evident of the Lacids putting a high value on their ancestral lineage history.

(B)The Origins of the World and Human Beings

It is believed, by the Lacids, that the world was created by the Absolute Creator **GYU SO** who created the existence of the world, and the generations of human beings, of all the things in the world, the resources, animates or inanimate , the flora and fauna, and all the atmosphere as well. A time prior to this creation is called the Great Darkness, **KHA YANG CHOID**, in Lacid term. After that the 9-planets were created . At that time was in total darkness, which was termed **CHOID DOM** in Lacid. Then light was created to overcome darkness. It was said that it took over 4,000 years for the Absolute Creator to turn **CHOID DOM** (total darkness) into **BOO" DOM**, or light period (when 9 sun appear). **GYU SO** rolled out a threadball to prescribe the 4 directions –east ,west, north and south. The direction to which the threadball rolled was prescribed as South (**GAM" GYO**) , and the opposite direction of which as the North (**GAM"DO**). When the 9 planets were lit, the direction from which the light came was recognized as the East , where the sun rises (day), whereas, the side of the earth where there was no light, was recognized as the West, where the sun sets (night). **CHOID DOM** and **BOO" DOM** mean night and day.

The aim of the causing **CHOID DOM** AND **BOO"DOM** to occur is for the creation of the earth's flora and fauna . With the establishing of **CHOID DOM** and **BOO" DOM** the earth's adjusted temperature was made possible. **CHOID DOM** AND **BOO' DOM** are equal to thousands of years when compared to the time duration of the modern day, it is said.

According to the Lacid traditional belief, the present day human beings were created by the Absolute Creator in the form of **GYU ZO SU ZO** , the human male and female couple. This creation period was known as **JHUNG: SHOEM BYU ZEE COID**. As the term human began to appear in the **JHUNG:SHOEM BYU ZEE COID**, the creation period , it is assumed that humanity began there and then . **BYU** means ' human' and , **JHUNG: SHOEM** means the 'beginning' .

Therefore, the expression JHUNG:SHOEM BYU ZEE COID can be interpreted as 'human beings came into existence from that time'. It was said that there were interrelations among creatures of the universe during the early human era.

The GYU era was when the earth's surface conditions, such as mountains, plains, valleys, and gorges were worked out, and there appeared the brothers **LA HUNG LA BANG**, who caused disturbances in the Creator's tasks. The brothers turned the good deeds the Creator made into bad ones by taking fishes out of water and put them on land, land creatures into water, and surface ones onto treetops. Therefore, the Creator got rid of the brothers LAHUNG LABANG. They were made to shoulder a big tree called JANG ZEING being felled on them. But the evil -monger brothers survived. However, the LA HUNG LA BANG brothers, with the exception of one, succumbed to the poisonous mushrooms they ate which grew out of the **JANG ZEING** tree that was felled on them. The lone survivor was caught and executed. The corpse was dried, ground into powder, and blown towards the north and the south. These dusts turned into the present day creatures which are a nuisance to mankind, such as mosquitoes, snakes and insects. Therefore, Lacids particularly avoid eating the mushrooms sprouting out from the **JANG ZEING** tree.

The world's climate changed as times went by. It was said that, with it, all the living creatures and things were destroyed. There were 2 devastations that the earth faced. The era of increased human generation through the descendants of the GYU Z0 SU Z0 was called SOMTONG SOMSUNG era. These generations were destroyed in the holocaust of fire which lasted 3 years and devoured the entire earth. Keeping that in mind, the Lacid nationals use the expression **DOEM" ZAIN " MAMYIA SHID** when they have to undergo various troubles and hardships.

Next, the LABYU LAMYANG generations emerged. They had lived in what today is the great LABYU KHRUNG cave about 3 miles northeast of Chi-phway Town. This great cave, thought to be the largest in Myanmar, is of 30 feet in breadth, over 20 feet in height, and although the length is not known, it is found that people can venture into it up to 1 mile. In the said LABYU Cave are found human utility tools and accessories such as big stone mortars, large

stone cooking pots , cooking tripods, soot racks, and other traces of remnants as fossilized corpses, and foot -paths etc..

Again, the LABYU LAMYANG generations were wiped out by the holocaust of floods . It is said the 2 eras, the SONTONG SOMSUNG and the LABYU LAMYANG combined lasted for 4,000 years. The great floods lasted no less than 3 months. Therefore, when Lacids come across disappointments in life, they would use the expression, SOME"LO"TA GYID A KAING, meaning the floods do not ebb up to 3 months.

After the floods there remained the brother and sister XANG MUNG'XANG NAM, who later got married and became husband and wife. [By rolling the round bamboo tray, and the stone downhill, and by combining ( criss -crossing) the smoke coming out from separate fires made by the siblings] it is assumed that the Creator God willed the brother and sister to get married order to produce new generations of human beings. However, being siblings they were shy of the new relationship. Then the brother, on the pretext of making bamboo strings close to the sister, poked the sister's nipples with the bamboo strip. The sister gave a (covetous) smile. From that moment the siblings got married to each other. It is assumed that the population grew through the descendants of this siblings-turned- couple.

According to the Lacids' assumption, all the present day human beings and creatures are believed to have descended from **TA GYID SHID**, the floods survivors , the couple and the creatures who survived the floods on a bamboo raft.

#### (C) Migration into Myanmar

A study of the migration wave of the Lacids will show that the couple XANG MUNG ZANG NAM survived the TA GYID SHI, the great floods, were left stranded on the huge mountain by the name of 'Ngha Lung: Bom'. The Lacids assumed that mountain to be the largest and highest one of its kind on earth. The Lacids, after making Mt. Ngha Lung:Bom their dwelling place for quite a long time, moved southward gradually and reached southeast Asia. The migration wave was usually via rivers, streams and waterways to avoid difficult climbs. To reach the present location on the northeast of Myanmar, the Lacids

came passing through the Mongolian Plateau, and from thence via Maykha, Malikha, Thanlwin, and Mekong rivers.

The Lacids believed that the fair-skinned races went towards the west of Mt. Ngha Lung" Bom, the dark-skinned to the southwest, and the yellow - skinned to southeast of Asia.

The indigenous races of Myanmar, descendants of the Mongoloids entered Myanmar in 3 groups, the Mon-Khamer, the Tibeto -Burman, and the Sino- Thai respectively. The Lacids, descendants of the Tibeto -Burman group, migrated into Myanmar in 3 groups. They were-

- (1) The Chin -Kachin group
- (2) The Myanmar and ancient Myanmar descendants group
- (3) The Lolo hunters group

The Lacids , as members of the middle group of Myanmar and ancient Myanmar descendants group, moved together with the group via along the Maykha valley and went down towards southern Myanmar . Though this group went south, some remained in Upper Myanmar (the present Kachin State). These were Lacids, Rawangs, Law- waw and Zaiwa racial groups. Traditional historical evidences showed that the Lacids had ties with other racial groups- Rawang, Law-waw , Zai- wa, Lisu and Jing-phaw . Moreover , it is found that the Lacids language somewhat resembles that of Myanmar. Instances are-

<u>Lacid</u>	<u>Myanmar</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Nho: duang	Nha Khoung	Nose
Voo:	Wah	Bamboo
Myi:	Mee	Fire
Khu	Khwet	Cup
Khoid	Khway	Dog
Lo, voo:	Letwah	Palms
Ni:	Hnee	Bamboo strip
A No '	Ahnet	Black
Myab Myam Loo	Myan- myan lar	Come quickly
da xi:	Ta-hse	Ten
Chey	Chey	Foot



Ta-yoke

TA-yauk

One person

The Lacids after residing for a long time on Mt. Ngha Lung: Bom, gradually moved down hill, one lower mountain after another, and first settled down to establish the huge village of **Gyi: deing gyi: lho jang**. At that time the Lacids were known to have mastered the use of wood and bamboo, to have progressed from shelters with earthen flooring to those of upright and storied abodes, and to have held social functions and festive occasions. In particular were the Ji GO" dance performed at housewarming ceremonies, the Zoem GO or MANAW dance, and the Ga bein Go" dance performed at funerals. In clothing, also it was found in the history of the race that their dresses were made of thread produced from cotton plants they grew. This period is presumed to be in between BC 200 and 100.

As time passed, the population increased, there was scarcity of land areas to go in search of food, and the deforestation caused unbalanced climate. Therefore, families organized among themselves and went in search of new arable land. The huge village of ZANG"LOO: VOO: SHEING GUNG was rebuilt to the south of GYI": DEING GYI": LHO JANG. It is learnt that the name of the place described the bearings and the prosperity of the town. It meant the place as slim and lengthy plot of land where prosperity existed. The song in praise of this town is still sung by the present day performers of sacrificial rites (DAM SA). This period is assumed to be in between BC 100 and AD 200.

After ZANG" LOO: VOO: SHEING GUNG had deteriorated, it was said that a fertile plain was found in the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. It was called LOO KHOO MOUG in Lacid language, and since it was a very fertile land the Lacids lived there for about 700 years. It is assumed that the Lacid population grew at its fastest rate during this period. It was at LOO KHOO MOUG that the Lacids achieved a highly developed culture, and a systematic farming. The main crops were rice and maize, and were able to domesticate bullocks and cows for farm work. This era began to wane after AD.1,000, and at the middle of eleventh century AD, the Lacids left LOO KHOO MOUG.

Leaving LOO KHOO MOUG for new lands where the water was clearer and the grass greener, the Lacids reached northern Myanmar at the beginning of

the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD. According to leading tribal elders, the incoming Lacids, at the time of entry into Myanmar, were reunited with some of their blood relations at **CUNG:DAM NGA YEO** and settled down after establishing a village there. CUNG: DAM NGA YEO is located in what is now Chi-phyay township, northeast of Myitkyina, and Htau-lan township, north of Hsaulaw township, Kachin State. The ancestral names – Madeing, Galau, Zone bauk, Zekhone, etc., came intense after residing at this place. Villages were founded according to family groups led by persons who enjoyed the honor and respect of the majority of its members. It was a time when land had to be bought up if one family group wanted to establish a village of their own on the estate area owned by the current resident family group. Thus, at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century AD, real estate transactions were in practice among the Lacid ancestral groups.

At the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century AD, the Lacids entered Northern Myanmar Via the CUNG: DAM NGA YEO region along river routes. The Maykha River in Lacid language was known as **LUNG:BYID**, and the Thanlwin as **MEING GYUNG**. They crossed the Maykha on the rattan rope bridge called **BASHE" SHOID LO**.

The region where the Lacids settled down for good was bordered in the east by China, in the west by Maykha and Malikha, the eastern bank of LUNG: BYID, in the north by **Htau-lan** (Hsau -law township), and in the south by Hsaddon (Waing-maw township). The region mostly inhabited by Lacids comprised of **Cang"Moo" Khung, Myed youg" Kyang: Lang:, and Jang"Mo" Lug Koem: Zang,** villages in Chi- phway township .

Of the present locations where Lacids inhabit, those in the eastern part of Kachin State are assumed to be dated from about the 10<sup>th</sup> century AD. During AD 11<sup>th</sup> century, there began community settlements, and henceforth, spread through out Myanmar round about AD.1,400.

At present, the Lacids are spread all over in such townships as Chi-phway, Hsau-law, Waing-maw, and Hsa-don region; Mogoung, Mohnyin, Karmine, Kathar, Muse, Kut- khine, Mabein, Lashio, Hsenwi, Hsipaw, Momeik,



Namtu, Kunlon, Kengtung, Tanyang , Mong-yein, Namkham, Kyauk-me, Mongyong, Mongphyat, and Hopan regions as well as along the riverine routes.

**(D) Population**

There are over 30,000 Lacid nationals in the Kachin State, out of a total of 80,000 nationwide. Madeing village has 246 homes for a population of 1,100 Lacids. The whole village proper has 549 houses, 1687 males and 1933 females making up a total of 3,620 inhabitants comprising of Lacids, Lauwaws, Bamars, Jing-phaws and Zaiwas.

**(E) Physical Feature and Temperament**

The Lacids nationals belong to the Mongoloid ancestry, and are members of the Tibeto-Burman group. They are slandered-faced and have narrow eye – sockets. The majority lack eyelids. Thin lips are common but there are a few exceptions. The eyebrows and hair are dark, most are straight-haired but here also, a few exceptions prevail. Cheekbones align well and jawbones are also of medium stature, neither too narrow nor too wide. The average height for males is 5' 5", females, 5' 2" . Most are fair and well-built.

The Lacid nationals are diligent people who leave home for work early in the morning. Greed is unknown to them and are content with what they have. They are brave and courageous, and are noted for their stand for what is right. They highly value honesty, and are frank and friendly. Family ties are strong due to their practice of living together in unity; preventing any danger that befalls on them. Guests travelling through Lacid villages need not take along with them money for fares, or rations, or beddings. Villagers who entertain the guests with the best they can afford cordially provide them with shelter and food. The Lacids are noted for their hearty and enthusiastic speech habits.

On arrival, the guest will be Enquirer of his family lineage so that the relationship can be determined. After this preliminaries, the ancestry line of each party is recited and thus develops an intimate relationship. By these customs, it is obvious that the Lacids fully maintain unison in fraternal fellowship, and lead a live attaining security in love and care.

Lacid nationals put a high value on their ancestral history. They would explain patiently and tirelessly to any enquiries made. They wish the departing guessed

with the expression, "Easy. Take it easy." The outstanding and gallant participation in political and military affairs under the British rule were proofs of the Lacids' valour. They have been awarded titles and sanctioned revenue areas for keeps. The 3- time 'Thura' award winner **Captain Saug Cang**", **Captain Teing"Boem Cang**, ", Captain Teing"Boem Kyang, **Captain Phare Yeing" Kyang**" were all brave warriors who fought the Fascist Japanese valiantly from the Lacid region to southern Shan State areas. Lacid patriot leaders Wunna Kyaw Htin **Duwa Zoug Phu Mataung Kho Sough**, and the Reverend **U SauCang" Zung** co-signatories of the Pinlon Agreement (1947) in the course of National leader General Aug San's efforts to achieve Independence for Myanmar. These facts clearly highlight the Lacids nationals as a race of brave and courageous people.

(F) Mode of Dressing

The Lacid grows long hair on the top part of the head to tie into a knot, and cut the hair short in the rest of the head. A hog tusk is used to tie a big knot of hair, and the black linen turban worn over it is about 12 feet in length. The left ear is bored to wear a silver ear ring. Dark baggy trousers, collarless white shirt over which is worn an open-fronted jacket. Carved wooden and rattan cane bound sword – in- scabbard, adorned with tiger tusk is slung down from the shoulders. Nowadays a Lacid male wears black linen turban of about 12 feet, the right end of which is adorned with woolen tassels. There are no more ear borings these days. Long coat is worn over a pair of baggy trousers and a colorless white shirt. The long coat, woven by a traditional back-strap loom, reaches down to the upper levels of the lateral malleolus. Both sides of the coat are slit open below the knees and laced with a 1 – inch gold and silver embroidery. A black piece of cloth about 4 – inches is stitched at top of the sleeves. From the neck-opening down to the bottom of the long coat, gold and silver embroideries are made for about 1.5 inches in width. A carved wooden scabbard bound by rattan cane is hung across the shoulders. In former times, men used to hang bags. Some ancient males hang stone beads around the neck. Lacid women wear a six ft. long black turban with tassels at the fringes. They use underwear in addition to the jacket with string buttons. Some wear

long dresses made of a mixture of red , green and yellow cloths at the back, Red pieces of cloths about 4 inches are stitched at elbows, finger tips and waist. Some ladies wear dresses to which are stuck reddish gold orchids at the back, fringes, and sleeves. They usually wear linen rope belts adorned with porcelainrings, and in some cases, small bells. Cylindrical silver bangles, silver coins , necklaces and porcelain beads are the common ornaments for ladies. Black and red stockings , woven on back –strap looms, are wrapped around the legs. The long dress is no more in fashion now. Instead, velvet-like black blouses adorned with silver gongs around the neck and back have replaced them. Red cloth pieces are stitched on to the elbows, sleeves and around the waistline. The hem of the skirt is beautifully woven with wool , gold and silver embroidery, with wavy knit work above the hemline. To conceal menstrual effects of grown up girls, green and red linen cloth pieces are stitched as belts for ready wear around the waist. Nowadays, the ladies string rattan cane baskets adorned with tassels.

The Lacid nationals of Madeing village wear shirts, cotton lounges (skirts) just like the Bamar nationals. The ladies wear jackets buttoned down the front, and skirts. Older ladies above the age of 60 always turban their heads with cloths.

In the past, Lacid damsels cropped their hair at shoulder level with some clearing around the ears and keep their hair oblong in the form of Semi-coconut shell. Married women kept their hair long under a turban. Girls aged 4 to 5 started donning traditional attire, and for the boys it was at the age of 5-6 . Girls wore black, for wearing white would be despicable in Lacid society. For boys, the chosen color was white.

In the olden days, the traditional dress for a Lacid girl cost about Kyats 14000, but now it would be Kyats 12,000. For boys it used to be about Kyats 17,000 , compared to the current price of about Kyats 14,400 . Unfortunately, the Lacids nowadays do not always put on their traditional garb. Only on wedding ceremonies and traditional festivals is the attire cherished.

#### (G) Language and Literature

The Lacid nationals themselves invented the present day written language. With the conversion to Christianity from Spirit worship, the urge to

understand and discourse the Bible in their own language grew. They made an attempt to invent the Lacid written language in 1958 . First , the Lacid nationals , in order to produce own written language, went to MO" S, the missionary working among the Rawangs, to get alphabets from him. But they didn't like them. Then they chose one invented by the Rev. Bishop **LU"KA HRO"LEIM** and made arrangements to adopt it. However , as one of the Lacid elders, the then Myanmar Socialist Programme Party, Central Executive Committee member, **U GALOU BOEM ZUNG** " suggested that they make use of the Myanmar alphabets, the Lacids attempted the matter for a whole decade. Unfortunately, it was found that the Myanmar alphabets were inadequate to cover the sound system of the Lacid language. Therefore, in the end, the Lacids again turned to Bishop LU"KA HRO" LEIM's linguistic data, and with revision and scrutinization work led by the veteran Head Teacher U LA NHAM: KHO CANG" , the missionary's version of the Lacid language came into use. The Lacid language formally came into existence in 1975. The official assigning ceremony of the Lacid language was held on 14<sup>th</sup> May , 1977 at Zeelon Ward , in Myitkyina. A seminar of Lacid language and literature was also held in 1985, at Madeing village in Waing-maw township. Lacid literature is based on the Roman alphabets. There are 21 consonants. They are – B,C,D,F,G,H, J, K, L, M, P, Q, R, S, T, V,W ,X ,Y, Z. The 5 vowels are A,E,I,O,U , and the 12 diphthongs being AE, AI, AU, EI, EU, OE, OI, OO, OU, UA, UE, UI . Consonant clusters are the (---+ H) group consisting of JH, KH,LH,MH, NH, PH, RH, SH, TH, VH, YH, ZH, MYH, NYH, NGH, and the (-----+Y) group consisting of BY, GY, MY, NY, KHY, PHY. The superscripted devowelizers are –B, -D, -G, -M , -N, -NG . For intonation, there are phoneme: long syllable: short syllable: low pitch: low pitched short syllable: high pitch.

e.g.

Gau-	(meaning happy)	is pronounced as	/gau/	(phoneme)
SaRa:	( " teacher)	"	/saja:/	(long syllable)
Ngho'	( meaning bird )	"	/ yha/	(short " )
Lo,	( " hand)	"	/ la /	(low pitch)
Nyid;	( " exist)	"	/ njeint/	( l.p. short syllable)

Tang"( " run ) " / ta: n / ( high pitch)

The Lacids value their literature very much. There exist 2 language families in Myanmar, namely, Austro - Asiatic and Sino- Tibetan, the former being earlier than the latter. The language of the Lacids is of the Sino-Tibetan family. A great number of vocabularies in the Lacid and Myanmar languages having similar meaning as well as pronunciation shows that the 2 languages generated from the same stock. This close relationship between Lacid and Myanmar languages is shown in the following comparison.

	<u>Lacid</u>	<u>Myanmar</u>	<u>Jing-phaw</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
(1)	A phoo	Ahba	Ah-wha	father
(2)	Voo:	wah	Kawah	bamboo
(3)	Nho:duang	Nha-khoung	Ledi	nose
(4)	Xam	Hsan	Kara	hair
(5)	A phyu(colour)	Ah- phyu	Ah-farok	white
(6)	Lo, voo:	Let- wah	Talaphant	palms
(7)	Shed	Shit	Ma-saik	eight

Lacids nationals residing around Waing-maw township are fluent in the Jing- phaw language in addition to the language of their own. Although they may change their use of language according to the region they are in, the Lacids are well known for their language preservation.

### Chapter 3.

#### Social Organization

According to the Dictionary of Sociology, the expression 'social structure' means the organizational set-up of the human society which has sub-communities organized on the criteria of age, sex, kinship, occupation, locality, property and ownership, rights and privileges, and status. The social structure is organized based on the combination of all these sub-communities. The human society is where the masses of the people co-exist within a set of systematic rules and regulations. The customs and culture adopted by the society is handed down as heritage. Thus, ensuring the stability of the society in question.

The Lacid indigenous race is one of the smaller social communities in the Myanmar society. There are different age groups of male and female in this social community. The socialization topics include birth, reaching maturity, marriage, legacy, death, settling down, migration, and interpersonal relations. The study of a society should begin with the family, the basic unit of the human community. Only after studying the behaviour of the members of a family can we go on to study those of the society.

#### (A) The Village – structure and Naming

Depending on the population growth, or in the search for greener pastures, the Lacids established villages. They do so in accordance with the prescribed traditional customs of the racial group.

The Lacids usually build on successive land stretches or on ridges. The essentials for establishing a village are as follows.

- a. arable land
- b. easy access to water sources, and
- c. convenient transport and communications

The oracles make use of leaf-knot astrological prediction, and by interpreting what is dreamt over a pillow enclosing a lump of earth from the would-be village site, or by solemnized oath over the singer sprout, or by CenLhang"Khyo astrological prediction which is a prediction by way of arranging rice grains. The Zoug Phoo tribe leads the establishing of villages. When a good



site for establishing a village is located, the selected family from each tribe is sent out to build the new village . A village is known by the name of its founder tribe. A lance is presented to the Duwa tribe which is to lead the task in order not to lose track of the generation of kinship, and contact with other villages. Likewise, a sword to clear the underbrush, a gong for assembling the inhabitants , and an extra gong to cover the offertories of eatables made to the guardian spirits of the site, a set of beads to tie up the four glasses of liquor for the four directions, east, west, north, and south, and a shot gun, percussion lock fire arm to protect the land, and a loungyi.

The Lacids christen a village by the name of the founder, or the environment in which it is situated. For instance, the village founded by U Madeing Zoug Phu Kho Kei christened Madeing village on a hillock and receives the first rays of sunlight is known by the name of **Bid lhab**.

A village close to the meadows will be Nu: Zung Boug, and one near an oblong lake as **Thoem" Sheing**.

From the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century it was found that family - wise villages were founded from the base location of **Cung: dam Nga yoo**.

Tho' go village was founded by one Ga Lou Teing Lug Boem. There were also villages founded by Phyi Moo" , Thang" Dung, and Jen co' LaTung, respectively.

**Madeing Zoug Moo" yhoi**, founded the villages **Moug Yoo" go** , and **go yhoem**. **Meu lang Khoug: Shi" jhang**, village was founded by one Fa Yoo, the grandfather of **Shi" jhang**, **Mang: Shang, soug lang, lug seing** and **Pha Rhi.Cang" yoo** is founded the village of la goid:•

The establishment of separate private villages affects the unity among communities. Every leader of the family based village does not want another to come and dominate the place. Therefore, they were in search of someone who could all Lacids. They found one, the family clan leader Voo: Jang, the brother of Voo: lang " who was the grandfather of Madeing and Ga Lou. All Lacids unanimously elected him the leader and therefore, up to the present day, his descendants are recognized as the Zoug chieftain race. One of its descendants will be called into lead the founding of family clan village. However , the

founding leader does not rule on his own , but calls in influential village elders for consultation in the administration of the village.

(A)The House- how it is built

Lacids call in the oracle for the choice of the building site of a house. The choice is made through the leaf knot prediction method, the Lacid term for which is Kha Phyed Fu. The leaf, Kha Phyed is plucked and cut into 6 strips in line with the grains, the middle one to be thrown away. The strips are bound in the hand in order to get mixed up. Then the strips are made into 2 knots having 2 strips each. The oracle implores the Spirits to bless the choice through the leaf- knot. Then the bound leaf strips are loosened up, causing to appear in various designs. If they are knotted over every alternate strip, it means well, or else, move on to another site and repeat the procedures.

For human habitation, bamboo is slit open into halves and 6 grains of crimson glutinous rice for the male, and 7 manually peeled grains of hill-side paddy for the female are put inside the slit bamboo, covers it up with the other half, and buried in the ground. The next day, the bamboo is dug up, and on opening it , if the grains are found intact, it means good, if otherwise, move on to another site and repeated the process.

The leaf-knot prediction method also comes in handy for choosing helpers to build the house. One chosen , the house builder goes to the chosen male helpers to secure their help taking along with him the local brew of country beer. If help is agreed upon, killing a chicken at the helper's place makes the sacrifice to the guardian spirit of the house. The male helper is called lang :Jhang Phoo, and the female, lang:Jhang Myhi for whom the similar approach for help is made as that for the male helper.

If everything is set, the house owner appeals for help to the house guardian spirits. The date for collecting timber for building materials such as wood and bamboo is also decided by leaf- knot prediction. The date has targets such as full moon, new moon, the 8<sup>th</sup> waxing, or the 8<sup>th</sup> waning day, by which the task has to be completed. Large trees for making posts are felled as follows. First the chosen tree is tied with slit bamboo straps, or creeper vines one or two days in advance. Then the guardian spirit of that tree is sought for advice as to



his consent on felling the tree , the positive answer for which is to leave the rope intact. After about 2 days the tree is revisited and if the rope is found broken , the builder leaves that tree and repeats the rites elsewhere on another tree. If the rope is found intact, people begin felling the tree. As the tree begins to fall, a wooden statue of some sort of creature is placed right on the stump and everyone runs off to a nearby place. Next moment, after the tree has fallen , all rush back and blame the creature for the felling of the tree.

When the timber collecting task is over, the house owner asks the whole village for assistance in transporting all the materials to the building site, for which he treats them to meals along with home brew country beer. The construction date is again chosen through the leaf-knot prediction and the house is built with collective efforts. Lacid homes used to be of oblong shape with many rooms. In the past , the Headman's house can be distinguished from that of the commoners by the size of the pillars. Married sons live under the same roof with the parents, turning the abode into the dwelling place of 3 or more generations. Bamboo strap chairs are hung under the eaves for the continuity of descendants, a bamboo rattle, Voo Phung" Lhang" in Lacid is also hung to ward off wild beasts, and La Yoem/ Ja Shu leaves tied in the shape of beehive, and bullock horn on the front rooftop , are hung for fertility .

The portico-like structure at the front premises is roofed, from under which a ladder is fixed for entry into the house. This is a log curved into footsteps. The very first room is kept for the Spirits, and the following two are drawing rooms. Adjacent to the drawing room is the room for the Grand Old Man of the house. Behind the drawing rooms are the firewood store, the place for bamboo containers, and the dug-out for the pig feed. Adjacent to these is the room for the first born, followed by room for unmarried siblings, opposite of which is the chicken- run built over the pig-sty. The simple wooden device of boom and pestle for pounding and polishing rice, plus the bullocks take up the front yard. All rooms in traditional Lacid homes keep furnaces. The Lacid traditional house is built of wood, bamboo and thatches.

Nowadays, traditional houses can be found only in hilly regions. The well-to- dos in Madeing village build houses of brick, corrugated zinc sheet roofing

and wooden flooring, big enough for the immediate family only, while some others build with wood, thatches and bamboo. There are no buildings of multiple-room traditional houses any more.

(C)The Family – the set-up and adoption practices

The family is a basic unit in society. A societal unit comprising husband and wife, their natural offsprings or adopted children is called a family. The Lacids' concept of the family unit is more or less similar to that of the Myanmar . However, since the Lacids give priority to the paternal side, the expression /pha tha: su/ (translated as- the father & children group).

The male parent is the most dominant person in the family. He is the most responsible person for the family, the bread winner, and the representative of the family in the community affairs . The male parent leads in the taun-yar (hillside terraced cultivation) works, fishing, and hunting, while the female parent takes charge of preparing meals, gathering vegetables , house chores and child care, an in spare times works the looms.

Anthropologists' findings on the world's families break down into-

- (1)The Basic Family
- (2)The Joint Family
- (3)The Extended Family, and
- (4) The Compound Family

A survey of the Lacid families in Madeing village yields a majority of the basic family and the joint family. The Lacid basic family comprises of the male and female parents and their offspring living under a single roof. This basic family not only build up the human society but also contributes to its welfare. Joint family also the male-parent leads the family. The male offspring, even when they get married, stay with the parents and earn a collective livelihood with them. For the female offspring the custom is that they have to follow their spouses and live with them once they get married. The male offspring bring their brides to their parents' homes and after getting married live together with the parents. Later the male offspring leave the parents to set up new household and only the youngest son's family remains with the 2 parents.

The head of the family, the male parent has to lead religious rituals as well as the economy of the household. The families collectively work for the common economy and share a common missing. Since the earnings are collective so also is the ownership of the estate and land. All the families live under the authority of the male parent of the basic family .

In joint families the eldest son takes over the male parent's position of authority on the demise of the latter , and leads the household's economy. If elder sons set up separate household's, the remaining son has to lead the household . Cattle and land etc. , are handed over as inheritance when sons get married and set up separate households.

polygamy had been in practice among the Lacids in the past . A Lacid male could take on a number of wives for reasons of sterility on the part of the wife, the right to wed the widows of his late brothers, and the right to take on another in the case of the present wife not bearing any male offspring. This enhanced the compound family led by the male parent. Among the wives the most senior maintained authority over the rest, and she managed the household affairs. The next in line took over when that wife became too old to carry on with the household management.

The relatives of the male - parents can put with the Lacid family whenever they choose to, but it is not found to be the same for those of the female parents.

Daughters cease to be members of the male-led family as soon as they get married and go off with their spouses. But the male elder sons, though having set up new house-holds upon marriage, remain as members .When it generates into an ancestral tribal group, the kinship ties are attested .There are tribal groups such as Madeing, Ga Lau, La nam , La Gwei, Laton , Jen Co, Bi Myan La nam, Za Khung and Ngaw Cang" etc. . Ancestry line must be produced when one gets among one's own tribal group. In the old days , those living in the same village in the hilly regions are of the same stock. . Families of the same stock regarded themselves as one family however far they might live apart. And once they had been identified as from the same stock the members

treated each other as intimate blood relatives. Adoption is practiced by the Lacids.

Adoption is practiced by the Lacids. Children of both sexes are adopted, though the majority prefers boys. Adopted children are treated as natural offspring with fringed benefits of inheritance rights. Adoption, therefore, in the Lacid society means not adopting of strangers but of children from one's own bloodline such as sons and daughters of relatives. If strangers are adopted the nephews and nieces have the right to sue the adopting parents.

#### (D) Kinship

The emergence of the family unit brings about kinship relations between families. The term 'kinship' appear along with marriages in a socially and intellectually developed era of the human society , prior to which there had not been term for this kind of relationship. Kinship is important to human society in that it can **ban** the marrying between close blood relations.

There are 3 kinship lineages for the Lacids.

(1) Male siblings

(2) Parents – in – law, and

(3) Sons – in – law.

In Lacid language the male sibling kinship is called **Mang: Nhung"** , and includes all the offspring, both male and female, of great grandfathers, grandfathers, and fathers. It is found that this kinship lineage functions only for the male parent's relatives, not for those of the female's.

The parent's – in – law kinship lineage is called **Yug Pho** in the Lacid language. It includes relatives from the mother, grandmother, and grandfather's mother side, both male and female. The relatives from the male parent regard those from the mother's side as in – law kin.

Zoo Mo is the Lacid term for the sons – in – law kinship lineage. The relatives of maids who have wedded females from own stock are recognized as the sons – in – law kin. Relatives of males who marry one's sister, father's sister are included in this category.

There are codes of ethics in the relationship among the 3 categories of kinship lineage . A female from the parents - in – law stock and a male from

the sons – in – law stock can get married , whereas a marriage between a male and a female of these 2 stocks , in this order, is prohibited. Cousins from the male parent's male siblings are relatives who are not allowed to get married to each other. If they do, they are bound to make up for breaking the code of ethics by paying up compensatory fees. Therefore the Lacids abide by these principles of social relationship of their society.

#### (E) Legacy and Inheritance

The legacy of authority is the entitled right of succession through out the lineage of generations. Legacy does not go by merits of seniority. The legatee has to be chosen from among the sons. The oracle holds a chicken while the male offspring sit infant of the shrine for the Spirits or Nats of the house .The oracle, after making supplications to the Spirit, frees the chicken from his hold. The owner of the head on which the fowl perches becomes the legatee. Nowadays, local administration prescribed by the Government is adhered to.

Females are not given any priorities in the Lacid traditional inheritance process. The estate is equally divided among male offspring. But the youngest son is the first among equals. He is entitled to the house and the plot upon which it is built. The female offspring does not really get as much estate as the sons, but only gets what is left of the latter. The youngest son stays with the parents , even after marriage , looking after them . On the demise of the parent, the youngest son gets the lion's share of the property, and he continues to take charge of male parent's relic and the remaining members of the family and feed and clothes them. Moreover, the youngest son has to bear the largest amount of the father's funeral expenses.

Some Lacids couples die sterile, and the relatives of the male parent take up their estate after consultations with village elders. In the case of the singular female offspring survivor , she gets all the estate of the parents. A widow can remarry the deceased's elder or younger brother. In so doing , she is entitled to inherit the estate, the right which she loses if she remarries outside of the immediate family of the husband. The adopted children of the Lacids are found to enjoy the full right of inheritance as the natural offspring do.

## Chapter 4.

### Social Affairs

#### (A) Bachelor and Maiden Life

A twelve to thirteen – year Lacid lass or a thirteen to fourteen – year lad is considered a grown – up. They begin to have a distinct mode of dressing. The grown – up girls weave their own attire and dress smartly. They become very skillful in the housework, too. For the grown – up males, they are already involved in the 'taun – yar' (the hillside terraced – cultivation) works and hunting by now.

On attaining puberty, the process of paying court begins. The bachelors and the maidens lead a free and happy life , but under the control of the parents and the restrictions of the religion . During the Nat (spirit) worshipping days of old, the house had separate rooms for the bachelors and for the maidens. The match – maker was involved in the courting. The village chaperon was in charge of the maidens, while the leading bachelor took over his charges. The female leader is called Zoo: Myi: Vhu" jhung: and the male, Zoo: lu Vhu" jhung: in Lacid terms.

Paying court in Lacid society is a very interesting affair. On receiving the information of a visiting maiden, the bachelors of the village make the leading bachelor or the chaperon to go to the house where the maiden is putting up. Once at the place, the leader or chaperon makes some introductions, after which the betel package brought secretly along is left with a member of the host family before leaving. This is to be done without the visiting maiden's knowledge. The custom calls for the host to bring the maiden along with the betel package to the bachelors' place. There, the two parties meet and converse, debate, solve riddles and sing songs. They pass the night in the same room, males and females on separate sides. They all have to leave before the elders wake – up the next morning. The betel package or the handkerchief is presented.

The maidens similarly introduce themselves to the visiting bachelor through the chaperon or the leading bachelor of their village. If the host maidens do not carry out the paying court practice after they knew of the



bachelor's visit, the latter would censure them and the host villagers will be brought to shame.

Although the bachelors and the maidens in the Lacid society lead a tradition of care – free life , rarely are pre- marital excesses. Such acts will be disapproved by the Nats. There are taboos in the Lacid society . For instance, it is a taboo for a young man pulling the longyi (skirt) of a sleeping girl. He could not even touch it . If found guilty , the offender is to make up for it is way of giving two fowls and one pig as compensation. These are to be offered to the Guardian Nats (spirits)of the girl's house. When a young man makes a girl in the family way , the following has to be presented as wedding presents, or as compensation in the case of the young man refusing to marry.

- |                           |            |
|---------------------------|------------|
| {1} Water buffalo         | (one) Nos. |
| {2} 7 ½ ft. gong          | (one) "    |
| {3} Double- length longyi | (one) "    |
| {4} String of beads       | (one) "    |
| {5} Suit                  | (one) "    |
| {6} Knife /sword          | (one) "    |

A Lacid male brings home for confinement the female who bears his child outside of wedlock , when she is seven months in pregnancy. He has to take the responsibility for the confinement. . After giving birth, the girl is sent back to her parents. Some males would not marry the girl, but readily take the new born.

Nowadays, the practice of paying court is found to be no longer in existence. Long ago, it was only the taun – yar (hillside terraced – cultivation) that they worked in , and so had ample free time. Now , things have changed, and since people are involved in other business activities besides the taun –yar work it seems that there is no time to spare for the rituals of paying court. Those who fall in love with each other ask for the parents' consent for the bride's hand in marriage.

(B) Mate Selection

There are rules to be followed in the selection of brides and grooms for the Lacids. Cousins by the male parents siblings are recognized as parallel cousins and therefore, prohibited to intermarry, whereas marriage is permitted between cross cousins from the male parent's siblings and those from the female parent's siblings.

In the past there were very few marriages by the two parties falling in love with each other. The parents arranged everything. For the son the parents searched for a girl from among the parents - in - law kinship group and engaged the two to be married later on when both grow up. Some Lacid males made their own choice for a bride , and asked the oracle for the suitability of the choice. If positive, the male contacted a match - maker proceeded with the proposal . If the choice was made out of the parents - in - law kinship group, the male brought gifts and presented the matter to them. The could oblige by going to the girl's parents and formally asking for the hand of the girl in marriage.

However, the Lacid males generally marry girls from their parents - in - law kinship group as arranged by their parents. The parents brought mementos such as a strand of hair, a piece of garment cloth, or a piece of thread secretly from the girl of their choice . This is called Sha phan: in Lacid . Only the person who took it and the oracle knew. The latter then takes a frying pan filled with pure water, and two eggs which he holds one in each hand and pronounces the boy's and the girl's names. Next, he slowly puts the eggs into the pan . If the two eggs stay together side by side, it is assumed as favorable. But if the girl's egg turns round, if the two eggs remain in a line one after the other, it means unfavorable. In that case, the memento taken without the owner's knowledge has to be returned to the pillow - side of the girl with apologies from the Cupid. If the memento is not returned, and the girl concerned comes to know of it , then a compensation can be demanded.

(1) Betrothal

For the initial sounding out, the Lacids work through the match -maker presenting gifts as follows.



- (1) Double – length men's longyi
- (2) Pickled tea leaves in bamboo containers
- (3) Two containers of liquor

This is called Dang : Myed: lagyoo: . When the host party shows the green light for a betrothal, an elderly male and an elderly female have to go to carry out the task . These two should be very intimate with the parents of the future bride , and be eloquent. For preliminary **bride price** (bridal fees) the following items are sent.

- (1) A 7 ½ ft. gong
- (2) A buffalo or a cow
- (3) One double – length men's longyi (high quality)
- (4) A long smoking pipe
- (5) A woolen mat
- (6) A gong for the future parents – in – law
- (7) One pig, and
- (8) A traditional basket with sling.

This is called Theing" Khaid To" . Then, the bride' s party in return give Mahtoe Knife and Mahtoe Spear as tokens of acceptance .The bride's father strikes the gong three times to show his consent.

Then the confirming bridal fees in the form of –

- (1) 5½ ft. gong
- (2) Double –length men's longyi
- (3) Traditional sling basket containing eggs , liquor, steamed glutinous rice.

When these have been given the auspicious date for the wedding is fixed. Weddings are usually held during the waxing moon , and the month of thirty days. This is a practice followed up to the present day.

#### (2) The Marriage Ceremony

The marriage ceremony is usually held at the groom's house, not at the bride's . Only the **patrilocal residence** is accepted . On the wedding day

match – makers go to the in – laws and the bride to speak to them . On this trip the match – makers bring along with them the bridal fees in the form of –

- (1) One 6 ft. gong, and one 6¾ ft. gong
- (2) Three buffaloes or cows
- (3) One double – length men's longyi, and
- (4) One necklace.

This bride price is called **Myi: Jhu" Vhoid**. Before coming to the groom's place, the bride's parents have to invite the village elder in and present him with a gong or a double – length longyi. And then to the guardian spirit of the village an offertory of fowls , pig or double – length longyi is made. Only after doing these , the bride's parents go to the groom' together with the match – makers.

At the groom's house , they have to pass the **pheing"** reed before entering into the house. This is to leave out the evil spirits if these spirits have been accompanying them. The guests are accommodated, and the Nat of the parents – in – law is offered a sacrifice of pig , and to that of the groom a buffalo. Then the exchange of gifts begins.

- (1) On the arrival of the parents – in – law , the son – in – law gives a bolt of double – length longyi and food as a token of wiping the sweat of the guests,

(2) A gong, to usher the guests into yhe living room

(3) One pig

(4) **Vu, Suid Sold**, a double – length longyi bolt to wipe out the blood stains of the hog.

On the part of the parents-in-law give the following things as **dowry** to the couple.

(1) A double –length longyi, as a sign of acceptance of the living room

(2) A chopper , **Vu, Zain Sham**,

(3) A string of coral beads, **gung cang: yi**

(4) A silk double – length longyi , **Boug jhid**

(5) A traditional sling basket , a gong, a bolt of double – length longyi , crockery and seeds

(6) A coral string of beads from the uncle

(7) A buffalo or a cow for breed

(8) A pot and a tripod stand for cooking

On the part of the son – in – law

(1) A gong to put in the bridal fees, Vhoid jung kaung

(2) A coral string of beads for mother's breast feeding, Tang lain

(3) A cow or a female buffalo , Gung Lhig'

(4) A buffalo for the uncle

(5) A buffalo for the elder uncle

(6) A buffalo for the brother – in – law

(7) A bolt of silk double – length longyi for the elder accompanying the bride,  
Myi: DI" phoo

(8) A bolt of double – length longyi for the female elder accompanying the bride,  
Myi: DI" Myi

(9) An ox as the completion of the bridal fees

(10) A bolt of double – length longyi , steamed glutinous rice, eggs and locally  
brewed beer to wind up the ceremony

(11) A bolt of double – length longyi to cover expenses for the parents – in – law  
's return journey.

The parents – in – law left a sword as a token of their folding camp. Nowadays, cash is given for the worth of cows, buffaloes, and coral strings of beads. After being converted into Christianity the weddings are held at the church. The pastor carries out according to the religious rites . The Lacids wear traditional dress at weddings.

The groom presents the wedding ring to the bride in recognition as a wedded partner. The bride in return, adorns the groom with sword in scabbard and a bag . Then they pray to God for a lasting wedded life . The groom and bride then put their signatures down before the pastor. The guests are served food and refreshments after their church service.

#### (C) Wedded Life

Lacids practice the patrilocal residence and thus wish to have male offsprings more than those of female. The male partner dominates the

household. Preparing plots for taun – yar , building houses, and hunting are the male professions while sowing , weeding and reaping crops are done by the women folk.

### (1) Pregnancy and Confinement

When a Lacid women realize they are in the family way they have to abide by the traditional taboos. They must abstain porcupine meat, which is believed to lead to abortion . Monkey meat also leads to a difficult birth and thus avoided. Both the husband and the wife must avoid chicken head with jaws apart or else the child will be born with broken lips. During pregnancy , water pots, containers, and cups should not be broken.

Local midwives administer child - births. The thread used in cutting off the umbilical cord is dyed with the dark fluid obtained from the Mhi" gam Fu tree. The thread is tied to the placenta and cut off by bamboo of the giant species. The male offspring's placenta is buried on the head side of the house , with six bamboo slats stuck to the ground and tied with bamboo straps . The female offspring's placenta is buried at the foot of the side pole of the house in an enclosure of seven bamboo slats stuck to the ground and tied at the top by a bamboo strap. Some use twelve bamboo slats for male and fourteen for female. The bamboo enclosure is to ward off animals coming to destroy the spot . In the past no visitor is reviewed during Nat offertory time, and at the time of childbirth. The mother had to stay in the house six days for a male and seven for a female. After this duration, the mother could go out up to water – fetching place. Giving birth to twins , born with the placenta slung, and covered face are taken as favorable. The mother is given brewed egg fried in walnut oil or bear fat or buffalo fat. To ward off evil spirits, six slabs of ginger , six slabs of garlic stitched to the hat, are worn by the boys, and seven of the similar stuff are for the girls.

Nowadays, child- births are performed in hospitals as well as by midwives of the rural health centers and local professionals.

### (2) Naming Ceremony

In the Lacid custom , a newborn is given a name as soon as it comes out of the mother's womb, before the umbilical cord is cut. If not, the evil spirits

will give the new born an evil name, it is believed. The parents are worried that their offsprings might be given evil names.

Right after confinement , ginger shoots, six for male and seven for female , have to be stuck to sticks and planted at the kitchen corners . A few days later, the christening ceremony for the child is held. The oracles make offertories to the ancestral Nats. The one who prepares the local beer for the christening occasion should be a bachelor. It is the same for the girl who cooks for the ceremony . The ginger are pounded with dried meat and put in a tray for the offertory to the Nats . The oracles pray to the Nats surrendering the newborn to their care. Relatives and guests are served with dried rat meat, dried fish pounded in ginger, and with steamed glutinous rice . This tradition is still in practice up to this day.

The last syllable of a father ' s name is allocated to the initial syllable of the offspring , who are given names in serial order . Therefore, it is convenient to identify the Lacid ancestral lineage. If the father's name ends in 'Yeing' , Kho, or Boem', the first son can be called by a name in conjunction with one of the three syllables. For instance, if a father 's name ends in ' Boem' , the offspring names can be as follows.

	<u>son</u>	<u>daughter</u>
Firstborn	Boem Kho	Boem Ham:
Second	Boem yeing	Boem Myoo:
Third	Boem Zung	Boem Sang
Fourth	Boem Cang"	Boem Vang
Fifth	Boem Zi	Boem Ven

### ( 3 )Child care and the Educating process

The Lacids strive for the non- extinction of their race. They believe their race will perpetuate when more offspring are born . Therefore, pregnant mothers have to adhere strictly to the confinement regulations and abstain from committing taboos. When the child is born the mother has to adjust her way of life for the health and wellbeing of the child.

Breast - feeding is the main method of rearing a child. The mother spends the whole time with the baby, taking care of it. She does not any taun -

yar work. When the baby is four or five months old, the mother does house chores with the child on her back, and goes to work at the farm in same manner. At the age of two years , breast feeding stops , and the child is fed rice . Once the child is stopped breast feeding , it is left with the grandparents when the mother goes to work in the taun – yar .

The Lacid language is taught as soon as the child can talk . The expressions for father , A phoo , mother , A Myhi, brother, Mang, sister, bi , uncle, yug phoo, aunt , Nig, elder uncle, phoo Moo" , elder aunt , Nig Moo" , grandfather , A phoug, grandmother, A phyid , etc . are taught.

Boys usually follow fathers to taun – yar work at the age of six . At ten the boy is taught fishing , bird trapping, and hunting by the father. He is shown how to identify medicinal herbs during his hunting trips. At the start of his teen – age , he begins to do house – roofing, fencing the yard , and erecting the hut. Therefore, by the age of sixteen to seventeen males are thought to have acquired the vocational skills and begin to get married.

The girls have to fetch water, feed the domestic animals, and gather vegetables since young. On passing the age of ten, they are taught ginning, spinning and weaving by their mothers . After that, paddy transplanting, reaping, pounding and brewing local beer are taught stage by stage. By the age of fifteen to sixteen, they are thought to have acquired all skills that a Lacid female should possess.

Therefore, the Lacid parents train their offsprings in domestic as well as vocational skills, and in manners and behaviour when young.

#### (D) Divorce

It is a fact that divorce in the Lacid community is very few and far between. If it occurs for reasons of unavoidable circumstances, it is done in the traditional customs.

If the divorce is of bi - lateral consent , there is no compensation to be made. Bridal fees received on the wedding should be reimbursed as compensation when the female partner initiates the divorce. The male partner, in that case could return the compensation to the parents – in – law kinship group if he does not want to break ties with them, and if he chooses to remarry

with someone from their stock. Then, the parents – in – law stock chooses the divorce's younger sister or any other suitable female to wed with the divorced male. If the male wants the divorce,

- (1) he has to forfeit all he had spent as bridal fees,
- (2) to give the female partner a coral string of beads, earlobes, and bangles as face – saving fees, and
- (3) to give the parents – in – law a bolt of double – length longyi and a gong.

Elders from both sides usually intervene to try their best to achieve a reconciliation when a divorce case props up. It is allowed only as the final resort . Currently, with Christianity as their professed faith, the Lacids are **adopting monogamy** as is the Will of God.

#### (E) Illness and Medicare

The ancient Nat worshipping Lacids believed that illness and diseases are caused by the Spirits. It is only by appeasing them that the disease will go.

Therefore, when someone falls ill, it is believed that he is stricken by the Nats , and ask the oracle for the cause of it . When the involving Nat is identified, cows , fowls, and hogs, etc. are sacrificed to appease the Nat. It is believed that only then will the disease go away. For instance, Mashang: for an evil spirit resulting from a violent death, a dog has to be taken out of the village and killed.

In the old days, the belief was that the Nats disapprove of cohabitation prior to marriage. If committed, there would be illness and disease befalling on the girl's household. The oracle was called in to identify the other party and a hog from the girl's was killed and offered to the household Nat to appease him.

Apart from these spiritual cures, indigenous medicine is also used. These are usually extracted from the natural tubers, roots, barks, leaves, and animal blood, brain, gall, etc.. Moonseed vine, gold thread herb , mashao plant, honey, and grape –fruit are very valuable ingredients for the indigenous medicine . It is assumed that the roots of the acacia could be boiled and drunk for small pox cure.



Kachin State is a mountainous region and therefore malaria is widespread. People rub their bodies with camphorated oil, or coconut oil, or edible oil and scrape down with spoon or ice container. This is known as 'scraping the sore causing high fever'. Some use cool water on the chest to rub down between two hands, or to strike the arms with cool water.

Now that the Lacids have taken up Christianity and are in tune with the modern times, and the medical facilities, they rely on hospitals, clinics and health centers when they fall ill or are diseased. Still, there are those few who stick to the old ways, and rely on the traditional indigenous medicine and the 'scraping down' treatment.

#### (F) Funeral

Lacids believe in the life after death. The soul leaves the body when death occurs. Ancient Lacids believed that the soul of the dead person should be together with those of his ancestors. In the old days, Lacids celebrated funerals on a grand scale. Particularly, the funerals of the ruling class, the well-to-do, and the elders were held with pomp and ceremony. Three gunshots were fired, and the funeral gong was struck three times when these people died. A chicken was killed instantly, and then on the way to fetch water, a bamboo container was smashed, saying, "this kind of water is not desired", and took another container to fetch water. The water falling from the open bamboo pipe was struck three times with the knife brought along. The same procedure was repeated after fetching water. The water brought was poured into the liquor barrel and then a piece of cloth was dipped into it, and with the soaked piece of cloth the dead person's face was washed. Then the body was bathed. The dead person's clothes were picked with a stick and muttering, "no desire to wash" pretended to wash them in water. Back at home, the washed clothes were hung on the rooftop.

The tree from which the coffin is to be made is thrown at with eggs. If the egg breaks, the coffin can be made from it. The corpse is kept for at least two days. Thron bushes precede the corpse into the coffin. The thumbs are tied with thread. Not far from the house bamboo poles are planted, on which the dead person's clothes are spread. The animals to be killed are tied to the

bamboo grove. The thread left over from the dead person's thumbs are tied to the neck of the cow. The cow is killed by a cut at the joint of the foot, pierced with a lance, and slashed with a knife at the neck.

From the time the person passed away, the funeral dance began in the house. This is called the 'ga bein go" dance. There are about forty to fifty dancer movements. The initial dance movement, called 'Magyi Khaid' announces that someone has just died. Others include illness, death, preparing the dead corpse, intimation and inviting relatives, and so on depicting the livelihood activities from birth to death. The 'Leing: go" dance is winding up of the funeral rites, and wishing for the good health of the remaining family members. The lead dancer is chosen by the oracle through the leaf -knot prediction, and is offered a casket of the local brew for the task. .

In leaving for the cemetery, the corpse is held at the front by parents -in-law, at the middle by the siblings, and at the foot by the sons - in - law. A piece of wood cut off from the house poles is put into the coffin. The corpse is carried out of the house feet first. Some choose cremation while others prefer burial. Throwing eggs choose the burial site. If the egg breaks, it is to be the site. The pit is covered using the left hand. Then a hardwood pole is erected. Bamboo poles whose tops are tied together and covered with 'La voem' leaves enclose the buried coffin. The picture of a head, and that of arms spread are hung over the top of the foremost pole.

In a funeral celebration, rice is served for the repose of the soul. It is served at midnight. The rice is prepared in the reverse in every aspect. The bamboo container cut upside down is filled with water, placed over the 'taun - son' leaf spread palms downward, and cooked with firewood chopped upside down. This is held in six days for males, and seven for females. Water for the dead commoner is fetched from a stream but for the ruling class, it is from the river.

For the death of confirmed bachelors and old maids, the striking of the round bamboo tray precedes that of the gong. While striking the tray, water from the dried gourd container is sprinkled after chipping in the 'Kha Pyet' leaf - knot. The gong is struck while muttering, " Not having a wedded life as

human beings, is worthless existence. Let this not be repeated in the next existence. "When teenagers die, the peers do not accompany on the last journey because the dead youth might take along all his / her peers' souls.

A violent death must be buried instantly. There are separate graveyards for the purpose. It should be in remote places, such as gorges and far away spots. Death by drowning, in confinement, killed by others, and by wild beasts should be buried immediately, under the charge of the oracle. Mourners follow the funeral procession using bad language so as to discourage the deceased to return to this world again. Once back from the violent death burial, the whole village undergo the cleansing process of passing through the 'pheing'.

After the burial of a violent death, cattle are killed, and sacrificed to the Nats for the cleansing of the whole village. If visitors happen to be in, they should not leave. Red threads are used to barricade the edges of the village. The dead person's belongings are burnt. The immediate mourners bear the major portion of expenses incurred at the Nat sacrifice. Only after the sacrifice is made the barricading threads are pulled down. Children are out of bounds in the village, and are kept at homes. The houses are fenced with white and red threads. Those who took charge of the funeral, the 'Dam : Sa' and the 'Khan jung' are presented with double-length longyi.

Nowadays, the Lacids, being Christians by faith, follow the Christian burial rites. The son-in-law and the parents-in-law kinship groups help out in a funeral occasion, both in cash and kind, and manual labor. For the death from the son-in-law clan, the parents-in-law group of relatives will provide a gong, a double-length longyi to wrap up the corpse, and a knife to clear the ground of the burial site.

In return, the son-in-law clan gives-

- (1) one buffalo for the gong received
- (2) one bolt of double-length longyi
- (3) one gong to wash hands in, and
- (4) one knife for the double-length longyi received.

## Chapter 5

### Economy

A study of the economy of the Lacid nationals will a great improvement as compared to the past. Previously, agriculture was the main factor of the economy. Besides, there were hunting , and other cottage ' industries ' . The Lacids of the Madeing village work on an economy for the survival of the family rather than that of a commercial one.

#### (A)Agriculture

Agriculture comprises of paddy farming, plantation and orchard , and ' taun - yar ' , hillside terraced - cultivation . The natives depend on rain fall for their economy. Therefore in the past, there were ' rain --calling ' ceremonies in times of draughts.

#### (1)Paddy Farming

There are 350 acres of summer paddy , and 1304 acres of monsoon paddy being undertaken by Madeing villagers. Summer paddy depends on irrigation water, while the monsoon one has the rainfall to rely on . Farming is done on permanent plots. Nowadays, there are no more collective transplanting of paddy as once used to be. Only relative will lend a hand, and so transplanters have to be hired. It is the same for the harvesting eating.

Paddy threshing is done by cattle trampling on , or by beating with sticks. Here , collective labor is employed. So the farmer concerned serves the helpers snacks and meals. Farming tools include wooden rakes hoes, mattocks, and spades, and hemp ropes . There are ox - carts, bullocks, oxen, and plough shares, and the recent addition of Guan Dong tractors from China. There are also huler rice mills to grind their own paddy , and barns are built separately for the systematic storage. Milling fees for one bushel of paddy is kyats 25 per acre yield is 30 bushels, and price per bushel is Kyats 500. The Lacids had worked on terraced cultivation when they were settling on the hilly regions, but not any more since they came down to the plains.

#### (2)Plantation and Orchards

Madeing residents carry out plantation and orchards not only for own consumption but also for surplus earnings. The crops include lemon, lime,

grapefruit, mango, jack - fruit, pomelo, pineapple, orange, banana, star apples and aborigine. Vegetables are also grown for family consumption as well as for sale at the market. Acacia, aborigine, ladies finger, cucumber, gourd , pumpkin, marrow , chilly, beans, tomato, roselle, potato , and radish are to name a few . Lychee is grown on commercial scale. Plantations and orchards are family wise responsibilities where all members of the household take part in.

### (3) Taun - yar ' /Hill site cultivation

Ever since the Lacids had lived in Gyi: deing gui: lho jang, the hilly regions , they had been devotedly grown paddy. Birds crooning marked the growing season.

The two birds, la fu: la gyung, in Lacid terms, usher in the cool season. The Ug ' Shed ' bi loem ma lounng bird's crooning sound of pyi " pyei" commences the Lacids Taunyar cultivation. As soon as that time comes, all the trees, plants, bushes, and vines are cut down and cleared off . The clearing work should end by the time the Kug Doo crows of the Bang Khang bird are heard. And the plot is set afire ( to prepare the land , to get natural fertilizers ) to the tune of ' yheing - yheing' made by the Myi: yu" . Again , the planting of paddy starts with the Meing deing ngho, Co's Moug cid:" xig crows. The weeding time is when the gibbons squeak. Soon after that, harvest time comes.

The taun - yar paddy is the main crop, and other cereals and vegetables grown include millet, maize , sheing: Nham, , taro, varieties of cucumber, bean, chilly, yam, ash pumpkin, and pumpkins , etc.. In the former days, the preparation of the plot for the taun -yar farming began with the collective work, a sort of labor contribution, on the village elder's plot of farmland. Then, the rest of the villagers ' plots were cleared in collective efforts in accordance with the oracle 's pronounced serial order. Someone leads the cultivation with sharpness and bright abilities, because it is assumed that only then will the taun -yar develop and yield more crops.

In the Nat (spirits) worshipping days the taun - yar plot was selected by means of the leaf - knot prediction, and by making offertories to the ancestral Nats. Every family and house - hold has land and property ownership. Tribal

chiefs distributed the estates and boundary landmarks were the natural entities such as rocks, boulders, trees, gorges, streams, etc..

#### (4) Ritual sacrifices to the Nats/Spirits

The preparing and clearing of plots for the taun – yar farming is usually done after making sacrifices to the ancestral Nats ( spirits ) . For prosperity and advancement in life, portents and astrological predictions are consulted. There are also offertories and sacrifices made in times of harvesting. For the purity of mind and uprightness, the maritime spirit is invoked upon, and this is assumed as the main source of agriculture. The oracle is invited in the commencement of the taun – yar works.

There are ethics and beliefs to be abide by while the crops are in bloom. Before leaving for the taun –yar the seed chosen by the oracle and sowed by the housewife is picked up and the man takes it along to transplant it at the farm site. On his return, he takes a drink of the locally brewed country beer and keeps silence until he reaches home where he takes another sip of the brew before he can converse with others. This is done to prevent waste of the crops and the plants becoming barren. The very first crops produced are offered to the Nats. When it comes to the final day of the harvesting, a pronouncement is made that the crop concerned will be harvested again in a year's time. The housewife who sings in praise of the incoming harvest for the year reaps those crops growing near and around the homestead. Returning to the village, the housewife , upon advice from the oracle, who predicts by means of the leaf – knot , places the assorted grains in the barn .

A certain amount of harvest collected is kept for special offertories and sacrifices, and for the coming year seed grains . In the coming sowing season , some of the seed grains thus stored are sowed after making offertories out of them. At the paddy threshing ground, ceremonies such as wrapping someone with paddy sheaves and rolling on the ground are held. The housewife, after the oracle's predictions, propped up a ladder from one corner of the threshing ground to enter for winnowing the paddy, and designates the site . This is done for a higher yield of the crops.



The paddy is husked in a mortar, and cleansed with a sieve. The very first produce is offered to the Nats and elders, and tribal chiefs. These dignitaries, after consuming the offered produce, would impart blessings, and these acts ensure a prosperous future, it is believed. The sacrifices consist of SEING:BUG the vertical flag mast used in Manaw festivals and the horizontally hung SEING: BUG.

#### (5)Agricultural Folklore

The Lacids had a legend handed down by the ancients. Once there was a granny who went daily to reap the crops, but found that the reaping never finished. Instead , the paddy plants increased. Therefore she set fire to the rest of the paddy plants, which devoured the harvested crops also .The plants were burnt and went up into the sky. A dog witnessing the scene groaned, causing the burning plants to fall down onto a heap and the fire extinguished . The granny then repented her action, and pounded the paddy, cooked it and with meat and fish dishes, fed the dog. Therefore it was the crops that the animals had saved , and thus at harvest festivals all the domesticated animals must also be fed.

Formerly, the clearing of the taun -yar plot, sowing, and reaping were all done collectively . The host served food and drinks to all . The taun -yar was cultivated for one year and shifted to another place in the coming year. Thus, the original plot was recultivated only after a period of ten years. There was a belief that laughter during the sowing of cotton would enhance the yield. Along the footpaths grow corns and beans. Soya beans are sowed when the waxing moon is its early crescent stage. The horticulture makes use of pointed bamboo and the likes to pierce the ground for sowing paddy. Nowadays, paddy is sowed in June, transplanted in July , and harvested in October.

#### (B)Livestock Breeding

The Lacids breed Mythun, buffalo, and cow. The former two are the majority . Every household breeds buffaloes and cows so that on special and commemorative days, and for social and welfare occasions, these can be available for offertories and sacrifices as prescribed by the oracle.



Besides cattle, there are , pig, goat, horse, dog, and cat. Usually , chickens and pigs are bred on a manageable scale. The domesticated animals are kept at the backyard as appropriate . The animal feed is the leftovers from the household ,broken rice, and bran and arum leaf.

Animals are also bred for making sacrifices. The Lacids, since the days of residing at Gyi: deing gui: lho jang region are now well - versed in domesticating animals. During that time mythun, dog, pig, cat, chicken were bred very fondly. Dogs were used in hunting to retrieve. Pigs and mythuns are for bride price , festivals and sacrifices. Eggs are kept usually for social occasions, but sometimes consumed .

#### (C)Hunting

Hunting is done only on free time during the summer. Some hunt as a hobby, while others for fun and enjoyment. It is done in groups or by individuals. The boys learn the trade from their fathers since young. The father teaches him shooting with bow and arrows , hunting for prey , and setting up traps . Once grown up, the boy accompanies the father on his hunting trips.

Before going on a hunt , the prospects and the auspicious date are consulted through leaf -knot predictions. 'The Lord of the Creature ' , the Spirit Jha Khoo is appeased by making sacrifices to him. Eggs, dried fish etc are offered at the shrine at the main post of the house. After that, the leader leaves the house quietly. The leader of the hunting group is chosen through the leaf - knot predictions.

There are taboos in hunting. The hunter never returns for anything left behind at home. Not abiding by this will contribute to an unsuccessful hunt. The hunting attire must be clean and washed thoroughly. If a female is in menstruation in the household, the rations must not be taken from home for the hunting trip since it is taken as impure food, which will surely prevent the hunter from getting any game. The husband abstains from going on hunting trips while his wife is in pregnancy. The stairs must not be skipped as the hunter set forth for his hunt , which will cause ill luck to him.

No eating nor speaking is allowed during a hunt. When visitors call on while one is on a hunting trip alone, it will deprive one of any game. If a snake

is seen on setting off for a long journey, it is better to return home . There are also the don'ts for those remaining at home while someone of the household is on a hunting trip. The hunter's head should be made and kept neat and tidy. Strangers , and others should not be let to use it . The hunter's belongings should not be lent out . Besides, these, the children should not play with it . These things are to be avoided by those remaining at home. During the hunt, the names of the preys must not be pronounced, but only indicate by producing sounds imitations using bamboo or leaves. For the success of the hunt, the trip should be not made known to the women folk and children , abstain from sexual intercourse, not include spouse of pregnant women. The family members should not be talking about the hunting trip, but they can work on their looms.

The hunting team uses cross, arrows, percussion lock firearms . The arrows are usually smeared with poison. The poison is obtained from a thumb – size fruit of the tree called Myi No; that grows on snow – capped mountains. This fruit is pounded thoroughly and liquidized pulp is smeared at the point of the arrow. When hit by the arrow the game dies presently, and that area of the flesh where the poisoned arrow has hit is cut off before cooking the meat. There is no way of hunting by luring the game with domesticated animals. Retrievers are used in hunting. Hunters use assorted traps such as thorn meshing, booby traps, trenching, noose traps, etc.

Lacid hunters usually go for big games. This is because of the size of the hunting team. Bigger games are convenient for sharing among the members of the hunting team . Games available in their surrounding forests are hogs, tigers, barking deer, bantengs, wild cats, monkeys, and assorted fowls and hibernators. One particular game is the polar bear which weighs about ten viss (16.31kg), and whose fur is much valued. Catching elephants is not in the Lacids' hunting habits.

One item that the Lacids value from their hunt is the wild hog tusk, the enclosed one. This is a very rare item and is believed to be gunshot proof. The date of acquiring the wild hog tusk is noted down not to coincide with the starting day of future hunts. The wild hog with the enclosed tusk is believed to be at its best and highest constellations . So, it is only when the hog is luck lies

low, and the hunter's one at its peak that the tusk can be obtained. Therefore , the logic is that the next hunting should not coincide with that day, for it might well be the unlucky day for the hunter in terms of the rise and fall' , the up and down tendency of fortunes. That particular day is dismissed for the hunting trip. What the Lacids retain are horns , and skins of the games they acquired throughout their hunting career. They value these as trophies for their achievement. Hunting teams make use of ten to twenty people for forcing hunted animals to break cover . The trips last from a week to ten days.

Pits and trenches are dug, camouflaged with leaves, to trap the game. The hog's foot prints are taken , spit on , and turned to the opposite direction , and pressed with a knife hone in order to catch the animal. Then, to get as many games as possible, the village guardian spirit, Lom Shaing is called upon to help. Any visitor from other village will have to stay in . Enclosures are erected, and scaffoldings for shooting games are built. Helpers noisily shoo in prospective games, and those waiting on the watch – tower shoot. Bees in hibernation are gathered by using drips of alcohol , and smoke of burnt leaves from a torch pierced into the hole. For the spirit of the game killed, the way to appease the Lord of those creatures is to make a sacrifice of the blood, the tips of limbs, ears, and lips of the game to him . Meat not appropriate for consumption is burnt or buried. The games' blood , livers, and flesh are eaten raw for bravery and courage. The hunter who could kill a tiger would be shown around with the game hung on his shoulders . Well –wishes donate cereals and vegetables, with which meals are prepared and enjoyed.

The game acquired is evenly divided among the team. The initial shooter has a larger share. The village elder gets a hind leg, and the marksman takes the liver. The head is shared with close relatives at the dining table. The remaining part is equally divided into shares. If the whole village went for hunting, teams are formed for preparing meat, for skinning and drying up the hide, and for cooking. One lump of meat is given to each household. The hide is usually sold out to earn some money , but if the leather is stitched into clothing it is said to last up to five generations.

#### (D) Domestic crafts

The Lacids spend their free time in occupying themselves with the following domestic crafts.

- (1) Weaving cloth with looms,
- (2) Weaving baskets of various types

##### (1) Weaving cloth with looms

This is the main domestic craft for Lacid women. They learned this from their mothers since they were little girls. So, it is no wonder that when they become grown-ups, they already are very skillful in the craft. For the married woman who has to go and work in the taun - yar for the family, there is very little free time. Therefore she could weave mainly for the family's clothing needs. The grand - parents, who for reasons of old age, stay at home can do the weaving more. Usually, two or three elderlines together work at a house, or under a shady tree, while having a chat at the same time. The looms in the hilly regions are usually backstrap looms. This is a kind of loom where one sits with legs stretched out, the loom straps connected to the back, of waist, and weaves. Therefore it is portable. Young girls weave longyis, bags, and scarves for their beaux. Formerly, when permitted, youths and grown-ups alike gathered under shady trees and weaved, enhancing intimacy and friendship.

##### (2) Basket Weaving

Elderly males usually weave baskets of various types. Their handiwork of excellent quality is demonstrated in the products thus produced. The products are also of lasting texture. The bamboo mats used in flooring and partitioning of homes are also hand-woven. Moreover, thatches for roofing are made by the family members themselves. There are sling baskets made of rattan cane used in carrying paddy, shopping and gathering fruits and vegetables.

Lacid elderly males produce household utensils from a species of bamboo called ' Lung jhu ' in their free time. This variety of bamboo differs from others in that it grows not in groves but by single plants two yards apart. Kitchen utensils are mostly made of this bamboo. In the past, it was produced for domestic purposes only, but now commercial production has developed.

Mats are woven of bamboo slats, thinly cut and smoothed. Rattan cane is also used in weaving mats . Sunshade hats and rainproof toppers, Mug leing and Mug yhung, in Lacid respectively, are made of ' Lung jhu ' bamboo. The felt for the hats come from the leaves of Pho ' jaing, Pig, and Qua Moo " plants.

#### (E)Other Occupations

Other occupations that the Lacids engage themselves in are; blacksmith – making percussion lock firearms, knife , spear, axe , construction – building houses, bridges; dyers producing dyes.

The crossbow is made out of bamboo and wood ; knife , spear , and firearms out of iron ore. In building houses, and bridges, the gathering of timber, cane, bamboo , and thatches and the clearing up of the building come first. The raw materials for dyes are bark, leaves, and bulbs which are boiled and treated to produce dyes of red, black , yellow , and pink , etc. , for the required coloring of the cotton yarns.

There was a legend as far as construction is concerned. The Stone Age man Mang : Byo and the tiger Mang : lo met and talked about helping each other . The man built his house leaving the roof unfinished, while Mang: lo , the tiger completely finished his house . On a moonlit night the man called on the tiger at his house and told the tiger that he had built a very pleasant house where one can watch the moon and the stars. Then , the tiger asked the man to exchange house, to which the man agreed. When the rainy season came, the tiger asked the man to roof his house. The man agreed, and went to the thatch thicket in advance and hid in a sheaf. Unaware of it , the tiger carried the sheaf home. On the way , the man set the sheaf on fire and hopped onto a branch hanging along the road – side.

The tiger did not realize what was happening, and went on his way home . He met a cow on the way who told him that the thatch sheaf was on fire , and that he should run up the hill . As he ran the fire became greater, and the tiger was frightened out of his wits . Then he met the buffalo who told him to climb down the pond , and so the fire extinguished . Therefore, the tiger hated man

cow , and devoured them , but not the buffalo , the folklore goes . And the stripes on the tiger's body are marks caused by the fire .

#### (F) Commerce and Trade

There was commerce and trade activities within the Lacid community and with other natives living around. The two systems practiced were , (1) the barter system , and (2) the cash payment system .

The essential consumer goods were usually exchanged on a barter system . With the Chinese traders , the Lacids exchanged their local commodities such as beeswax , Khang tauk – a medicinal root , hide , chilly , dried fish , dried meat , dried mushroom , bear liver , etc. , with food , textile, and crockery the Chinese brought along. There were no other merchants than the Chinese in those days. There were no place properly designated as a market , but only a collective sales of goods once in a 5 days or 10 days period near and around Chi – phew and Sadon villages.

Later on , there were transactions made in cash payments for the purchasing of cattle , hammer , axe , and salt . The Chinese Yuan as well as the Myanmar Kyat was occasionally used. For cross – border trade , the feudal lords, ' Zoug ' in the Lacid terms , levied taxes.

Madeing village has a daily morning market . It starts at 5.30 a. m ., and by 7.30 a. m. it is already over . It is a small market with make – shift tents. The crops produced in villages are transported to Myitkyina via Waing – maw on trucks. Groceries , cosmetics, and clothes are bought in Waing – maw . There are 3 general commodities stores in Madeing , which also boasts 5 snack out lets. The stores commodities include eggs, salt , tinned fish , soap, medicine , seasoning powder , and cigars etc . .

Since the Lacids ' native land was close to China , measurements were of 12 - tin capacity baskets, and fistfuls, and cupped handfuls , Lo , Da Zhoem and Da lo , Khyung , in Lacid respectively were units of measure in common use . Measurements of length were of more or less rough estimations. Da Thoo: : which means one hand span, (a quarter yard ) , Da dung , da lam : elbow – 1 length , and double arms length , 1 ½ feet and 6 feet measures for length were used . The Lacid term Da Gyoï , Toi Danam is length of time between the first



crow of the hen , the distance of a dog 's bark indicates a half day journey . Besides , there were , a bamboo length , a spear throw , meaning a one day trip and a half day one .

#### (G) Diet

The Lacids main meal is rice and curry . In their former days up on the mountain they settled, there were three meals a day . The first was prepared at dawn and it was taken first thing in the morning . When they went to their work sites , where the noon meal was served, and after which , work continued till dark . Dinner was prepared back at home after a strenuous days work . But nowadays , only two meals are taken, the morning , and the evening ones.

The paddy grown for the Lacids ' staple rice is the taun - yar variety . Yam , taro , cassava , pumpkin , ash pumpkin , cucumber , chili , gourd, maize , and mustard are cooked with meat obtained from the hunt . Meals are family group occasions. Rations for guests from afar are kept in the rice pot and on the smoke rack in the kitchen . The guest caters for himself, and the host , on returning from the taun - yar finds that the rations has been used up , will assume that some close relatives had called . The Lacids do not consume fox meat and monitor lizard meat because they are thought to inferior flesh . From the ancient times to the present day , the Lacids eat with their fingers.

The Lacids prepare an intoxicating brew out of glutinous rice , the common rice , for medicinal and curative effects , and for treating guests . The ingredients and utensils are -

- (1)Glutinous rice , corn , ordinary rice , Italian millet , common millet
- (2)Steamer, perforated upper steamer
- (3)Sponge gourd
- (4)Yeast
- (5)Mat
- (6)Earthenware pot
- (7)Basket
- (8)Banana leaves, and
- (9)Ladle



First , the rice grains are rinsed and washed . Next , the steamer is set , and with the sponge gourd in between , the perforated steamer , is with the rice in it , it is set on top . After steaming , the rice is spread on the mat to cool . Then the rice is kneaded well with the yeast . After that , the rice and yeast mixture is packed into the basket with the banana leaves as under layers. The package is tightly secured and kept thus for two or three days . Then , it is put into the earthenware pot with the inside smeared with thick ashes . On the top of the package inside the pot some bran is spread. Finally close up the earthenware pot tightly , and after a week , the brew is ready to be served.

For snacks , there are delicacies prepared from Laso ' , the ' pin – baw ' plant, which is a short tree with large stem. Others include Cang" Zain , a tall plant with small stem , and Mang Kyi " a low – lying plant . The Laso ' is sliced thinly kneaded . The juice is sieved through a cloth . The paste retained in the cloth is taken and prepared into sago and served . Cang " Zain and Mang Kyi " are also peeled and dried in the sun . The dried stuff is then ground and put into a cloth bag, which is shaken in an earthenware pot . The powder thus obtained is prepared as Indian flat bread and served. It can also be served in sago form.

There is not much difference in the diet , but the living standard has improved. There are snacks in the morning and afternoon available for convenience . Since the Madeing residents have converted into Christianity , they would now say the Grace before meals as to acknowledge God 's gifts and sing his praise .Guests are also invited to meals in giving thanks to God who favors them to be sitting at the same table.

An essential in the Lacid diet is the pounded paste of tomatoes, chilli , meat and leaves, etc .. It is a traditional delicious side – dish which every Lacid relishes.

## Chapter – 6

### Religion and Traditional Beliefs

In the old days , Lacids were not professing the Christian faith .Religion for Lacids began with the practice of making offertories to the Nats (Spirits). They believed the Spirits were responsible for their fortunes and misfortunes.

The Lacids' beliefs and religion varied from the Nat – worshipping to Christianity and Buddhism . Those around Waing – Maw Township had taken up Christianity . Spirit – worshipping can still be found in the hill regions. There are Buddhists but very few in numbers.

#### (A)Traditional Beliefs and Worship

The Lacids accept the fact that in the ancient times human beings and the Spirits dwelt together. When the Lacids came down from Mt. Himalaya to the south into Myanmar, one horned Spirit was with them. Not wishing him to come along with them , they tried various means to leave him behind but in vain . When they came to a wall on their way , which they could not pass through , they made an oath of promise with the Spirit that should he be able to level down the wall, they would make sacrifices to him . Then the Nat with the horn knocked down the wall with one stroke of his horn . From then on , it was said , that the offering of sacrifices to the Nats began . The above were facts handed down by word of mouth from generations to generations.

The Lacids had a large numbers of offertories made to the Nats. Those providing prosperity and welfare are –

- (1)Moug yu
- (2)Zoem Main
- (3)Soem laid
- (4)Khyang ven
- (5)Myed Naid
- (6)Bid joem
- (7)Seing
- (8)Jhi" Khoo
- (9)A phoug "
- (10)Phoug" Phyed Naid

Spirits casting ill effects are –

- (1) Goem moug :
- (2) Moug : Boeb
- (3) Nghi main :
- (4) Si: yu
- (5) Joem yu
- (6) Yu Thu"
- (7) Yam byoo , and
- (8) Ma Shang

The 'good' Nats were offered sacrifices during the open season of winter and summer . For those Nats of evil undoing offertories were made at any time of the year depending on the frequency of the sufferings the people underwent. Therefore, making offertories and sacrifices to the Nats played an important role in the life of a Lacid.

At the time when offertories and sacrifices to the Nats dominated the Lacid society, there were religious practitioners known by the names of Dam: Sa , La pi:, Khan jung, and Ji: Zeing. The Dam: Sa was the highest in their pecking order, an oracle who was well – versed in the Nat affairs, and of the ancestry.

There were four levels of oracles. They were –

- (1) the power of exorcism,
- (2) the power to perform sacrifices by killing animals,
- (3) the power to control the deceased 's soul and guide its wishes, and
- (4) the ability to recount the history of Nats as well as the origins of humanity , direct contact with Nats , the power to act as a go – between among Nats and men.

The position of Dam : Sa was found to be of an ancestral heritage one . The Dam: Sa avoided eating out of the Kha – Phyed Fu leaves lest his powers faded out.

A Lapi was someone who could cast evil spirits on others. The Dam: Sa chose the Lapi: ... A Lapi: must have loyalty and avoid eating ginger. In the event of evils entering into a Lapi: , he spoke out what appeared to his mind on the

omens, visions, and predictions. The Lapi; had to wash himself in boiling water, and run up and down treading on banana leaves, which were spread on knives in the formation of ladder steps leading to stage. The Lapi;, being a loyal man did not get burnt by the boiling water nor cut by the blades of knives.

A Khan jung was the person who killed the animals and prepared the meat for the sacrifices to the Nats. When the evil spirit was with the Lapi; queries on the cause of illness, the identifying of thieves, etc., should be made and the answers recorded.

Ji: Zeing was the leading dancer and vocalist in the Lacid traditional festivals. He must have the ability to compose lyrics on the ancestry, and the attitude of those hosting the ceremony. The Ji: Zeing had two Ji: Htuk who did the chorus part of the song.

Dam: Sa, Lapi:, Khan jung, Ji: Zeing, and Ji: Htuk were all part-time religious service men. In the former days, the Lacids made sacrifices to the Nats for success in economic, health, social, and military affairs. At both the entrances of the village rock cave shrines were built for the Nats. There were four glasses of liquor tied together and covered with a marble slab. This was for the Lom Shaing Nat, the protector of the village for whose sacrifice all villagers participated.

Sacrifices to the 'bid joem' Nat was made in case tribal wars. The throat of a red cock was cut and the blood poured into a bamboo container. The oracle doused the blood upon the ground and that could easily lead the villagers to capture the enemy. Games were aplenty when the hunting began after offertories to the 'jhi' Khoo Nat were made.

The oracles had a special dress for occasions. The hat was made of rattan cane on top of which was fixed the head of the Indian pied hornbill, and adorned with peacock feathers. This was because the Indian pied hornbill was noted for its loyalty and bravery. The dress was made of silk and satin imported from China. The long sleeved shirt came down to the knees. There were pictures of dragons and flowers printed, and this outfit the oracles wore at traditional festivals.

(B) The Adoption of Christianity

Lacids were originally Nats ( Spirits ) worshippers . In 1922, Sarakaba Sumlut Nawng lat, a Christian by faith, came to Htaw Gaw village as a schoolteacher appointed by the British Government. Then he brought in Sarakaba Geis to Htaw Gaw in 1924. In 1925 , Sarakaba Tha Htoo got to Gam Hkum village in 1927 . Due to the efforts of these missionaries, the Lacids were converted to Christianity .

The first to be converted into Christianity in 1922 was the Gam Hkum Tingluk Ying family of Gam Hkum village, followed in 1923 by the Madeing Ying Bawn family of Ta Loem Voo village in Ta Mhu: Khung region . Then in 1934 the Ladaw Chang Hkaw family of Myang jung Voo village and later on other families, and clans were converted into Christianity .

Once the Lacids became Christians, they begin to build churches where they could pray and sing in praise of God. On Sundays, all commercial trading and business stop, for the Lacids to attend church services where the Divine Revelations extracted from the Bible were read and prayers were said for the general safety and well – being of the community . After taking up Christianity, the Lacids led a life guided by the divine word.

In Madeing village , there are 5 Baptist Christian churches, but there is no Roman Catholic church . So the Roman Catholics of Madeing go to Waing – maw to attend services there.

(C) Interpreting Portents and Omens

Traditionally, Lacids interpreted portents and omens . Dreaming of the moon setting was interpreted as the demise of a mother, and of the sun setting as that of the father.

A branch from a tree breaking down towards one's house , without the wind blowing , meant some ill luck for the household , and if the branch headed the other way , a friend would suffer . If rats bit the furnace at the foot of the living room , some ill fate would befall on the son – in – law . If it was the furnace at the head of living room it would be a member of the household who was to be unfortunate. In between the two furnaces, the interpretations would be that some one from the cousin clan suffered. When a 2/3-year-old child

played building houses with sticks beside the inner furnace , there would be a funeral in the household . When children walked around shouldering sticks wrapped in cloth , death was likely to occur. Rat – bitten shirts conveyed no good fortune.

When a bee cruised in the house, a guest from the nearest place was expected, or news from afar to come in. Sparrows permanently inhabiting in the house meant good harvest . A sambar passing through the village meant a fire breaking out , or a warning that the enemy was closing in . A dog barking at a house could bring harm to the said household. If birds flew past through the home , it was believed some harm would befall on a member of that household caused by the spirit of the violent death .

The varied cooing of the owl could be for the better or for worse . The hunting trip would be discontinued on hearing the crow of Ngat Myiee Shay(legendary bird). A corpse was most probable if the wild cat turned to the hunter. A journey had to be cancelled when sambar barks were heard. So also when the traveler saw a snake descending sideways from a mountain slope.

It is learnt that the Lacid nationals residing at Madeing has kept up the traditional practice of interpreting portents and omens.

#### (3) Mana and Taboos

Eyetooth of tigers and wild boars ,and thunder – bolts were carried on the person for protection from danger, from illness, and for prosperity . The horns of taking were kept in the house for protection from fire breaking out in the house. The Lacids liked even numbers and carried on them as charms.

No guest was to call on a Lacid home within the first seven days of the house –warming ceremony . If they did during that week they should do so accompanied by gifts for the house – warming occasion . There were only two doors in a Lacid traditional home , the front door and the back door. Guests were expected to enter by the front door. And coming from the front door and proceeding straight to the back door was a taboo , for which compensation had to be made.

During the era of Nat worship, guests could not be received in the house at confinement . The date and time of acquiring an eyetooth of a wild boar was



recorded properly in order not to coincide with the next hunting trip. Other taboos included poking the firewood in the furnace with a knife ; felling planted bamboo's on fullmoon days (for fear of extinction ) ; using timber and bamboo taken from the cemetery ; girls treading over paddy pounding pestle ( for fear of child – birth difficulties ) ; Keeping paddy winnowing and sifting trays at the door ( for avoiding the wrath of the home protector Nat who wouldn't approve of it , causing illness to the head of the house –hold ); using these as head gears (which the Rain Nat disapproved and might pour down rain in consequence ) . Therefore , the Lacids were very mindful of these customs and taboos.

#### (E) Folklore's and Proverbs

The Lacids have a considerable number of folklores. They include the Mung Lo – Mung Byoo tales , on the cause of paddy grains becoming smaller in size, death of human beings , etc. , .

The cause of paddy grains becoming smaller in size was that at the advent of cultivation civilization , there used to be a cereal gauging team . One day , this team went on an inspection trip intending to gauge grains as large as mare's tail. Thinking aloud their intention , they went by the chameleon , Zang gyung's place, who after enquiring of their destination, joined the team offering to gauge the paddy grains by his tail. Thus the grain size was reduced, and from then on, the tale went that the Lacids fell on any chameleon they came across.

The ancient human beings were said to be immortals . According to the Lacid folklore, Moug Zoo: Tung gyung, the celestial beings invited the early humans to their Ga bein go" the funeral dances . That dance was so harmonious and delicate, and the humans had danced it time and again that they wished they could do so on earth . But since they were immortals they had to think out for the occasion where they could indulge in doing so . One day , they found a dead 'lang: so ' , bay squirrel , which they prepared into a corpse covering it with cloth . Then the humans arranged for the funeral dance, inviting the sons of Moug Zoo: Tung gyung to the occasion. Wondering as to the strangeness of the occasion since humans were immortals , the Nat's sons



came sticking their thumbs with beeswax . While dancing , they treaded on the cloth covering and as they continued with the dance steps , the cloth covering overturned and revealed the animal corpse. They were very angry with the humans and imprecated that since the immortal humans wanted death, let them be as they desired. From then on , the story went , humans became mortals.

#### Proverbs

(1)Byu gi Su ri a juang: Khyoid gi Su ri agyah•Good people never criticizes others, good dogs never bark at people.

(2)Zoug Zoo: jhaug a Noo " , Pig Zu a coen Noo . There is no need to admonish children of good breed, as there is no need to sharpen thrown of Yone' plant .

(3)Moo' Myhed nyha" Tu" Voem: Myhed Su Tu " . No one will help out with your left -over tasks, but no one will help themselves to your left -over food.

(4)Men doeb ri: Moug Vo" Mo" doeb ri Zoo shed. Clouds on the summit cause rains, parents anger causes children 's ruin.

(5)Gug' a ge Myed Myeing yu , Zoo: a ge Moo" Myeing yu. For poor crops the soiled is blamed, for bad children the parents are shamed.

#### (F) Traditional Festivals

The Lacids have many traditional festivals . There are Manaw festivals, house – warming ceremonies, the moon goddess festivals, the cucumber celebrations, and the taun – yar festivals, and the New Year celebrations held nowadays.

Manaw is the highest level as far as the Lacids' festivals are concerned . The Manaws celebrated by Lacids are as follows.

(1) Jhang : Kham: Zoem (Manaw for prosperity and power )

(2) Ung Lhoo Zoem ( " victory )

(3) Jhung Zoem ( " longevity )

(4) Ge Zoem ( " fitness)

#### (1)The origins of Manaw

After the Great Flood on earth , the brother and sister couple Xang Mung' – Xang Nam bore offspring, and the Creator, Gyu So instructed them to collect varieties of animals before he gave the alarm . Xang Nam wove hemp ropes to

tie up the animals . Because it took a long time to weave ropes only a few animals could be gathered . Xang Nam tore up the Kha Phyed leaves to make ropes, and this speeded up the task of tying up the animals. Then the Creator , Gyu So gave the alarm and the animals stampeded into the jungle because Xang Nam 's ropes were not strong enough to hold them . Xang Mung ' ropes were strong , so the animals did not stampede. Xang Nam went after the strayed animals . When Xang Mung asked Xang Nam for his share of the animals , she told him that she was very much ashamed of endogamic practice in this world, that she had borne for him , and that she would die along with the animals . Therefore she asked to be told about the historical aspects of the Creator . She told Xang Mung if he wanted crops and animals, he should draw pictures of them as he narrated the history . Then she would promise bumper crops and an increase in herds.

When winter came, crops and herds were in short supply. So tents constructed with planks painted with pictures of grains and animals, and written the historical achievements of the Creator were erected. Then the sister was called upon to fulfill her promise of a bumper crops and an increase in the number of herds as they were then narrating the history of creation . So saying, the people danced around the tent . Thus , the Manaw festival came into being . Nowadays , its is celebrated on a much grander scale.

The ( Piioug) "Voo Jang of all the Lacids was held in at about A.D.158on a Manaw festival of a grand scale at Jhang " Moo" Lug Koem Zeing , situated on the northwest bank of May Kha river seven miles up the Junction where the Chang" Moo Lang and May Kha ( Lung Byid Lang) rivers meet , in what is now Hsau - Law Township, in Kachin State . Then , as new territories were consolidated to the eastern banks of Chang " Moo Lang , the Manaw continued to be Heldin places like Voo Houg and Myi Youg Khrang Lang in Hsau - Law township where the Lug' Zhung Tan", the stone seats for the oracles, and the Jhung" Zeing, the blessing pillars for health can still be seen up to this day.

Then , from the Myi Youg Khrang Lang Manaw region the generations of Phoug" Voo Jang - Jang " Boem -Boemnu" - Nu " Kyang, etc. came up and the

elder brother, Nu" Yung " moved to Htod Gaw , founded a village , and the Manaw was held there.

After the Htod Gaw celebrations, the Manaw spread to places such as Chi -phway , Tu Mo , Shi Ngaw, Dwam Bum , Sa Don. , Sa Mar, Jan Shie, Gina, Kayat - Maw, Mandin, Mand Yon , Khoung - Htan, Keng - tung , Keng - Sai, Kut - Khai, Sinle , Myitkyina, Bhamo , Mogaung, and Mohnyin.

#### The Manaw Flagmasts

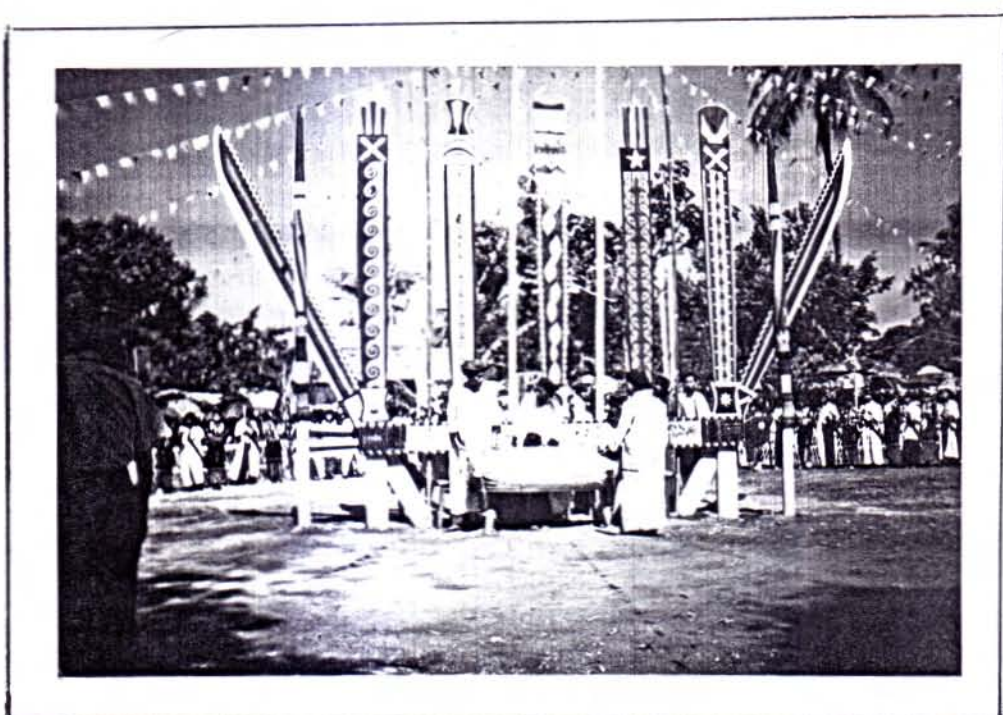
The Manaw flagmasts of the Lacids are different from those of other clans. There are five main flagmasts erected, each conveying a significant meaning.

The first depicts the host family and its kin dancing the Manaw in unison. The top figure stands for brightness and radiance. The swords which follow is meant to protect the clan from any danger. Lower down , the Manaw participants are depicted. A bell occupies the bottom part.

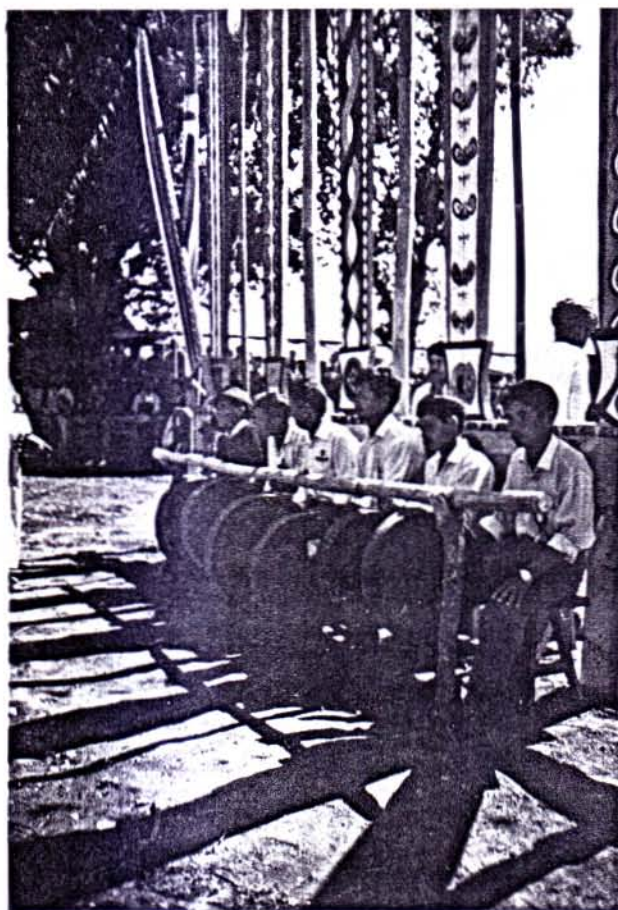
The second flagmast depicts the dancing steps, the choreography of the Manaw , with the radiance of the rainbow at the top middle , each side of which is taken up by the crescent moon . In the second place , the rainbow itself is illustrated. Lower down, come the butterflies and dragonflies conveying them as merrily cruising in the dance. Underneath is the picture of cymbals.

The third flagmast tells the history of the Lacids . Darkness, light, burning fire, and floods are illustrated. After the floods , the survivors, the brother and sister couple , came down the mountain and found a tree upon which the bees were feeding on the nectar at the top, and the snake couple eating up the leaves below. That tree proved to be the one whose leaves the Lacids nowadays are using as fermentation agent in brewing liquor. The human couple thought the tree was edible since the animals and the bees were eating it. The message here is that if alcohol is used to one's advantage it is like honey , sweet and nourishing, otherwise it can be like the snake's fangs, bitter and disastrous. Underneath is the picture of a gong.

The fourth Manaw flagmast depicts the host family clan and the invited dignitaries participating in the dance. The top most part represents the radiance

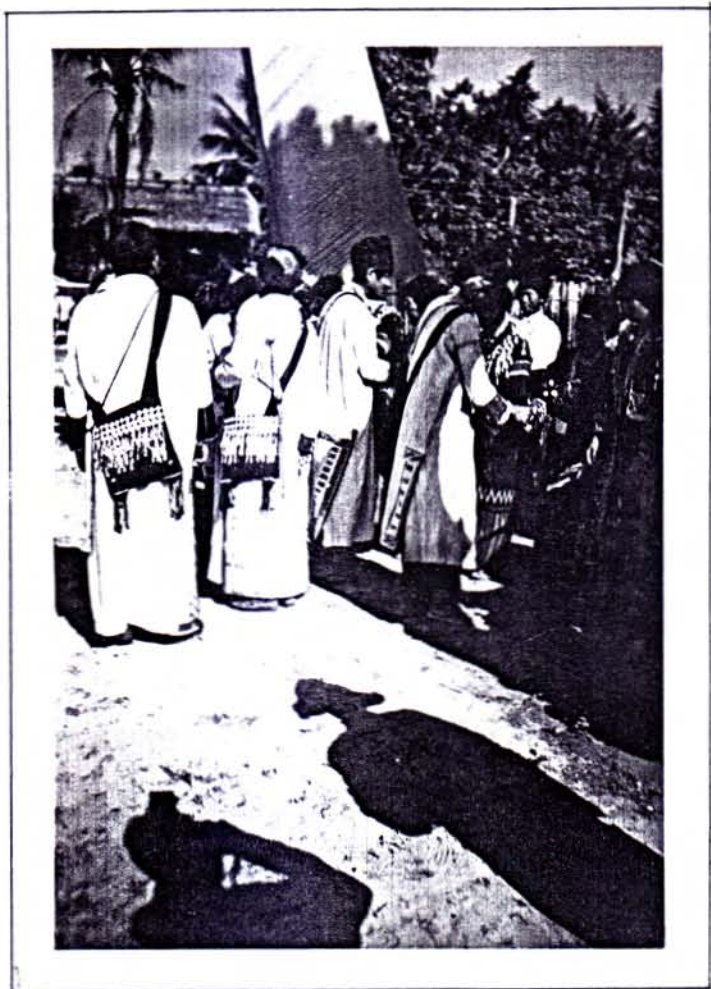


Lacid Manaw Flagmast and Traditional Drum

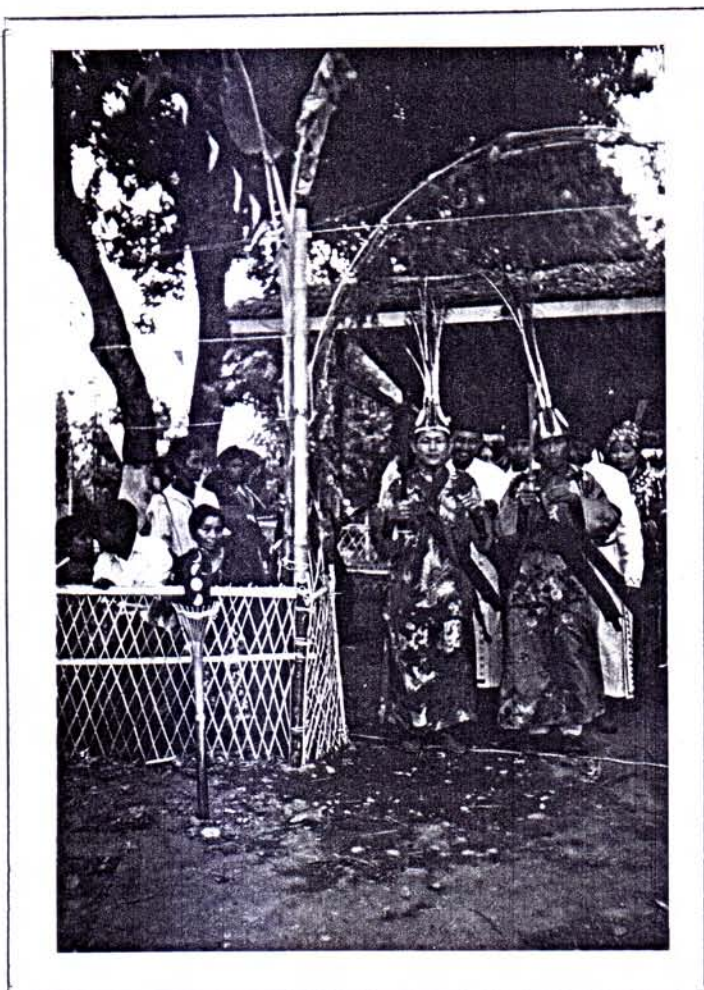


Gong





Welcoming the visitors



Manaw leaders entering the Manaw field

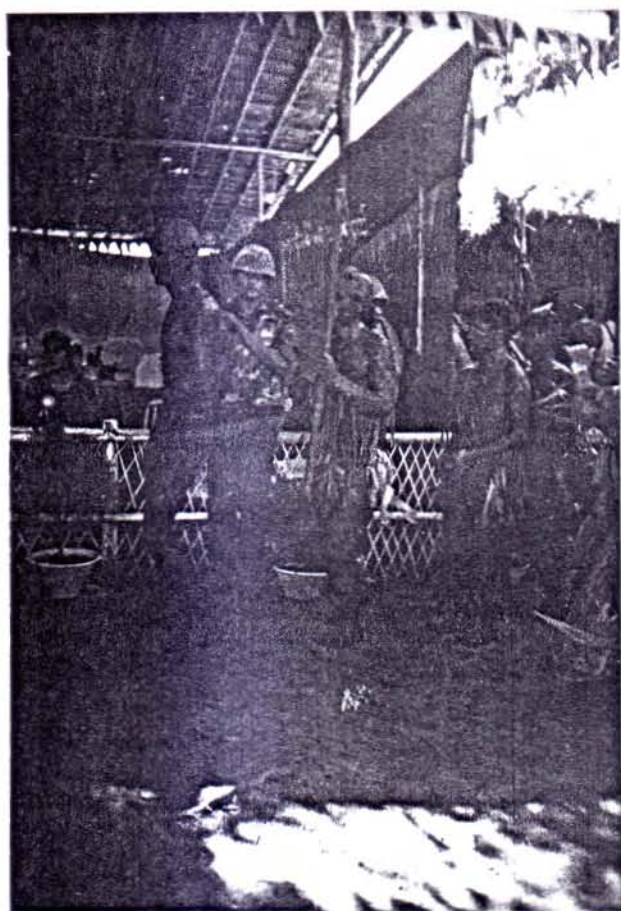




At the entrance of Manaw Flagmast



Do obeisance to Manaw Flagmast

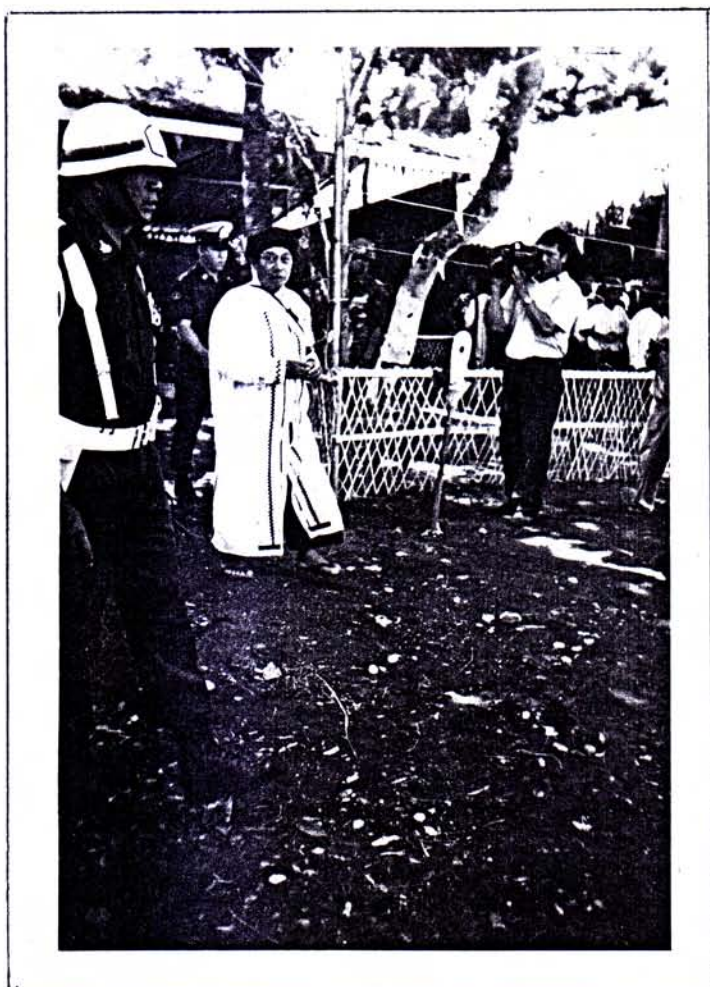


A group smeared with mud

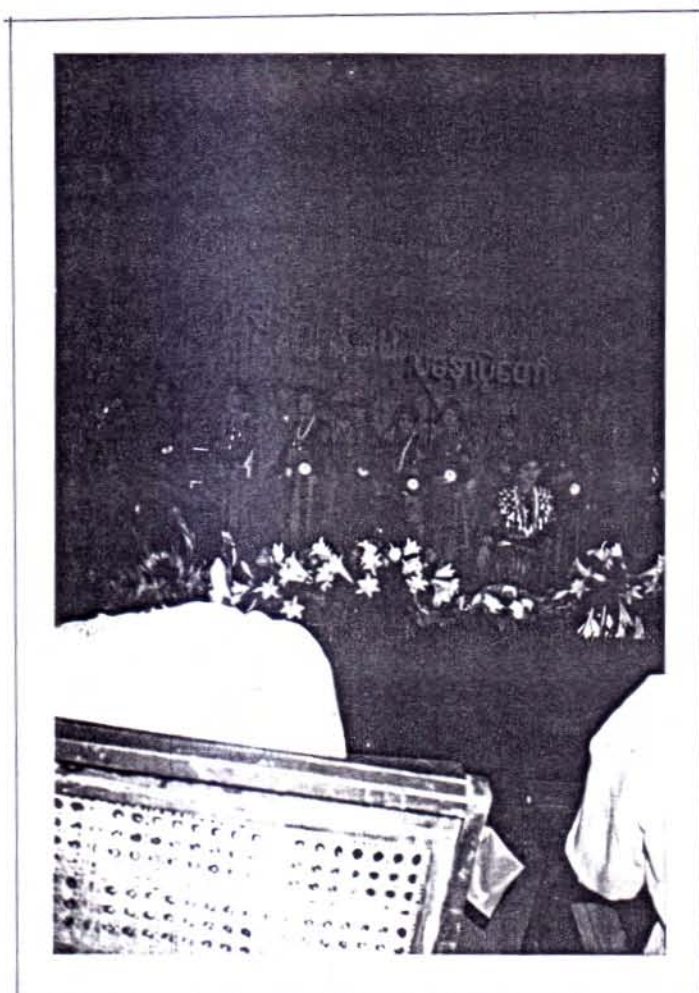


Zoup: Phoo Za Khung" Tuing Yeing  
(Kachin Special Region 1) and  
Major – General Kyaw Win  
entering the Manaw Field

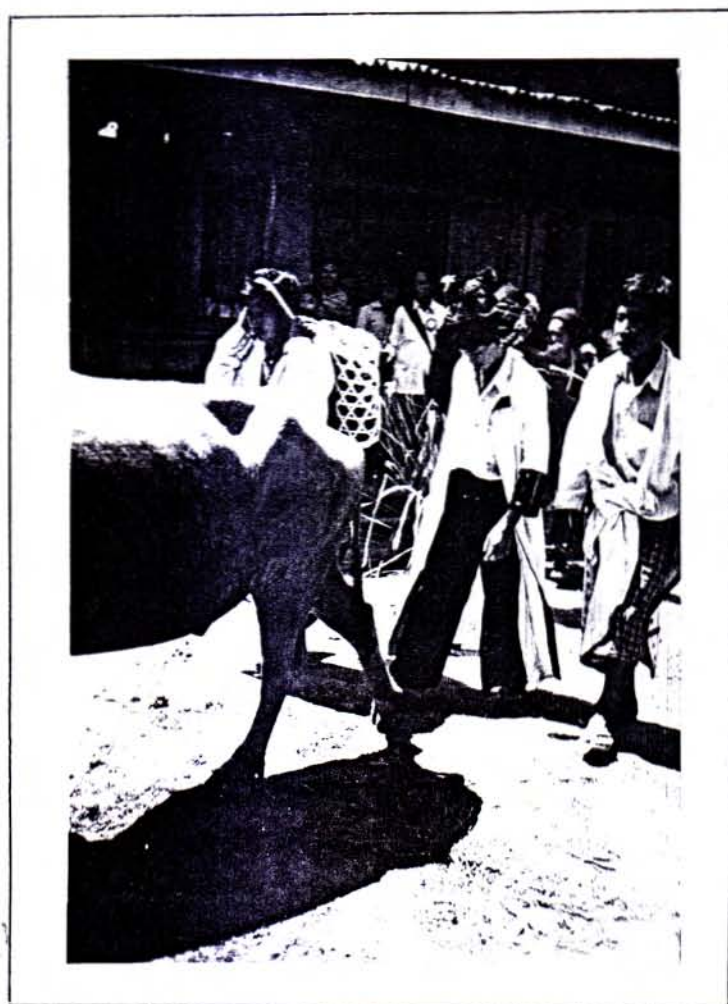




Zoug: Phoo Jen Co" Kho Sau  
Chairman of the Lacid literature and  
Culture Comittee entering the Manaw Field



Beauty Queen Contest



Coming to the Bride's house  
to put up property  
to the bride's parents

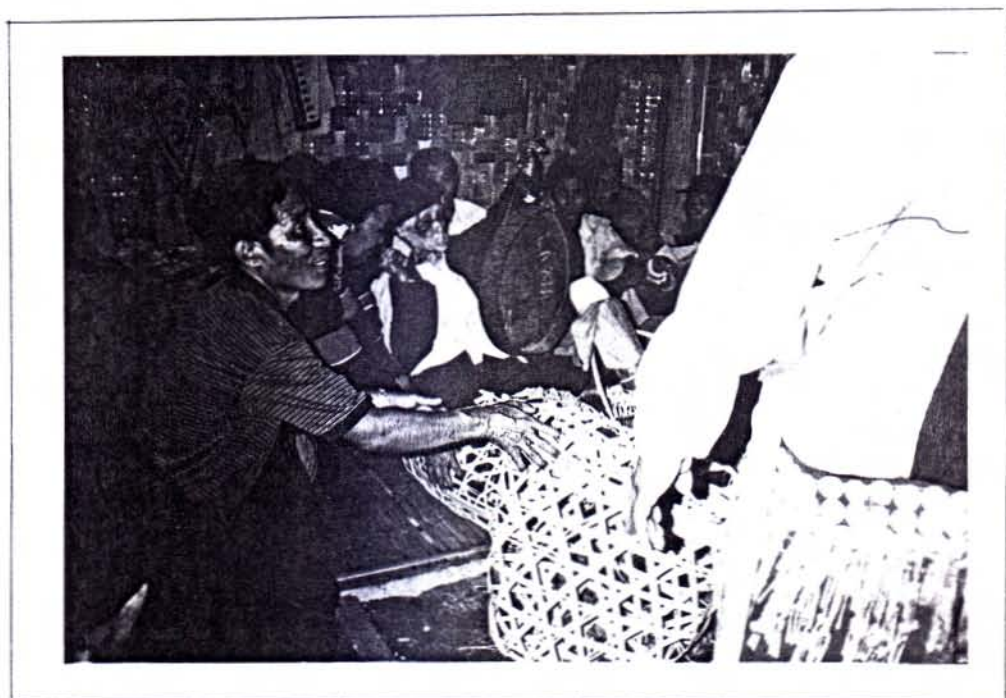




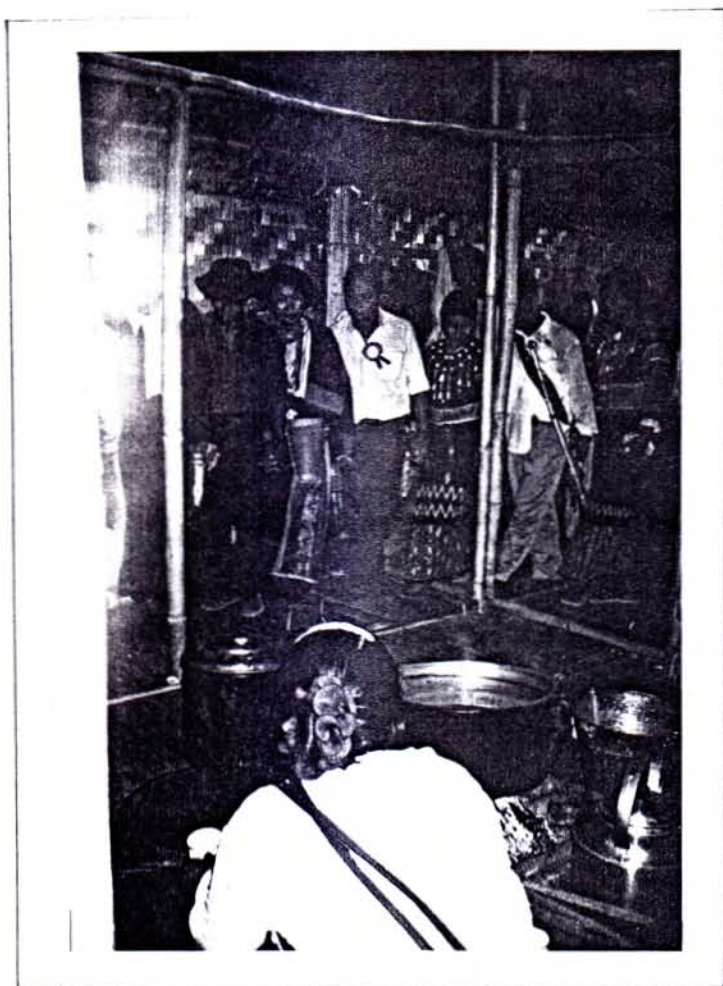
Giving propitious words from Bridegroom's  
father/ relatives



Bride's father is giving a speech



The Bride's father shiking the gong  
after he has agreed the marriage  
of his daughter



Both sides of relatives are dancing  
after the success of the marriage  
Bringing the Bride to bridegroom's house





Bringing the Bride to bridegroom's house

of the shining star, and then comes the picture of the star itself. Under this, the two parties of dancers are painted. At the bottom is the picture of the drum.

The fifth Manaw flagmast symbolizes protection from danger. The uppermost part symbolizes the brilliance of the sun while in the second level, there are two swords crossing each other. Next comes the arrows meaning to attain protection from dangers likely to befall on the clan.

The curves and sags at the top of the flagmasts stand for knives and spears. The bell, cymbals, drum, and gong at the bottom are the musical instruments of the Lacid people. The knives and spears stuck to the ground on each side of the flagmasts are for protection against dangers likely to befall on the clan. There are wooden planks at the base of the flagmast. On these are drawn the head of the Indian pied hornbill on the topmost part, and its tail at the bottom. In the middle, on the side of the gong drawn pictures of animals, and the two topsides are illustrated with pictures of clothing and dresses, and the social system. On the side where there is the drum, pictures of crops are drawn. The hornbill represents the orbiting earth.

The colours on the board were previously black obtained from a mixture of soot and eggs, yellow from smearing with turmeric plants cut up with a knife, white from limestones, and red from a concoction of clay, areca, and cutch. Nowadays-finer colours are used with enamel paints.

Around the fence of the flagmasts are poles on which pictures of animals are drawn. The drum is made from a special kind of timber known as 'ba - htein' tree. The hollowed wood wrapped with buffalo - hide ropes and covered with hides of barding deer or mountain goat. To make the drum sound loud and clear, 2 rattles, 2 gibbon teeth, 2 curled up cock tails, 2 'pinbaw' plant roots, 2 silver bracelets, and 2 pieces of necklace are put inside the hollow before closing it up with the hide.

#### The Jhang: Kham: Zoem

In the compounds of the Lacid Literature and Culture Association, Jhang :\_Kham: Zoem Manaw festival was held at Takon village, Myitkyina township on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of April, 1998,. The essence of this Manaw is the

ritual performed for the endowment of the physical well - being , outstanding intellectual achievement, and for the acquirement of wealth and prosperity.

The grounds for the Manaw is prepared in advance, so does the breeding of animals to be sacrificed. The Manaw flagmast made of ' padauk', a hardwood, is erected at the grounds. The Myanma Radio and Television Department made the Manaw announcement for the 1998 on air , and the invitations were sent beforehand , at least 30 days ahead. Woven ropes with a number of tied knots were sent to friends and relatives, one knot symbolizing one day , and each knot to be cut off at the end of each day . The Manaw starting date being the day when all the knots are gone, those invited could work out their journeying time. The guests came by the village, singing, and dancing, and playing musical instruments. Friends and relatives brought along rice, salt, pounding mortar and pestle, cooking tripods, etc., . Guests were accommodated in the village . All the host villagers, young and old alike contributed in various tasks for the great occasion.

The Jhang: Kham : Zoem Manaw festival was formally inaugurated by the Commander of the Northern Command , Major - General Kyaw Win at 10.30 a.m. on April , 27, 1998. At 11.00 a. m., the festival began with the Manaw leaders coming out from the traditional homes and made one round of it . Then , they entered into the Manaw grounds passing through the entrance, and cutting off the Pheing " , the reed , and reached the Manaw grounds. This was done to leave the evil spirits out side of the Manaw grounds .The elders led the dance, circling the Manaw ground .Flagmasts were erected in the middle . Drums and gongs were at the front and at the back of flagmasts towards which the dance was headed. The leader at the head of the dance procession held the knife rather erect pointing upwards. There are two leaders who were in Dam: Sa: attire. Behind them came the elders, representative groups, and the youth alike , all taking part in the Manaw . After dancing for half an hour or so, all the guests were treated to lunch , and the local brew of drinks.

In the afternoon after lunch , the traditional aspects of betrothal , and the taking possession of the bride were acted out . In the evening , after dinner



, a medley of young and old danced in-group-holding hands . Modern popular songs were also sung, and the Manaw Beauty Contest was held.

On the next day , other invited national groups performed collective dancing wearing their own national costumes. They brought glutinous rice , eggs, gong , meat , etc. , as gifts.

There was a shield of human wall acting as guards for the Manaw participants. They were stationed at the edge of the festival grounds , performing the dance patterns of various kinds carrying water containers , sprinkling rice, and swinging swords and sticks. There were persons smeared with mud . All that was to prevent evil spirits from entering into the festival grounds – to scare them off from doing so.

Food and refreshments at mid - day followed collective dances in the morning . Animals to be killed for the communal feast , and for the sacrifice to the Nats were kept separately at the back of the traditional homes. In the afternoon , there was the election of the new Executive Committee. During the meeting , girls went round serving the local brew of drinks . In the evening , the final selection of the Miss Manaw title was carried out and prizes were awarded there and then.

The Manaw Flagmast Removal ceremony was held on 16, May , 1998. First, a buffalo was killed and its blood sprinkled onto the flagmasts. Then , religious practitioners led the readings from the Bible , and songs for the occasion . After that the flagmasts were pulled out . The Jhung: Kham : Zoem enhanced unity and harmony among the Lacids . Patrons for the organizing of the Manaw were –

- (1)Zoug: Phoo Za Khung" Tuing Yeing [Kachin Special Region (1)]
- (2)Sara galau yoo Boem [Yuzana Ward , Myitkyina]
- (3)Saralabau Sau Nu [Teacher Training School]
- (4)Zoug: phoo Shi" Jhang Yeing Khoo [Yangyiaung Ward, ]
- (5)U Lang Jaw Tung Sau [Mand Kheing ]
- (6)Duwa Kyang Lawm [Lashio]

Led by these patrons, the Chairman of the Lacid Literature and Culture Committee, Zoug: Phoo Jen Co' Kho Sau and the committee members, and all the Lacids contributed their utmost to make the Manaw a success.

The objectives of celebrating the Jhang: Kham : Zoem were as follows.

- (1) To value and preserve traditional culture
- (2) To train the new generation in celebrating and performing of traditional festivals
- (3) To hand down the cultural heritage
- (4) To strengthen unity through traditional culture
- (5) To be able to live in harmony with all the indigenous races of the Union

The Manaws held by Lacids since the Independence was as follows.

- (1) 1977 Myitkyina, Zeelun Ward; Literature promulgation Manaw.
- (2) 1985 Waing -maw, Madeing village; Literary Seminar Manaw.
- (3) 1993 Waing -maw, Madeing village; Traditional harvesting Manaw.
- (4) 1994 Waing -maw, Madeing village; History consolidation Manaw.
- (5) 1998 Myitkyina, Tatkon Ward; Jhang: Kham: Zoem Manaw.

By holding the Jhang: Kham : Zoem it is hoped that the Lacids and all the indigenous races of the Union may be blessed with physical fitness, and material wealth and prosperity.

#### House – warming Ceremony

The house –warming traditional ceremony of the Lacids is an interesting event. The site of the building, the date on which it is to be built is all decided by the leaf –knot prediction, and for habitation by the rice grains arrangement prediction methods. Likewise, the helpers, male and female are also chosen by the leaf – knot method. The construction begins when these and all the materials are ready.

( The details are given in Household Organization)

The construction is led by Lang: Jhang Phoo and Lang: Jhang Myhi and the house owner provides food and drinks for the helpers. On Completion, half the roofing is left undone, to leave room for the ushering in of the La Shen" (The heavenly princess) statue, that is accompanied by choral singings. The statue is then placed in the appropriate location. Next, snacks are tied up to

the string used in lowering in the statue . This is usually done in the evening with the oracle placing himself by the new fireplace kindled by the house owner on a tripod. The oracle utters the pronouncement , "Herewith are the auspicious water, fire , and foods , and the auspicious people – seven males and seven females –complete with gold , silver , jewellery , and animals."

On the second evening , Ji: Zeing, the leader who could perform the housewarming dance is invited by presenting him with a container of the locally brewed drink known as ' khaun – yei ' . A gong is presented to him after the ceremony comes to an end . The ' Khuan – yei ' is poured into large bell – mouthed pans , and after making gestures of respects, the drink is taken in-groups. Then , the Ji: zeing leads the dance , which begins with words of paying respects to the traditional Nats. The dance, accompanied by the composition of activities for the collection of timber and bamboo , is of a slow and harmonious pattern. The lyrics include how the house was built , how the evil spirits were warded off, and the appeals for the prosperity of the home and the neighbourhood . During the dance , the Ji: zeing is presented with ' pheing' Thain: ' , the carpet, betel , and the ' Khyeing Theing ' , the ribbon which is slung across the shoulders . All the dancers are provided with drinks and eggs. Finally someone with a slender basket collects donations.

Lang: Jhang Phoo and company kindles every fireplace with three sticks of firewood and bamboo . Then , there comes the Khuen " go " dance led by the elders.They hold figures of the hornbill 's head and tail . The head part is adorned with flowers, which are made of fresh wood scraped into curls and dyed. They represent the wings of the bird. The dance pattern, made up of two backward steps for every three forwards, is performed while consuming the drinks.

On the second day, La Shen ", the statue of the heavenly princess sent back through the undone roofing . This is carried out with proper words of eloquence, with the statue tied to the string and pulled up through the main post of the house.

The roofing is not to be covered up completely as yet for a week or so , leaving a small passage in it .During that period , there should be no borrowing

of jewelleries and money from the household members . The roof is to be completed when the week is up . On the second day , after the La Shen " statue is sent back , there is to be a flower adorning ceremony using paddy and corn buds. The aim is for all the helpers of the village to be fresh and young like these blossoms, and to breed goodwill and earn forgiveness for whatever wrongs they might have committed by words of mouth . Then there is the exchange of presents between Lang: Jhang Phoo and Lang: Jhang Myhi and the house owner . This is known as Mei bain: Xei" Pui the gift – exchange.

One day after the ceremonies, the house owner comes to Lang: Jhang Phoo's house to present one hog, two fowls, the 'Khaun – yei ' , and eggs. In so doing the house owner has to tell Lang: Jhang Myhi that he has sent back the house guardian Nat. Similar rites are performed at the Lang: Jhang Muhi 's house the next day . At the houses of Lang: Jhang Phoo and Lang: Jhang Muhi sacrifices of fowls and hogs are made to celebrate the return of the guardian Nats.

#### The New Harvest Festival

The new harvest festival is held in October. Prior to the festival is the collective tidying up of the whole village . The village roads are all cleaned up , inside the village to the 'taun – yar', as well as those leading to other villages. The venue is chosen at the villager elder's house by the leaf – knot prediction method . Paddy , cucumber , corns , and assorted fruits and grains produced from everyone ' s taun – yar are brought to the house where the festival is to be held . Then , offertories to the traditional guardian spirits of the river , creek , and those of the woods and mountains are made . Then, food and drinks are enjoyed heartily .

After being converted to Christianity , the very first crops produced are not consumed , but stored up . The festival can be held village wise or by individual households. If it is the village wise affair, the church becomes the venue where the occasion lasting for about two days is held . One day ahead of the festival , villagers bring in their earliest crops such as rice , corn, cucumber , taro , banana , grapefruit etc. , and vegetables such as gourd , aubergine , and pumpkin , to the church . The church compound is cleaned up far ahead of

the festival . Food is prepared for the invited guests in the church compound .The expenses are borne collectively .The next day , at the church service, the earliest crops are offered to God . Holding up the crops , participants of the service acknowledge that these are things created by God for mankind. Holding the ginger, which is to stick to the hat at child – birth , its beneficial uses are pronounced. Likewise , basil is used to rub the head and feet of those suffering from headaches. They pray for a bumper harvest in the coming season , at the same time resigning to the Will of God . Then, sermons are heard, and the youths recite and sing in praise of God .

The food is prepared over the night at the church . The consumption of 'khanu – yei' and other intoxicating drinks are not in practice nowadays . Meals are served on broad leaves and are heartily enjoyed after the church service.

The harvest festival promotes friendship and intimacy among Lacids, and the value of collective efforts is made obvious in the festivities . It is also a proof to the Lacids ' unity .

#### The Moon Goddess Festival

This is an occasion for young bachelors and maidens. It is usually held in October – November when the rains have cleared off. It is on moonlit nights that the occasion is held and young guests from surrounding villages are also invited. The guests bring along food and drinks as they can afford. The hosts also prepare meals and refreshments. The ceremony is held at the 'taun – yar' in the open air rather than under a roof . There is someone , and adult woman, or a spinster who knows how to invite the Moon Goddess . When all are assembled, the ritual begins. The invitation lines go like this, now , it is autumn . Please slip out unnoticed by your parents, on excuses as to get firewood. We are having this pastime with the consent of the elders. So please come and join us for the benefits of the youths. A carpet made from hemp's called 'Jed Moo" is spread here for you. While this invitation is being recited, a bamboo container inside which are a rattle , some cash , bracelet, a shell and pieces of gold, is held. The bamboo container is covered with a piece of cloth , the edges of which are tied like a hair knot . The bamboo container would shake when the

Moon Goddess comes .Queries are made of her being as to the first or last born daughter, the failure to do so could be death by thunder strike.

The movements of the bamboo are deciphered as to what the Moon Goddess meant in her answer . A bachelor could propose a maiden on the pretext of making a request to the Moon Goddess. Names of young men and women are read out to the Goddess to get her opinion that is favourable or unfavourable match these names would make . The occasion is not to be held without notifying the village elders. No kindling of a fire is allowed during the ceremony . The Moon Goddess is sent back when it indicates the wish to do so, asking her to recount what is good out of the whole affair.

### The Cucumber Feast

The cucumber feast is held in September. It is the traditional ' acting out' of the peace accord made after a major battle. The feast is celebrated at the village Headman's house or any house with strong doors, notifying the owner with gifts in the form of a cucumber fixed with horns , limbs, and tail , and a container of liquor.

When it is about to be acted out , four strong heavily – built males cover the doors. The group , taking the role of the villagers at large , closes in tightly beside the four strong men. Those who play the enemy part consist of twelve to fourteen young men naked except for short , tight fitting pants . The enemy group led by two has to make their way through the crowd to force themselves into the house, while at the rear, the leader holds a bouquet. The enemy charges in force and the leader reaches into the house . The leaders try to get water to extinguish the fire in the house where care has been to be of a bare interior.,

After extinguishing the fire of the furnace inside the house, the bouquet is stuck to the in between the doors .Then victory is declared, and the play ends here. As the panel of judges commences to make a peace accord , those already captured by both sides are exchanged. The side with more numbers of captives has to compensate by producing a cucumber cut out in the design of a buffalo or an ox. Then , the house owner asks the enemies why they have come to battle , to which the enemy side replies that they did so because their grand



-father's property of a viss ( 1.63 kg ) of frog hair and five earthen jars of crab blood had been taken away and had not returned, giving the cause as an instance for the battle.

The panel of judges then decided that for the one hundred viss of frog hair the compensation would be two buffaloes and gongs. The panel next Enquires of both the parties' attitudes. When the two parties are found to be satisfied , a peace accord is made and the panel strikes the peace cucumber into two and gives each side a half to eat. Then follows the sharing of foods.

#### The 'Taun - Yar ' Feast

This is a post - harvest feast to bring home the Nats, guardian spirits, that had been called upon to guard the taun - yar at the onset of the farmwork. It is an offering made to the respective Nats of the locality , the narrating by Xang Nam of the ancestral history , and the appealing for increased herds and bumper crops.

Pictures of animals and crops are drawn on boards and partitioned with a beautiful double - length longyi. The offertories to Xang Nam , two fowls , one hog, are placed on large leaves. Beside this are offertories to other Nats consisting of dried fish cut into halves , and a slab of ginger.

For the dance ritual, the bell is held by three Dam: Sa with the shield group and the mud - smeared group at the ready. The invited Nats are called upon from the scare - crow dais by the blowing of the buffalo horn and the beating of the bamboo drum. The three Dam: Sa sing in praise of the Seing Naid and ask to apportion some heritage on them . The shield group carries water container , springle rice grains, bite ginger and spit out, shake the knife , hold sticks , symbolizing the warding off of evil spirits. The Dam: Sa praises all the Nats, the villagers participate in the dance.

One of the three Dam: Sa prays for the increase of herds and crops; the second narrates the ancestral history , and the last entreats all the invited Nats to come and take the offertories. Then the taun - yar feast is held and all sit down to the foods and drinks served for the occasion.



### Longevity Rituals

This prayer service is performed to enhance longevity when someone or a member of the household suffers from effects of his or her luck lying low.

The Dam: Sa: comes out from the shrine to the house owner's room holding the cane rope. He also holds a plate of uncooked rice, on top of which is put an egg, and makes appeals for Jhung" auspicious blessings . To the rope is hung two ribs of the ox. The party appealing for Jhung" holds the rope and repeats after the Dam: Sa: 's incantations.

Next, the Dam: Sa: summons the missing soul by reciting the appropriate ritual mantra. Then, claiming that the soul has returned, the egg is eaten up , swallowed down with some water. This ritual for longevity is called the Jhung" Lang PI feast in Lacid.

### The New Year Celebrations

Each household celebrates New Year. Before the celebrations, quality 'khaun – yei' , prepared with such ingredients as glutinous rice, and millets is brewed . The whole house is done up. The kitchen is also in spick and span, over which no water is allowed to spill. The Dam: Sa: recites incantations of blessing on the generations of human beings, and harvesting crops. Then, announcing that the old year has gone and the new year ushered in , water is thrown down, and the fire is extinguished. Before four o' clock in the morning of the following day, water is fetched again accompanied by recitations of auspicious words, and the fire is also rekindled.

### Music and Dances

The music and dances of the Lacids play an important role in the social affairs of the clan. The tunes can be categorized as those for –

- ( 1)Offertories to the Seing Naid
- ( 2)Offertories to the Myed Naid
- ( 3)The Jhung" go" , summoning back the soul
- ( 4)The accompanying the soul of a deceased
- ( 5)The mourning dance
- ( 6)Offertories to the Phoug" phyed Naid
- ( 7)The homage to parents

(8)The love – lorn

(9)The lullaby

(10)The praise of the natural environment

(11)The collective pounding of paddy.

The Lacid dances are as follows.

(1)The Zoem go" dance (Manaw dance)

There are five dance patterns. The first is Khyam Dang: Leig' dance which is meant to check for the Manaw post and Manaw ground . The second is the Khoem Boemthoid, which is performed to safeguard the Manaw grounds from evil spirits. The third is the Seing go" and Voo Nyid go" dances . The former is for household members while the latter is for the hosts and closely related guests combined. Next is the Zoem Ji go" dance which is performed in honour of the Manaw flagmasts. The fifth dance pattern is Ja Mang go:" dance, the final of occasions in which everyone takes part.

Every Manaw dance pattern carries its own essence, enhancing unity among Lacids, and cordiality with other indigenous races.

(2)Ji: go" dance ( Housewarming dance)

This is also found to have five dances patterns. The first is for the host, representing the stages of the construction of the house . The second is for guests, symbolizing the niceties of socializing among neighbours. Lang Jhang' the farm hand dance is the third pattern , honouring the farm helpers . Thang" Keing' go" is a dance pattern depicting the relationship between humans and Spirits. The last is Khuen" go" dance pattern, which is the final, a sign of leave – taking.

(3)Seing go" dance

Seing go" is the dance performed with the accompaniment of the narration of the ancestral lineage.

(4)Hung"go" dance

This is for the summoning back of the soul.

(5)Ga bein go" dance ( Funeral dance )

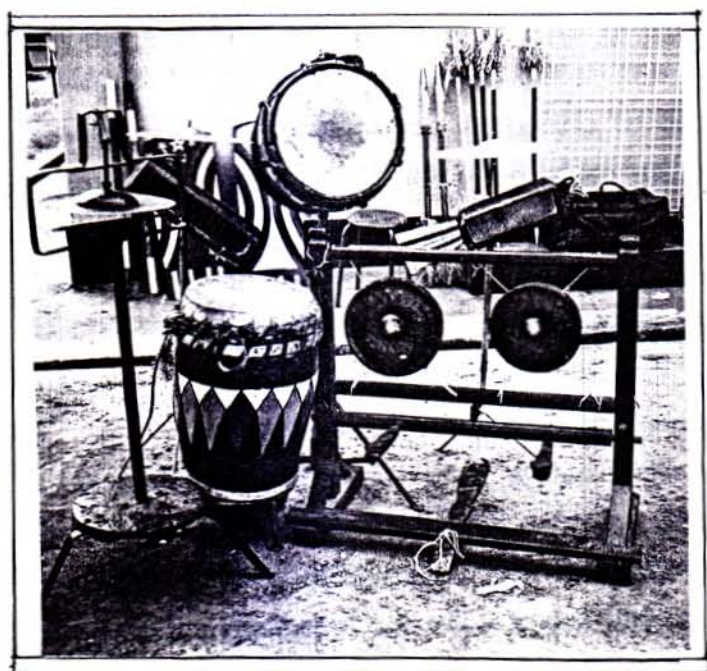
This dance depicts the life – long events of the human being from birth to death.The dance patterns reveal all the activities in the process of life, up to

illness, death , and funeral and mourning. Leing: go" dance is the final of mourning period , and for wishing health and wealth to the surviving relatives.

Musical Instruments

- (1) Zeing,' the long drum
- (2) Marg" , the gong
- (3) Jhat Ceing, the cymbals
- (4) Jhat Ceing' gyi' , the large cymbals
- (5) Shi Teing, double – stringed violin
- (6) Baid Teing , the triple – stringed mandolin – like stringed instrument
- (7) Kho Lhang , the flute
- (8) Lhang bung, the flute attached to hollow dried gourd

All the instruments are locally made, and the dances and songs are also of original native products, and thus, the Lacids are preserving their traditional arts.



Musical Instruments

## Chapter 7

### Administration

#### (A) Customary Laws and the Judiciary System

##### The Zoug administration

The Lacids practice the Zoug rule of law. The Zoug is the descendant of Sawbwa , the feudal lord, in other words, the ruling class.

##### The members

The Zoug is the lord of All his territories. Under him are the consultant Lu daid and Nheig boo, the village crier chosen by the Zoug himself for the administration of the village . The Lacids live in the northern hilly region of Myanmar in communities determined according to region , mountain ridge, forest and jungle, and river and creek upon which the boundaries are marked. The judicial system operates in accordance with a variety of regional rulings. Different territories have their own administrators. The administrator is called the 'Zoug' , who is not an elected Head, but entrusted the power by inheritance.

##### Litigation

The Lacids used to settle disputes among themselves. If that fails, the case goes up to the Zoug's consultant. The cases are not decided arbitrarily , but by the panel of decision making elders. The Lacids readily accept the decision of the elders. In the case of exceptionally refutable decision, the litigant swears on oath standing under the eaves with a knife over the head.

##### Customary Laws

Decisions on cases are made in line with the customary laws. The offender has to compensate the damages to the offended. In the cases for land and premises, boundary posts are erected at the close of the dispute. There are judicial rulings as to the particular nature and complexity of cases. For instance, in homicide there is the death sentence for the offender. However, the offender's close relatives could immediately mediate and discuss damages. The compensation for a homicide is as follows.

( 1 ) Head skull	2gongs
( 2 ) Hair	1viss ( 1.63kg)
( 3 ) Ears	2viss quality mushrooms

( 4) Eyes	2 refined jade
( 5) Nose	1 plough
( 6) Teeth	4 chopping hoes
( 7) Tongue	1 double – blade sword
( 8) Cheeks	2 gongs
( 9) Brains	2½ viss silver
( 10) Wrappers for brains	1 silk cloth
( 11) Abdomen	1 large earthen pot
( 12) Torso	1 buffalo
( 13) Shoulders	2 gongs
( 14) Hands	2 percussion lock firearms
( 15) Thumbs	2 iron scrapers
( 16) Liver	2 gongs
( 17) Heart	1 viss silver
( 18) Ribs	8 knives
( 19) Breasts	1 gong
( 20) Skin	1 cloak
( 21) Thighs	1 gong
( 22) Male death	1 spear
( 23) Female death	1 silver bracelet

The Lacids, in former times, accepted the rulings by the customary laws. They all lived unitedly under the government of their chieftains.

Nowadays, the Lacids in Madeing village solve their legal problems with the Ward Elders in the initial stage . Only when this fail will they put up their cases to proper levels of jurisdiction, and adhere to the sentences laid down by the courts of justice.

The present day administration abides by the Constitution prescribed by the Union Government . The levels of administration comprise of Ward/ Village Peace and Development Council (PDC), for the village / ward level ; Township PDC for the township level, State / Division PDC for the State / Division level, and the SPDC at the Central Government Level. The village level is administered by the Ward / Village PDC under which are In – charges



responsible for 10 households, and those for 100 households, who are elected by the Ward / Village concerned, and who see to the affairs of the residents, find solutions to their problems in the ascending order.

(A) Education

In the former days , the Lacids learnt their traditions, customs and ethics, verbally or through practical experience, handed down to them by the older generations . There were not any institution for formal learning. Schools began to function under the British rule. However , there were hardly any students as most children were involved in the traditional family or household occupations.

Interest in education began only after the Independence. There are 6 State Primary Schools in Madeing village, 2 in the cantonment, and 4 in the Wards – one in each. The student population is as follows.

Tanghau Ward	63
Hkakum Ward	66
Laban Ward	92
Madeing Ward	141
Cantonment (1)	95
Cantonment (2)	35

There are 26 teaching staff , 3 males and 23 females for the total number of 492 pupils . Once they finished the Primary education , the students continue their studies at the State High School in Waing – maw.

Now , all the parents are eager to educate their children. The Lacids are a breed of persevering , industrious, and diligent people who are bright and intelligent.

## Conclusion

### Comments

This research on the social organization of the Lacids nationals of Madeing village , Waing – maw Township is divided into seven chapters.

The well – in formed Lacid elders who have lived through both past and present events were approached for the details. To make known the traditions and customs of a race, the authentic culture and ethics so that these can be preserved is fundamental to the responsibility of anthropology . The essence on social traditions and customs such as beliefs, religions, legend and myth, proverbs, ancient adages, linguistic origins and language spread , and the anatomical aspects are assessed in the compilation of this thesis.

The study of the historical background of the Lacid nationals reveals the origins of the race as that of the Myanmar stock descended from the **Tibeto – Burman** branch of the migrating **Mongoloids**.

The attitudes and temperaments of the Lacids are found to be simple, straightforward, honest , candid , and open – minded. They have discarded their traditional attire , and like national races of Myanmar, adopted the common modern one of all Myanmar nationals.

In the social organizational setup , it is found that the Lacids had constantly practiced the patrilineal system of kinship .The male parent's siblings are regarded as fathers, and those of the female parent as mothers. Thus , segregation and animosity could be wiped out among relatives.The **nuclear family** dominates the society as the basic unit. The male parent leads the family and decides on all the affairs of the family . The Lacids practice **monogamy** and lead a peaceful family life, parents and offspring in unison. There used to be extended structures of abode for housing the generations on end , but now houses are built just to accommodate two to three families only . Although the young males and females enjoy a certain extent of freedom in socializing , among themselves, premarital sex is prohibited . Lacid matrimonial bond up to this day is still carried out under prescribed rules. Bride price need not be as burden – some as before, the present one in cash replacing the

former one in kinds. Popular culture has taken over wedding ceremony, but the traditional modes of attire for the occasion still remains intact.

Women in confinement are still found to be clinging to the old practices as far as confinement rules and taboos are concerned. Children are no longer made to work on the farm , but are sent to school to get education. Divorce is not allowed on strict religious grounds, and also for inconveniences on the part of the relatives , and the responsible elders. Inheritance is worked out in line with traditional legacy.

In health matters, the tradition of herbal treatments still holds fort, although the modern **medical practitioner's** prescriptions are not ignored . **Spiritual healing** are found to be out of practice, as also the funeral ritual of sending back the departed soul to the ancestors has become extinct.

In the field of economics, Lacids have become commercial minded as opposed to the survival economy of the past. However, as they are an easily contented lot there is not much sense of the exploitation of men by men in their commercial dealings.

As far as religious belief is concerned, the Lacids had converted to Christianity . They are resigned to the Will of God in everything – social , economics and the physical well – being .

Lacids take great interest in traditional music and dances. They produce their own musical instruments, compose lyrics , songs and poems. Traditional dance and music performed in festivals, and the traditional attire is still valued and revered. The **Zoem go" Feast** particularly demonstrates the Lacid culture.

To sum up , all the aspects of the life of a Lacid in Madeing village is presented characterizing the contented, peace – loving and independent picture of a Lacid.

There is the need to value and preserve the characteristics of a race , which can be studied to determine the level of the development of such a group. The diminishing of a culture helps promote the extinction of a race , which in turn is a loss to a nation of multi – racial society . Therefore, it is obvious that every national group should strive to uphold its culture and to make it lasting.

Also of vital necessity for the perpetuation various national groups , and the Myanmar nation itself , are the educational and economic sectors , for which all the citizens have the responsibility to strive for the development of a nation in tune with the modern times.

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| ၄။ပါတီ၊ မြန်မာ ဆိုရှယ်<br>လစ်လမ်းစဉ်                            | တိုင်းရင်းသားရိုးရာယဉ်<br>ကျေးမှုလေ့ထုံးစံများ<br>(ကချင်)               | စာအုပ်ထုတ်ဝေရေးကော်ပို<br>ရေးရှင်း                         |
| ၅။ခင်ခင်စု၊ဒေါ်<br>နွဲ့.နွဲ့.၊ဒေါ်<br>ကြင်ကြင်၊ဒေါ်<br>မိုးညို၊ | မနုဿဗေဒနိဒါန်း  | ရန်ကုန်တက္ကသိုလ်(ပင်မ)                                     |
| ၆။မင်းနိုင်၊ဦး  | လူသားမျိုးနွယ်များ  | ချိုးဖြူပုံနှိပ်တိုက်၊(၁၄၇)၊<br>မြန်မာဂုဏ်ရည်၊ရန်ကုန်မြို့ |
| ၇။မင်းနိုင်၊ဦး  | သွေးချင်းတို့ ပျော်သည့်မြေ  | ၁၉၆၈   |
| ၈။ မင်းနိုင်၊ဦး   | ဒို့.သွေးဒို့.သားတိုင်းရင်းသား  | ၁၉၆၇   |
| ၉။ပါတီ၊မြန်မာဆိုရှယ်<br>လမ်းစဉ်ပါတီ                             | သိင်္ဂါနဒီမြန်ပြည်မြောက်ဖျားသို့ စာအုပ်ထုတ်ဝေရေး<br>ကော်ပိုရေးရှင်း     |  |
| ၁၀။ကော်မတီ၊လာချိဒ်<br>စာပေ                                      | လာချိဒ်စာပေသမိုင်းအကျဉ်း<br>ချုပ်                                       | ၁၉၉၄   |
| ၁၁။ကော်မတီ၊လာချိဒ်စာပေ  | စီးပွားရေး၊နိုင်ငံရေး၊လူမှုရေး<br>နှင့်ယဉ်ကျေးမှုသမိုင်း<br>ဖော်ထုတ်ရေး | ၁၉၈၃   |
| ၁၂။အယ်လ်ဆောင်နိုး၊ဦး  | ရှာနဲခမ်မနောပွဲတော်   | ၁၉၉၈   |

# Lists of informers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Age</u>
1. U Kho Zung"	Madeing	103
2. U Madeing Kho Yeing	Madeing	69
3. U Khang" Teing"	Naung Hi	64
4. U Cang" Boem	Myoma	63
5. Zoug Phoo Jen Co' Kho Sau	Duka Htaung	62
6. Daw Cong " Win	Ijandun	60
7. U Kho Boem	PLN	58
8. U Boem Yeing	Mang Kheing	58
9. Daw Kyang" Yung	Takon	58
10. U Thoem" Sheing Cang"	Takon	57
11. U Cang" Boem	Takon	57
12. U Phare Teing Yeing" South	Takon	55
13. Daw Boem Wum	Duka Htaung	54
14. U Teing: Boem	Madeing	52
15. U Lang" Lug Zung"	Takon	50
16. Daw Boem Swang	Takon	48
17. U Lagyawm Bawm Kho	Takon	47
18. U Kho Teing"	Waing Maw	45
19. Daw Boem Tswi	Takon	45
20. U Thoem" Sheing Kho Zung"	Naung Hi	43
21. U Bawm Yeing	Ijandun	40
22. Daw Galau Boem Swamg	Takon	40
23. U Galau Boem Zung"	Takon	38
24. Daw Yaw Win	Ijandun	32
25. U Zoo: Boam	Takon	31
26. U Bawm Cang" Zung"	Ijandun	30



