

Lusai Tribes and the Society From the beginning to till 20th Century

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Abstract:

The study of the Lusai tribes has a great significance. Many studies have come out on the subject altogether with other tribal groups, their origin, political background etc. But the scholars had not given importance to discuss the tribes separately with totality i. e. by analyzing the social structure taking into account the important factors like marriage, family, belief system etc. This research has put an attempt to focus on the tribes from the beginning to till 20th century and with the passage of time how the society has been transformed. Sources are very scanty and scattered and not very helpful. In spite of this, the study has attempted to dig out the required things from the available sources like writings of the British administrators, contemporary history of Chittagong Hill Tracts (now in Bangladesh), Arakan, Tripura etc. Apart from this, folk lore, oral traditions also have been taken into account. Together all these have explained the Lusai tribes and their social structure etc. Hope this research will provide a wider sense of understanding about the tribes for the future research.

Key words: Lusai or Kuki or Mizo, British administrators, Christianity.

INTRODUCTION

Lusai tribes are living in Tripura, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya and Nagaland. According to Suren Debbarmen the Kuki or Lusai tribes are known as Darlong, Darlong Kuki or Halam Kuki in Tripura. They are known by different names in different states. The majority of them are living in the Lusai Hill, the present Mizoram which is considered the original homeland of the Lusai tribes. They are known as one of the major branches of the Mizo tribes (Debbarmen, 1997).

The Lusai tribes are also dwelling in the north-eastern portion of Chittagong Hill Tracts on the mountain tops of Sajek, Barkal and Thega of present Bangladesh. In the year 1974, there were 5,991 Lusai in the region while the census report of 1981 shows the Lusai population 1,041. In 1972, Hunter had estimated Lusai population