

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The North East region of India has an identity of its own which is quite distinct from the mainstream national identity. The entire region is unique in history, demography and culture. Since time immemorial, this region has provided shelter to numerous people of various ethnic groups having different social structure and cultural heritages. About one third of the total number of listed tribes for the whole of India is to be found in this region. The region is considered as a cultural corridor between India and South East Asia and is strategically important because of its geography, history, demography and culture (Kar, 2004). North East India has been the melting pot of many communities, faiths and cultures. The Northeastern region of India is often described as the cultural mosaic of India consisting of diverse tribal communities, linguistic and ethnic identities (Rajkumar, 2011).

Assam is situated in “One of the greatest route of migration of mankind” (Mills, 1928: 24). Since time immemorial she has been receiving people of different strains, who added new elements to its population and culture complex. From time to time there came men, ideas and means of production from outside which mingled together with the local population and shaped new mode of living and a new culture (Baruah, 2002). Assam is generally known as a bustling seat of *tantrism*. It is a lesser known fact that few centuries ago it was a hotbed of Buddhism too. Buddhism has a rich history in Assam. It had its days of glory in ancient Assam too. According to some beliefs *Padmasambhava*, the founder of Tibetan Buddhism is said to have died at Hajo, a town twenty eight kilometers from

Guwahati. Nagarjuna, another founder of Mahayana Buddhism is said to have erected a Chaitya at Hajo around the first or second century A.D. Some scholars believe that this Chaitya got converted into a Hindu temple around the third or fourth century A.D. (Department of Tourism, Assam). Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese traveler came to Assam in the seventh century A.D. Though he has not mentioned anything significant regarding Buddhism in Assam, Bhaskarvarman, the king of Assam is said to have accompanied Hiuen Tsang to the court of Harshavardhana to attend a large Buddhist conference. *Stupas* and other Buddhist remains in Sri Surya Pahar suggest that Buddhism flourished in the area from the early part of the Christian era and continued up to the twelfth century A.D. (ASI, 2015).

During the latter part of the medieval period and in modern period, Buddhism existed in its Theravada form in Assam due to the existence of communities like Tai Phake, Tai-Aiton, Tai-Khamyang, Tai Turung, Tai Khamti, Singphos, Chakmas and the Baruah Buddhists. Interestingly, most of these communities are very small and they have migrated to Assam in and around the eighteenth century A.D. Theravada Buddhist villages are spread across Assam especially in Tinsukia, Charaideo, Golaghat and Jorhat district.

The Tai-Buddhist communities constitute majority among the other Buddhist communities of Assam. The 'Tai Phake', 'Tai Khamyang', 'Tai Khamti', 'Tai-Aiton', 'Tai-Turung' belong to the Tai Buddhist community of Assam. They are collectively known as the *Man* (Tai-speaking) in the government records. The reason for calling them *Man* is that they had migrated to this part of India from Myanmar or the *Man* country. Though, this view is challenged by many scholars, many of them, especially the Khamti, Aitons, Khamyangs and Turungs, use *Shyam* as their surname for which they are also called Shyam community (Waddel, 2000). Many scholars believe that the word Shyam is derived from *Shan*. Shan is a branch of the great Tai race of South East Asia to which the Ahoms also belong. However some scholars are of the opinion that *Shyam* is a cognate with *Siam*, the old word for Thailand.

Among all the above mentioned communities, the Tai-Khamyang people are the subject matter of the research work. The Tai Khamyangs used to reside near the 'Moungmit' and 'Moungkong' kingdom at a place known as 'Khamjang' (in present day

Myanmar). 'Khamyang' is derived from the word 'Khamjang'. In Tai language 'Kham' means Gold and 'Jang' means to have, meaning a place having gold.

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Tai Khamyangs of Assam belong to the greater Tai race. The Tai people are scattered living in different parts in China, Burma, South East Asia and Assam. The habitat of the Tai-group of people extends from Assam in the West to Kwansi and Hainan in the East, from the interior of Yunnan in the north of southernmost extremity of Thailand in the South (Grierson, 1904). They originated in South West China around the first century A.D from where they migrated to other countries. They are also known as 'Shan' in Myanmar. The Shan are a divided into four sections i.e. South- Eastern Shan, South -Western Shan, North -Eastern Shan and North-Western Shan. The North Western Shans are related to the Shan of Assam (Borua, 1920). Some historians also refer the Khamyang people as *Nora* and their origin is traced to the Patkai range from where they migrated to Assam in the beginning of the nineteenth century (Martin, 1838). The Tai Khamyangs are Theraveda Buddhists and the Khamyang society is mainly divided into nine clans (Thakur, 1998).

The migration of the Tai Khamyang people to Assam can be traced back to the period of the first Ahom king Sukapha. According to the *Buranjis* (Ahom Historical chronicles), the Khamyangs are the first among the Man-Tais (Tai's who came from Myanmar) who had come to Assam. But initially they did not come to Assam for permanent settlement. According to the *Tai Khamyang Buranji* (2004) after *Chaolung* (Chao-Lord, Lung-Great) Sukapha's departure from 'Mung Mao', its king *Chaolung* Sukanpha (Sukapha's brother) dispatched a group of the Khamyangs to Assam to find Sukapha's whereabouts. Rajkumar (2008) stated that many *Noras* accompanied the first Ahom king Sukapha when he entered Assam in 1228 A.D. The Tai Khamyangs were sometimes also referred to as *Nora* in the past. They eventually reached Assam and met Sukapha in 1236 AD and explained their purpose of coming. Sukapha requested them to settle on the border to maintain cordial relation between the two kingdoms. Hence, from then onwards the Khamyangs began to live on the foothills of the Patkai range near the *Lake of No Return* in present day Myanmar. He further states that about one thousand *Noras* entered Assam after Sukhampha married a *Nora* princess in 1576 A.D. But they got

assimilated with the Ahoms and could not be distinguished as a separate community as they were engaged in different *Khels* by the Ahom rulers.

The Khamyangs had to migrate permanently to Assam in the later part of the eighteenth century as they were in constant conflict with the Kachins (Singpho). King Rajeshwar Singha (1751-69 AD) was the king of Assam during that period. The migration continued and the Khamyang Shan groups started permanently settling in Assam around the early nineteenth century (Terweil, 1980). The Ahom rulers also patronized the Tai Khamyangs to some extent. They were also employed by the Ahom kings as astronomers and writers. (Sen, 1999). At present, the majority of the Khamyang villages are located in Jorhat, Tinsukia, Charaideo and Golaghat districts of Assam. There are few villages in Namsai and Changlang districts of Arunachal Pradesh too. There are ten Khamyang villages in Assam. There is no proper record about the exact number of their population in Assam. According to the Census of 1891, he states that there were seven hundred and fifty one Nora in Assam at that time and nearly all of them lived in the then Jorhat subdivision of Sibsagar district (Borua, 1920). The exact population figure of the Khamyangs is not available as the census did not enumerate this group separately. Their population is about three thousand five hundred in Assam. The researcher has enumerated the population of two Tai Khamyang villages i.e. Chalapather and Rohon Shyam Gaon which have been selected as micro field. They have assimilated considerably with the local populace and became a part of the greater Assamese society.



Figure 1.1 Map showing Lake of No Return (Myanmar).

Source-<https://traveloangel.wordpress.com/2015/08/26/untamed-territories-the-lake-of-no-return/>

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Tai Khamyang community belongs to one of the branches of the Tai race scattered all over Asia. If any tribe or community retains their language and culture alive even after leaving their native place then that community even if it is a microscopic minority can be called as an ethnic community. Smith (1999) defines ethnicity as the sense of collective belonging to a named community of common myths or origin and shared memories, associated with an historic homeland. Anthropological adjustment, a distinct language, culture and religion are prerequisites for the survival and existence of any community. Every aspect of the above mentioned prerequisites was present among the Tai Khamyangs when they first arrived in Assam crossing the Patkai in the middle of the eighteenth century A.D. But some of the traits went missing among them in due course of time. The Khamyangs could not preserve their culture and language to the extent their other Tai counterparts from Assam i.e. the Tai Ahoms, Tai Khamtis, Tai Phakials and the Tai Turungs did. It is due to this reason that the present generation of Khamyangs is facing the problem of identity crisis.

Sources suggest that they were able to preserve their language and culture till the second decade of the nineteenth century .People could interact in Tai language, men and womenfolk wore traditional Khamyang dresses and ornaments and indigenous Tai festivals were celebrated with full fervor. According to Late Ungma Panyok who was born around the 1860's, the Khamyang could not speak Tai language fluently, though they could understand the language (Bailung, 2014).It thus became eminent that they started to forget their language within a few decades after their arrival to Assam. The assimilation took place to such an extent that within a period a few decades the Tai Khamyang language and culture was on the verge of extinction as they have accepted Assamese as their lingua franca (Chetia, 2005).

Under such circumstances the dawn of the twentieth century saw a sense of revivalist tendency growing among the Tai Khamyang community. Attempts were made to preserve their tradition and culture. Cultural revival refers to formation of group identity around a common culture where attempts are made to recover the aspects of culture related to the group lost due to voluntary relocation, colonization, modernization etcetera

(Encyclopedia.com). The subject matter of the study as the title indicates is to deal with the revivalist tendencies among the Tai Khamyangs along with dealing with issues of ethnicity and identity among them. Hence it becomes necessary for the researcher to the study in details about the socio-cultural life of the Khamyangs of Assam which will help in understanding the reasons behind the confusion regarding ethnicity and question of identity. The paucity of documented work regarding the Khamyangs is one of the problems which the researcher had to cope with.

1.3 ACCULTURATION

Acculturation is a term which is always being confused with assimilation. It is one of the several forms of culture contact. It is generally understood with regards to the migrant population. According to Berry and Sam (1997) acculturation is the process by which migrants to a new culture develop relationship with the new culture and maintain their original culture. Ward (2001) suggests that acculturation refers to dealing with psychological stress, acquiring new skills and developing a sense of identity and belonging during cultural transition or when navigating between different cultural groups. According to Refield, Linton and Herskovits (1936) acculturation can be defined as the changes that develop when groups of individuals come into contact with a different culture. The first known use of the term acculturation within the social sciences was made by John Wesley Powell in a report of US Bureau of Ethnology in 1880. Powell defined the term as psychological changes that occur within a person due to cultural exchange that occurs due to cultural contacts between different cultures (Cole, 2020). Cole (2020) also suggests that acculturation process is most commonly related to a minority culture adopting elements of the majority culture. It is typically the case with the immigrant population that is culturally or ethnically distinct from the majority in the place to which they have migrated. She further suggests that acculturation is a two way process where not only the minority culture adopts the culture of the majority but also those within the majority culture adopt elements of minority culture sometimes.

Berry and Sam (1997) and Cole (2020) suggest that there are five main strategies adopted by the immigrant population during acculturation-

1. **Assimilation-** This strategy is employed by the immigrant population when little or no effort is done by them to maintain their original culture. All effort is made to fit in and develop relationship with the new culture. The result is that the person or group eventually becomes culturally indistinguishable from the culture into which they have assimilated.
2. **Separation-** This strategy is used by the immigrant population when little or no effort is made by them to adopt and embrace the new culture. All efforts are made in maintaining the original culture. The outcome of such a strategy is that the original culture is maintained whereas the new culture is rejected.
3. **Integration-** This strategy is used when the immigrant population tries to maintain the original culture as well as adopt the new culture. This strategy is mainly adopted by immigrant population with a high proportion of racial or ethnic minorities.
4. **Marginalization-** It is a strategy used by the immigrant population when no importance is given to either maintain the old culture or adopt a new culture. The outcome is that the person or immigrant group is pushed aside, marginalized or overlooked by the society.
5. **Transmutation-** It is a strategy used by the immigrant population when they give importance in maintaining the original culture as well as adopting the new culture but rather than integrating two different cultures they create a new culture ,a culture that is a blend of old and new.

From the above discussion acculturation could thus be summarized as the process through which individuals or groups of different heritages acquire the basic habits, attitudes and mode of life of an embracing culture. (Merriam Webster).Assimilation and acculturation are two different things. Assimilation may or may not be necessarily an outcome of acculturation. It is a process by which a person or group adopts a new culture that virtually replaces the original culture leaving only little or no trace of original culture behind them. The process can be quick or gradual depending on circumstances. Some scholars are also of the opinion that acculturation is also related to expansion or political

conquest which results in the process of change in beliefs or traditional practices that occurs when the cultural system of the dominant group displaces that of another. It thus becomes evident from the above discussion that as far as the Tai Khamyang population is concerned, most of their traditional cultural practices are nearing extinction mainly because of assimilation or cultural assimilation.

1.4 CULTURAL ASSIMILATION

Cultural assimilation is a process by which different cultural groups become more and more alike. It is generally discussed in terms of immigrant or migrant groups (minority) coming to adopt the culture of the native (majority) and thus becoming like them in terms of values, ideology, behavior and practices. The process is either forced or spontaneous and can be rapid or gradual. Different groups gradually blend together into a new homogenous culture. As assimilation proceeds further, people belonging to different cultural backgrounds will over the time tend to share the same outlook, attitudes, values, sentiments, interests and goals (Cole, 2019).

According to Cole (2019) the theories of assimilation in social sciences were developed by the sociologists based at the University of Chicago in the beginning of the twentieth century. Chicago, an industrial center in the U.S., attracted immigrants from Eastern Europe. Sociologists like William I Thomas, Florian Znailecki, Robert E Park and Ezra Burgees have suggested three main perspective of assimilation with regards to Eastern European immigrants in USA which can also be related in case of almost all the immigrant population-

1. Assimilation is a linear process by which one group gradually becomes culturally similar to another over a long period of time. With regards to migrants or immigrant population it is seen that the immigrant generation is culturally different upon arrival, but assimilates to some degree with the dominant culture or the native population. The first generation children of these immigrants will grow up to be socialized within a society that is different from their parent's home country. Though they may still adhere to some values or culture at home or even in the community, if the community is

homogenous immigrant group. The second generation grandchildren of the original immigrants are less likely to maintain aspects of their grandparent's culture and are likely to be culturally indistinguishable from the majority culture. This theory is very much relevant in case of the Tai Khamyangs of Assam as well. It is generally observed that the Tai Khamyang language and socio-cultural practices slowly went into oblivion after the third or fourth generation migrants.

2. Assimilation is a process that will differ on the basis of race, ethnicity and religion. Depending upon the variables, it may be a smooth, linear process for some, while for others it may be delayed by institutional and interpersonal roadblocks that are manifested by racism, xenophobia, ethnocentrism and religious bias. Assimilation of the Tai Khamyangs can be considered as a smooth one as they had the moral support of the Tai Ahoms who were ruling Assam at that time and who considered the Tai Khamyangs as their kin as they belonged to the same Tai race. They did not come across much religious bias because Buddhism was not regarded as an alien religion by the native population. The peaceful nature of the Tai Khamyangs made the assimilation process very smooth.

3. Assimilation is a process that will differ based on the economic standing of the minority person or group. An economically marginalized socialized group is likely to be socially marginalized from the mainstream society. The low economic standing can encourage immigrants to bond together. Hence there is less chance of assimilation. On the other hand, middle class or wealthy will have access to different socio-economic resources which may encourage them to assimilate into the mainstream society (Cole,2019). Though there were some hardships faced by the Tai Khamyangs in the initial stage yet they did not face extreme economic crisis because of their hardworking nature. They were also donated lands by the ruling Ahom kings.

1.4.1 Key Determinants of Assimilation

Social scientists assess the process of assimilation by examining four key aspects of life among immigrant and racial minority population-

- i. **Socio - Economic Status** - The socio-economic status is a cumulative measure of one's position in society based on educational attainment, occupation and income. If the socio-economic status of immigrant population increases over time to match the average of the native born population or if it has stayed the same or declined is keenly observed by the social scientists. A rise in socio-economic status is generally considered as a mark of successful assimilation. As mentioned earlier, the early Tai Khamyangs were allotted lands by the Ahom rulers. The hardworking nature of the Tai Khamyangs made them economically stable. Field data also shows that there are very few people with very low income in the two Tai Khmayang villages.

- ii. **Geographical Distribution** - Whether an immigrant population is clustered together or dispersed throughout the larger area is also used as a measure of assimilation. Clustering would signal a low level of assimilation. On the other hand, the distribution of an immigrant population throughout a state or across the country signals a high degree of assimilation. Though the present day Tai Khmayang villages are clustered to some extent yet the early settlers came in constant touch with the Assamese speaking population. The urge for socializing with the native population furthered the process of assimilation.

- iii. **Language Attainment** - When an immigrant arrives in a new country, they generally don't speak the language native to their new home. Their ability to learn the native language in due course of time can be seen as a sign of low or high assimilation. Generations of assimilation will ultimately lead to the loss of native language and this is being seen as full assimilation. This aspect is totally applicable to the Tai Khmayang people of Assam. The inquisitive nature, urge for learning, friendly attitude and social nature of the Tai Khamyangs encouraged them to learn the native Assamese language. Sources suggest that the most of Tai Khmayang people started using Assamese as their lingua franca since the middle of the nineteenth century i.e. after about seventy, eighty years after their coming to Assam. The researcher also came across only two fluent speakers of the Tai Khmayang language from the two surveyed villages.

- iv. **Rates of intermarriage** - Rates of intermarriage on cross racial, ethnic or religious lines can be used as a measure of assimilation. Low levels of intermarriage would

suggest social isolation and can be read as low level of assimilation while medium to higher rates would suggest a great degree and cultural mixing and thus of high level of assimilation (Cole,2019). This aspect is also very much seen among the Tai Khamyangs of Assam. Data collected from the two surveyed villages also suggests that considerable number of population has married outside their community.

1.5 ETHNIC IDENTITY

The term ethnic is derived from both Greek and Latin words *ethnikas* and *ethnicus* respectively. The meaning of both the words is nation. *Ethos* in Greek means customs, disposition or traits. When the words *ethnikas* and *ethos* are taken together it may mean a band of people living together who share and acknowledge common customs. The word *identity* has Latin origins and is derived from the word *identitas* meaning ‘same’. The term generally expresses the notion of sameness, likeness and oneness (Joseph and Ryan). Ethnicity is defined as “the sense of collective belonging to a named community of common myths or origin and shared memories, associated with an historic homeland” (Smith, 1999: 262). It also refers to “some form of group identity related to a group of persons who accept and define themselves by a consciousness of common descent or origin, shared historical memories and connections” (Chazan, Mortimer, Ravenhall and Rothchild, 1988: 35).

Ethnic identity could thus be defined as a sense of belonging based on one’s ancestry, cultural heritage, values, traditions, rituals, language and religion. With regards to the migrant or the immigrant population ethnic identity would mean distinct culture, values, traditions and rituals which would make them feel connected with the past. Once these traditions are in threat or getting extinct or on the verge of extinction, these groups come across the feeling of identity crisis. Similar was the case with the Tai Khamayng people. Too much of assimilation led to the extinction of the traditions and socio-cultural practices of the Tai Khamayang people. By the end of the twentieth century, these customs and practices were almost extinct. The end of the twentieth century and beginning of the twenty first century saw the growth of ethnic consciousness and attempts were being made to revive the old customs and practices. According to Phinney (2003: 63) one claims an identity within the context of a subgroup which shares a common ancestry and shares at

least a similar culture, race, religion, language, kinship or place or origin. She further states that “Ethnic identity is not a fixed categorization but rather it is a fluid and dynamic understanding of self and ethnic background. Ethnic identity is constructed and modified as individuals become aware of their ethnicity within the large socio - cultural setting”. The same may be applied to the Tai Khamyangs of Assam as well.

1.6 CULTURAL REVIVALISM

‘Culture’ describes the many ways in which human beings express themselves for the purpose of uniting the others, forming a group, defining an identity and even for distinguishing themselves as unique. According to Giddens (2005) culture refers to the ways of the members of society or of groups within a society. It includes how they dress, their marriage customs, language and family life, their patterns of work, religious ceremonies and leisure pursuits. Most of the sociologists are of the opinion that culture consists of the values, beliefs, language, communication and practices that people share in common and that can be used to define them as collective. Culture is made up of our knowledge, common sense, assumptions and expectations .It also includes the rules, norms and morals that govern the society (Cole, 2020). Sociologists generally see two types of culture i.e. material and non-material culture. Material culture refers to the physical objects, resources and spaces that people use to define their lives. It is composed of the things that humans make and use. This includes a wide variety of things from clothing, music, arts, literature, and architecture among others. Non material culture generally includes ideas, beliefs, norms, values etcetera that may help in shaping a society. Examples of non-material culture include things like traffic laws, words and dress codes etcetera.

According to Henry Blackaby and Claude King, the word revive is made of two parts, ‘re’ meaning again and ‘vive’ meaning to live. Thus ‘revive’ means to live again, to come or to be brought back to life, health or vitality. It came into usage in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century when it meant ‘returning to life or rebirth’ with regards to God awakening and empowering a lethargic church (Singha, 2013).The word revival was first used in English by Cotton Mather in 1702 A.D. in his work *Magnalia Christi Americana*. It comes from Latin and maybe interpreted as ‘to live again’, to receive again a life which has almost expired, and to rekindle into a flame the vital spark that was

nearly extinguished (Singha,2013).This definition can be related to the Tai Khamyangs of Assam too. The present generation of the Tai Khamyangs is trying to rekindle the nearly extinguished fire into a flame by providing the vital spark as they are trying their best to revive their nearly extinct customs and traditions.

Cultural revivalism is predominantly associated with minority population According to Campbell (1994) cultural revivalism is a tactic pursued consciously or unconsciously by minority communities to gain recognition through an appeal to fundamentalist cultural logic, i.e., the belief that authentic traditions are unchanging and ancient, unique too and defining of a given community and properly transmitted only to members of that group through heredity or ancestry .Sociologists consider different theories which are responsible for the revivalist movements. The stress theory, the theory of deprivation and the revitalization theory are to name a few. Social scientists generally believe that it is the structural strain that is the underlying factor behind collective behavior. The relative deprivation theory suggests that revitalization movements may occur when a significant proportion of the society finds its status and economic condition trailing to those of the rest of the society and it leads to the feeling of deprivation among them. The most related theory with regards to the cultural revivalism among the Tai Khamyangs of Assam is the theory of revitalization .The theory was propounded by noted anthropologist Anthony F.C Wallace and it suggests that revivalist movements are organized by different groups with an attempt to create a more satisfying culture, with new culture often modeled after previous mode of living. Nativistic, revivalistic, millenarian and utopian are different varieties of revitalization movements. Revitalization movements have one or more than one prophets or leaders who initiate the cause of social transformation (Elizabeth, 2008).As far as the Tai Khamyang population is concerned, individual efforts as well as the socio- cultural organizations are spearheading the cultural revival among them.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The Tai Buddhist communities of Assam are some of the lesser known communities in India. They have their distinct history, society, culture and religion which adds flavor to the cultural mosaic of Assam. The Tai Khamyang community which is

related to the research is a microscopic minority with a population of around three thousand five hundred. Research work or even documented sources relating to the socio-cultural life of the Khamyangs is very less and could be counted on fingers. The research can prove to be of great help for further research about the community as secondary sources related to them are very few. One of the major problems /question which most of the ethnic and tribal communities of North East India come across is the question of identity. The Khamyang community of Assam is no exception either. The research addresses issues like ethnicity and identity crisis as well. By studying about the history, socio-cultural life and revivalist tendencies among the Khamyang of Assam, the work will make the future generation of the Tai people conscious about the socio-cultural practices of their community. Not much research work is done on Buddhism in Assam especially on the other Tai Buddhist communities like Tai-Aitons, Tai- Phake and Tai Turungs etcetera. The proposed work will provide impetus to Buddhist studies as well.

1.8 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of proposed research is postulated with an aim to understand the phenomenon of cultural revivalism amongst the Tai Khamyangs of Assam. We may further particularize these into a number of sub-objectives such as:

1. To study about the history and socio-cultural life of the Tai-Khamyangs of Assam.
2. To study about the assimilation process of the Tai-Khamyangs and understand the process of change within the community.
3. To study about issues of ethnicity and identity among the Tai-Khamyangs of Assam.

1.9 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study has been carried out in the villages of Chalapather Shyam Gaon and Rohon Shyam Gaon of Charaideo district of Assam. Both the villages are clustered having homogenous population consisting of the Tai Khamyangs. It is mention worthy that the Tai

Khamyang population is also distributed in few other districts of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. As this study has been conducted only in two villages of Charaideo district of Assam data and analysis are centered to only those two villages.

1.10 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTERS

Chapter-1: INTRODUCTION - The first chapter gives an introduction to the topic. The statement of the problem, the concepts of acculturation, assimilation, ethnic identity and cultural revivalism, significance of the study, objectives and limitation of the study is being discussed.

Chapter-2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY-The research methodology adopted to conduct the research has been discussed in this chapter.

Chapter-3: REVIEW OF LITERATURE-This chapter deals with the review of literature.

Chapter-4: A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE TAI KHAMYANGS OF ASSAM- This chapter discusses in details about the historical background of the population. By discussing about the different aspects of socio-cultural life of the population, an attempt has been made to understand the community better.

Chapter-5: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND DATA ANALYSIS OF CHALAPATHER AND ROHON SHYAM GAON -This chapter discusses in details about the demographic profile of the two surveyed villages of Charaideo district i.e. Chalapather and Rohon Shyam Gaon. Data collected on various aspects of the population of the two villages with the help of a survey schedule is being tabulated and discussed.

Chapter-6: THE ASSIMILATION PROCESS AND CHANGE -To understand the growth of revivalist tendency among the Tai Khamyangs of Assam, it is essential to know about the assimilation process first. This chapter is written mainly on the basis of the primary data collected during field study and it discusses in details about the changes in socio - cultural practices of the population as a result of assimilation with the local populace and some other factors.

Chapter-7: REVIVALISM AMONG THE TAI KHAMYANGS OF ASSAM -This chapter is written on the basis of the primary data collected during field study and it discusses in details about the revivalism process and steps taken by the Tai Khamyang people in reviving their traditions and customs.

Chapter-8: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION -The research work ends with the concluding chapter where all the findings of the research are being summarized. Suggestions based on the findings have also been included.