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HANDICRAFTS OF NAGALAND

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NAGALAND

PART VII

HANDICRAFTS OF NAGALAND

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Contents

Foreword

One of the first steps to be taken in the First Five Year Plan was the establishment of six boards for the promotion of handicrafts, village and small industries :

(1) The Khadi and Village Industries Boards ;
(2) The All-India Handicrafts Board ;
(3) The All India Handloom Boards ;
(4) The Central Silk Board ;
(5) The Coir Board ; and
(6) The small Industries Board.

The rapid expansion of the activities of these Boards which concentrated not only on production and techniques, but also on organisation, extension, credit, marketing and export, consolidated and enlarged the position that the household industries sector had so long enjoyed in the nation's economic life. It was this fact that forced itself upon the preparations for the 1961 Census and demanded that household industry should be separately investigated for a proper accounting of the nation's manpower, resources and its specific contribution to the national income. The 1961 Census, therefore, asked a special series of questions on household industry, input of family and hired labour, and the period over which household industry is conducted It was felt however, that an enumeration of the total number of establishments and their industrial classification would be incomplete without a proper description of what they produce and how they produce. It was important to make an assessment of the limits of rigidity within which traditional skill operates. This could be obtained by studying the caste, occupational, social and economic stratifications, the limitations of credit and marketing facilities, the dominance of custom over contract, the persistence of traditional tools and design forms, the physical limitations of transport, communication and mobility, the inability to adopt new lines or adapt to changing circumstances. It was important also to make an assessment of the limits of flexibility that traditional skill is capable of, because the transformation of traditional skills to modern skills is easier said than done and a thorough study may well reveal that it is perhaps cheaper from the social point of view to develop industrial skills from scratch than to try to graft traditional skill on alien soil. A rather tragic case of failure to make what would on the face of it seem a minor adjustment cast its heavy shadow on the nation when it was discovered that goldsmiths used to working on 22-carat gold all their lives felt sadly helpless when asked to work on 14-carat, so narrow and unadaptable were the limits of their skill and proficiency and so rudimentary the tools and equipment with which they and their forefathers had worked. This fiscal accident revealed that tools are even more important than skills.

An early opportunity was therefore taken in February 1960 to suggest to State Census Superintendents, that the Census provided a unique opportunity for conducting and documenting a Survey of this kind. As such a survey was quite outside the usual terms of reference of Census work it was thought prudent cautiously to feel one's way with the thin end of the wedge of what would, it was hoped, prove to be an exciting pursuit. It was therefore, considered the wiser course to wait until the State Census Offices felt so interested that they would no longer take the inquiry as an imposition but rather want to do it on their own and ask for the necessary staff and equipment. This office, too, in its turn, could make use of the

interval to organise and elaborate the design of inquiry in order to feed the appetite that work in progress would serve to whet. Because it was a labour of love, sought to be unobtrusively thrust on one's colleagues and because the inquiry itself was so vast that normally it would demand in any country as big a set-up, if separately established, as the Census organisation itself and that over a much longer period, and because it was almost a pioneer venture. nothing like it having been undertaken since the 1880's, it was decided to move towards a build up by stages, to let the inquiry unfold itself only as fast as my colleagues, chose to ask for more.

Thus, in the first circular of 18 February, 1960 it was suggested that the inquiry might be conducted through the agency of the Development Department, the State Director of Industries, the Director of Tribal Welfare, the Registrar of Co-operative societies, and other organisations concerned with the promotion of household industry. A draft questionnaire containing 30 questions in three parts was recommended for canvassing. It was suggested that information on this questionnaire, village by village and area by area, might either be obtained through the regular departmental channels of the State Government, or through the newly set up Census organisation, or through the hierarchy of the newly-created Panchayats. Stress was laid on the need of photographic documentation and illustration of designs, shapes and forms not only by photographs but with the help of line drawings or sketches together with a full description of the materials used.

Almost the whole of 1960 and the first half of 1961 were spent in organising and taking the Census count, although several states even during this period had not allowed the grass to grow under their feet but made exploratory studies and decided in their minds how the inquiry should be organised. A series of regional conferences held in Trivandrum, Darjeeling and Srinagar in May and June '61 revealed much enthusiasm among State Superintendents to proceed with the survey, but the need of separate staff and equipment was felt at the same time as the realization dawned that this was much too serious an inquiry to be treated casually and left to be achieved through the usual administrative channels and State Census Superintendents proceeded to augment their staff with qualified research and investigating officers, technical persons, photographers artists, draughtsmen and other trained personnel.

This was followed by rapid progress in coordination between the Central and State Census offices in the matter of exchange and processing of information, documentation and investigation, of assisting each other with trained investigators and in editing and finalizing drafts, layouts, presentations.

Mention has been made of a questionnaire in three parts and thirty questions The idea was to make a beginning with empirical, analytical studies based on a structured questionnaire which would replace general descriptive accounts that had obtained so far. The primary aim was to obtain a picture as much of the artisan himself as of his craft, to obtain a perspective of the artisan and his craft in his social and economic setting, the extent to which tradition bound him and the winds of change ruffled him, the extent of his mobility and immobility, the conditions of market, credit, new contacts and designs in which he operated, the frame of new as well as traditional producer-customer relationships in which he still worked, as how far he was ready to pierce, his own caste/tribe socio-economic cocoon and make a break through to new opportunities promised by the Five Year Plans. The aim was to hold up the mirror to hereditary skills struggling with the dialectics of tradition and change.

Thus the first part of the questionnaire, purporting to be a village schedule, sought to take account of the size and population of the village, its remoteness from or proximity to centres of trade and commerce, in short, the degree of isolation in which the artisan worked, and the relative strengths of various communities in the village which would afford clues to social interdependence and the prevalence of the *jajmani* system. The second part was devoted to artisan communities in the village : the several castes of artisans, the number of families in each, the total number of workers, males and females, the extent of cooperative activity among them, the extent of dependence upon employers and of wage or contract labour. There were questions on the raw materials used, the means of their procurement, the possible extent of dependence on others for raw materials, the extent of the materials that artisans can handle within the limits of their skill There were other questions on the exchange and flow of designs, the use of colours, the ancientness of the craft and legends associated, the colonization of the craftsman, on patrons and costomers and on social and economic contact with the world inside and outside the village There were specific questions on the workshop itself and particularly the tools and the source of supply of these tools, because it was felt that tools decide everything and are the surest index of inertness or flexibility. Separate block

of questions were designed to bring out the ramifications of artisan castes thoughout the country and the ways they sustained themselves, the type of clientele they catered for, the extent to which they operated on money or barter or service, how specialized their craft was, how wide the market, how dependent they were on their socially preordained cli ntele and how restricted the latter was by the seemingly unalterable laws of social custom ; the extent to which they could operate in the open market, the range of their wares and the sizes to which these were ordinarily restricted either by the limits of their own skill or the length of their customers' pursestrings. Inquiries were to be made about the operation of middlemen and of cooperative societies, the people who gave new designs and demanded new products. Finally the several stages of production of the articles themselves were to be fully described including the final and finishing stage and a list of very skilled craftsmen of each community was to be furnished The third part was devoted specially to tribal communities and designed to find out how self-sufficient or dependent they were on the production and supply of manufactured goods, the extent to which they produced themselves or depended on others, their contacts with other communities and the specific forms of production and commerce through which these contacts were maintained.

Particular emphasis was laid on the need of obtaining as full an account as possible of unique regional design differentiations as they reflect not only the very culture patterns of the country but the persistent inventive faculties of the craftsmen. The importance was emphasised of giving full attention to articles of domestic use as it is in their shaped, designs and forms that the culture patterns and traditional skills persist most tenaciously.

Simultaneously with the investigation of specific crafts, State Superintendents proceeded to compile a comprehensive list of all types of handicrafts obtaining in their State. As for the specific crafts to be investigated several tables were devised from the structured questionnaire in order to guide investigators toward pointed observation and analysis, to enable them to write, not just general descriptions, but with their eye on the object and on facts.

Investigations conducted between September, 1961 and May, 1962, including a study group of all States and the Social studies Division in December 1961 at Delhi, stimulated many of the States into going in for a much enlarged schedule. The revised village schedule itself the counterpart of the first part of the Feburary 1960 schedule, contained 19 large sections containing elaborate and probing questions. The family schedule for practising artisan families similarly contained 19 main questions each subdivided into many questions. The family schedule for non-practising artisan families contained 21 questions. There were schedules for the study of cooperative societies, of production-cum-training centres, and of consumer's preference. This enlarged schedule of investigation, in the formulation of which the States themselves actively assisted, was greatly welcomed. The surveys that will appear in this series will therefore, consist of two main types :

(a) Those based on the original short schedule and

(b) Those based on the much enlarged schedule In some cases Census Superintendents felt enthused enough to scrap the work based on the original short schedule and do it over again on the enlarged schedule. In the meantime much experience was gained on the analysis of facts and figures to clothe each observation with plenty of authentic information so that the reader could make his own judgement instead of being expected to see all the time through another pair of eyes.

This programme of survey of handicrafts and household industries has been fortified by several ancillary surveys, each one of which would deserve major attention. Along with the survey a compilation has been made of all handicraft centres in each State and an inventory prepared of skilled craftsmen. Photographic and other documentation has been built up to constitute what may now be regarded as the most considerable repository in the country. Elaborate and accurate maps of craft centres in taluks, tehsils and districts are either ready or under preparation. A full census of all fairs and festivals, weekly hats and markets, throughout India, has been taken and is being published for the first time. Andhra Pradesh has embarked upon a project of chronicling the social and religious antiquity and uniqueness of every fair and festival. A separate volume will be devoted to each district which promises to be of the utmost value to sociologists and orientalists. A full and complete inventory, replete with sketches and measurements of every object, has been prepared of exhibits in museums of tribal crafts in India. There has been a fairly satisfactory survey of houses and builldings, indigenous architectural designs and use of local

building materials of the whole country. All this has been entirely a labour of love, patiently organised and executed under great strain and in disregard of health and comfort, for which I take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation and grateful thanks to my colleagues.

NEW DELHI
30 *July* 1964

ASOK MITRA
Registrar General, India

Preface

This volume is the first attempt ever made to put on record the various handicrafts of Nagaland, particularly among the Aos and Angamis of Nagaland.

Due to the troubled condition prevailing within the State, our studies have necessarily to be limited to a few villages and hence though the volume has been entitled "HANDICRAFTS OF NAGALAND" the publication covers only the main handicrafts practised by the Aos and Angamis and not the other tribes of Nagaland, though basically there is not much difference in the handicrafts practised b the other tribes.

Nagaland with its many tribes is rich specially in its variety and colourful traditional shawls and skirts, each tribe having different traditional patterns and designs.

It is a matter of regret that due to circumstances beyond our control, we have not been able to do much research into the various handicrafts. It is hoped that the State Government on their own will carry out more detailed survey and research, as some of the crafts are dying out due to the import of manufactured goods from outside, though certain crafts like weaving has managed to hold its own due to the revival of interest and pride of the women folk in their own traditional shawls and skirts.

There is neither an industrial design centre nor a co-operative society of the artisans in the area. The study of these handicrafts are therefore confined to the individual village artisans and not to organised institutions. Hence in this report it has not been possible to give an exact and uniform assessment of expenditure incurred for an income derived from the practise of the crafts.

I would like to place on record the spade work done by Shri M. Alemchiba Ao, in the collection of materials and compilation which has made this publication possible, and the excellent line and coloured drawings of Shri Jyoti Raibaruah, our Draftsman.

KOHIMA.
19th November 1964.

H. ZOPIANGA
Superintendent of Census Operations,
Nagaland

PART ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. Nagaland and Its Population

Boundary

Nagaland, which is now divided into three districts—Kohima, Mokokchung and Tuensang with its administrative headquarters at Kohima town is a long narrow strip of hills running more or less parallel to the south on the left bank of the river Brahmaputra, westward is the broad valley of the Assam Plains, southward the State of Manipur, eastward is Burma and the Tirap Frontier Division of the North-East Frontier Agency to the north.

Physical Aspects

The entire land is covered with ranges of hills which sometimes break into a wild chaos of spars and ridges, and sometimes descend with gentle slopes. Most villages stand at 3000 to 4000 feet, though some hills rise much higher, the highest peak is Japvo in Kohima district which is 9,899 feet high. Due to the practise of shifting cultivation much of the forest has been cleared, but there is still a great deal of forest left. Principal wild animals are elephants, buffaloes, tigers, leopards, bears, and variety of deer. Of the domestic animals, the *mithun* is the most treasured for use in decoration and magic, so also the great Indian Hornbill among the birds. Rainfall is sufficient but not excessive. Average annual rainfall at Kohima and Mokokchung for the last 50 years is 1920.0 mm and 2756.3 mm respectively. There are many rivers and streams, but no lakes. The larger rivers are Dhansiri, Doyang, Melak, Dikhu and Zungki.

People

The population of Nagaland on 1st March, 1961 was 369,200 that of males 191, 027 and of females 178,173. The decade 1951-61 has shown an increase of 14.07 percent excluding Tuensang District. According to the latest available figures the area of the territory is 6,366 sq. *miles* which gives a crude density of about 58 persons per sq. mile. The sex ratio in the territory is 933 females per 1,000 males. There are 179 literates for every 10,00 of the population, 240 male literates for every 1,000 males, and 113 female literates for every 1,000 females. The highest literacy rates are found in Mokokchung district, where there are 296 literates for every 1,000 of the population, 371 male literates for every 1.000 males and 281 female literates for every 1,000 females. The lowest literacy rates are in Tuensang with 45,70 and 18 respectively. The villages are built on the most commanding points along the ridges of the hills for security reasons and formerly stockaded by stone walls, palisades, dykes or fences of thorns and many villages had village gates, which were approached by narrow winding paths sunk in the ground. Great wooden doors decorated with painted carvings closed the gates. While some tribes arrange their houses in regular streets along the top of a ridge other tribes build as they please; Usually the size of the houses are fairly large, sometimes unusually large and reflect the importance and status of the owner. Some have high gables projecting in front, other are crowned by crossed wooden horns. The trophies of raids war and the relics of the great feasts are displayed in the front porch.

Course of History

The Nagas presumably belong to the Indo-Mongoloid group. They are divided into over a dozen major tribes each speaking a different dialect. Every tribe has its own tradition of origin. Some tribes believe that they came out of rocks, others say that they emerged from earth and still some others terace their origin from a cave. What-

ever might be the tradition of their origin, most of them point to the east as the place of their origin or the direction of their migration. Thus though there is no recorded history of the Nagas, it may be presumed that most of the earlier migration might have been from the eastern direction Dr. J. H. Hutton the greatest authority on Naga tribes writing on this subject come to the conclusion that : "no Naga tribe is of pure blood The tribes have combined elements due to immigration from at any rate three directions, north-east, north-west and south the people having been pushed up from the plains of Assam and Burma by pressure. We may speculate that a certain stage a Negrite race, later an Austric race of kil-Annam or Mon-Khmer type was in occupation, leaving traces in implements and perhaps folk-tales now found. Then came a definitely. Bodo immigration from the north-west or west, and by this perhaps the Y-shaped posts, reaping by hand and indications of a matrilineal system have been left. There is, beyond dispute, a mixture of Tai blood from the east also. The immigration wave from the south is obvious enough, and possibly brought up elements of population from southern Burma wedged in among migrating tribes. The Angamis are probably related to the Igorot and possibly other Philippine tribes by blood or culture or both Further, these southern immigrants perhaps already consisted of two parts. One settled and cultured, the other barbarous but warlike; and the Angamis may have inherited certain customs from both parts of the tide. On the other hand it is possible that they contain some Aryan element from the other side of India caught up among migrating tribes"

Dr. Verrier Elwin also in one of his books while discussing about the same subject remarks that : "Every tribe, sometimes every clan, has his own myths, tracing between them their first homes to every point of the compass. It has been suggested that their love of marine shells points to a bygone settlement near the sea; that their spears (with ornamental bars curling outward from a shaft) suggest some relationship with the Igorots and the Philippine Islands; that they are connected with the Dyaks and Bornee through the common tradition of headhunting, with Indonesia generally by the use of simple lion-loom. This sort of thing is not very substantial evidence on which to build a history of ancient times, but it does give hints of what may have happened"

There are certain other resemblences between some of the tribes of the Indonesia and some Naga tribes in the pattern of hair dressing, tattooing, occasional boiling of rice or tea in bamboo tubes and many such other things. Without going into more detail about their early migrations, we may without risk conclude that the Nagas wandered far before adopting their present home and that many of them are probably related to the tribes of Indonesia by blood or culture or both. The recent discovery of some neolithic celts in Nagaland common to a type found in some parts of Indonesia and Burma gives rise to the speculation that the Nagas at one time might have come from that part of the Land taking Burma as a corridor of migration However, this speculation can be confirmed only by comparative and through study.

Crafts

There is much beauty to be found in the handicrafts of the Nagas and as a matter of fact, they are specially noted for their weaving, basketry and wood work, but to admire them require imagination and ability to relate them to their human background It is also necessary to understand the difficulties against which the artist has to struggle ; lack of materials and improved tools, a sense of inferiority in the face of commercial products of civilization and the absence of official or private portion in the past Added to these difficulties were the burning of villages and houses in course of raids and inter-village feuds in the past. Even now the highly inflammable bamboo houses thatched with grass or palm leaves and huddled together on a hill side are subject to disastrous fires. In Nagaland there are additional difficulties. For wood carving only the most primitive tools are available. For pottery in many areas the local clay is not suitable. For weaving cotton is not extensively grown as the people are hard put to it to provide themselves even with sufficient food and although a number of natural dyes are known, their use is slowly being abandoned before the competition of coloured bazar yarn and synthetic dyes, with the result that the old colours are inevitably changing.

A time of change

It has been seen that among certain tribes, wood carving weaving and personal ornamentation depended largely on head hunting and the giving of feast of merit. The administration had stopped the one, Christianity has in a number of places stopped the other. With the result that why should they made the splendid hats, decorated spears, shields and certain ornaments which were mainly associated with war, when that war has ceased

1. Verrier Elwin, *Nagaland* (Shillong 1961) page 31-32
2. J. H. Hutton, *The Angami Nagas* (London 1921)
3. J. H. Hutton, *The Sema Nagas* (London 1921)

Layout of Waromung village with church Building.

already. The people are now earning a good deal of money in road making and building, in porterage and by selling their animal and vegetables produce. It is quite natural that they should spend this money on manufactured goods instead of going to the trouble of making them themselves. Plastic ornaments now substitutes the place of older ornaments of feathers, bone, seeds etc. It is rather difficult to get a better expression that what Dr. V. Elwin has said about the changes that are taking place inside Nagaland. He writes, "*And, like everyone else the Naga is changing rapidly. This is nothing new: contact with the plains through trade has been continuing for much more than a hundred years : a new religion, an ordered administration, two world wars, the recent disturbances have had their varied impact, and it does, in fact, say much for the vitality of Naga culture that it has not disappeared altogether.

New accessibility of markets and improved communications have led to the import of many novelities—there are blouses, brassiers, lipstick for girls : plastic ornaments and celluloid combs usurp the old decorations of shell and bead, bird's-wing and flowers. School boys have a uniform of shirt and shorts, with gay coloured bush-coats in American style. Brass or aluminium pots take the place of the old bamboo vessels for cooking and drawing water, enamel mugs replace the old bamboo vessels which were sometimes skilfully carved or decorated with poker-work ; there are electric torches, petromaxes, chairs and tables, smart walking-shoes, fashionable hats of every kind.

But the real changes go much deeper. The fundamental difference has come in shifting the gear of life from war to peace, the cessation of head-hunting and the gradual disappearance of the Feasts of Merit. This has led to all sorts of unexpected consequences. It is no longer possible to wear some of the finest products of Naga textile art, for these depended on success in war or generosity in feasting. Wood-carving has suffered for the same reason. The architecture of house has changed, for centain features could only be added by families who had earned, the right to do so. The maintenance of the morungs is no longer urgent, now that there is no need to keep a guard always on duty.

Conversion to Christianity has made other changes : the stress on personal salvation has introduced a new individualism in place of the former community spirit. Hymos have taken the place of the old songs, many dances, which celebrated head-hunting raids, cannot now be danced or simply linger on for exhibition to important visitors. Among the newly educated, there is, as all over the world in similar circumstances, a turning away from the land, a reluctance to work with one's own hands, a desire for white collar jobs.

In some ways, however, the last few years have witnessed a revival of Naga culture. Except for a few 'modern' girls, nearly all the women retain much of their hand-woven dress. Even the christian Nagas are showing a new interest in their traditional dances : they want to build up their own literature in their own languages, to record their old epics and stories, they are developing a sense of history,

They are, in fact, beginning to feel that there is less conflict between yesterday and tomorrow than they had once feared. Their innate sense of beauty, their good taste, their own self-reliance will probably maintain the tradition of weaving and other arts. And the old life on the hillside, in the forest or by the mountain stream, which was a good life, will continue and the stories and ideas of the countryside will survive, but with new motives and a new direction !

Scope of Present Study

The scope of the present monograph is limited. It relates to the study of five handicrafts, *viz*, Weaving, Pottery, Basketry, Blacksmithy and Wood Carving practised particularly by the Aos and Angamis of Nagaland. For the facility of close examination of the subjects, the study has been confined to a particular village named WAROMUNG in Mokokchung district. However, for some informations other Ao villages like Ungma and Khari were also consulted in the matter but basically there were no differences. A quick survey was also made in the same handicrafts in village Kohima in Police Station Kohima and District; the brief report in a comparative study is included here to bring out the aspects of similarities and differences from the Waromung types. Preferences are also given about Semas and Lhotas. Most of the informations of those tribes were obtained from educated local employees and earlier published books for no handicraft survey were conducted in the villages of these tribes. There is no craft centre and the people practise

*1. Verrier Elwin, *Nagaland* (Shillong 1961) page 15-16.

those crafts only during leisure time in their respective houses. Therefore, the present study is nothing more than the study of a household industry.

The village Waromung selected for detail study in Ao area is located at 94°.5′ East and 26°.5′ North at an altitude of nearly 3900 ft. in the north of Chungliyimsen Circle Headquarters in Mokokchung district. It is 21 kilometres respectively from Chungliyimsen Station and Mokokchung town. It is situated in the middle of Changkikong range, which consists of nine villages and administered by a Circle Officer, stationed at Chungliyimsen as the agent of the Deputy Commissioner of Mokokchung District. This village is is the terminus of a jeepable road from Mokokchung *via* Chungliyimsen. There is no regular vehicular service between these two places. Waromung comes under the Mangkolemba Development Block which is 14 kms from the village. The Block is in the first stage of development. The nearest Railway Station is Nakachari at a distance of 24 kms from Waromung. There is no mechanical means of transport for personal and commercial purposes.

The two rivers namely Melak on the east and Tsurong on the west are 5 kms each from the village and flow northward almost parallel to each other. The whole territory of the village is about 30 sq. miles and bounded on the north by Imchenkimung village land on the east by the river Melak, on the south by Dibuia village is surrounded by a belt of bamboo clumps and light jungles from where materials for house constructions are extracted With regard to Handicrafts there is neither an industrial design centre nor a co-operative society in the village. Annual variation of rainfall is not available in the village but in Mokokchung town it is 2756.3 mm.

The entire population of the village is Ao Naga. Weaving, Pottery, Wood Carving, Blacksmithy and Basketry are practised by the Waromung villagers in a limited manner. Of these crafts weaving and pottery are done only by women while the other three crafts are exclusive work of the men. Weaving is a traiditional craft whereas pottery is not. The villagers are primarily agricuiturists, all other are secondary and practised in the very short period calling when they are free from the work in the Jhum. Spinning and weaving are performed entirely by women and every woman of the village is expected to weave the cloths of her husband and family. As there is no professional weaver in the village it is rather difficult to assess the monthly or annual expenditure for purchase of raw materials etc. and income derived from the sale of finished goods. Most of the villagers are pre-occupied in their shifting field and usually they either have no money to purchase the yarn more than the household requirements or could not spare time to weave clothes for sale which can be done only with certain difficulty as there is no ready market nearby. However weaving is the most popular and necessary crafts for them.

Pottery has never been a welcome craft in the village. In the past, strictly speaking pot making was taboo for any Ao other than Changki dialect speaking group which constitute only three villages. These three villages had almost a monopoly of making earthen pots for the other Ao villagers. Due to christian influence the old restriction is now discarded and several Christian women make pots for household use in very small scale. Wood carving is a traditional craft. Much of the art of wood carving is associated with religious belief and practises and as these weaken the art also weakens with them. Thus with the spread of Christianity the art of wood carving is fast disappearing. However wooden platters of various sizes are still made by those who intend to make use of them. Other wood work consists of *dao* carriers (scattord) rice pounding tables etc. which are described in part IV of this monograph.

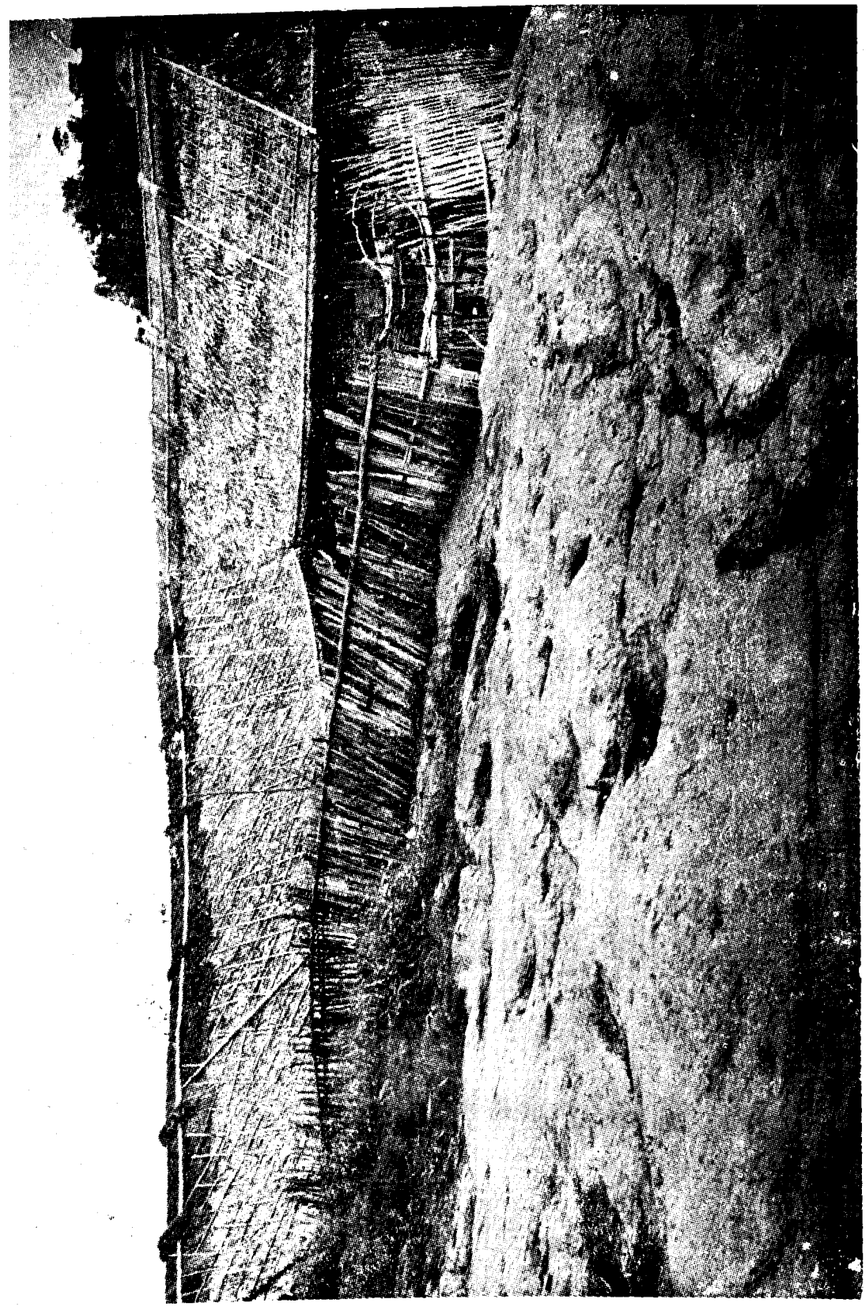
Blacksmithy is not a traditional crafts, this being only about the Ao area. This craft was first introduced by certain wanderers from the plains of Assam. There is only one blacksmith in the village and for him it is his primary occupation. Basketry an exclusive work of men as a traditional craft. Like weaving for women, basketry is one of the most popular and widely used craft. Every men is expected to make baskets to the use of his household. Statistics of occupational pattern of the village is given in appendix.

Kohima, the biggest village in Nagaland selected for the study in Angami tribe has a population of 4,450 individuals and its 958 houses are spread over the top of a hill. It is situated adjacent to Kohima town the capital of the new State of Nagaland. Northward are the villages of Chuziema, Meriema, Tsiesema, Nierhiema and Rukhroma, eastward the village Tsiedema, southward the villages pfuchama and Phesama and the westward is the Zochuma village.

The village lies within the jurisdiction of Kohima Police Station in Kohima District. It is located at an approximate height of 1561 metres or 5303 ft. above sea-level and lies between 25° 38′ North latitude and 94° 10′ East longitude. Its

Women of Waromung Village

Girl Students



Primary School building at Waromung village

Church building at Waromung village.

Typical Ao house

School Children of Waromung village

Graveyard in Waromung Village.

average rainfall is 1920.0 mm. The village is at a distance of about a mile from the market place at Kohima town, where some of the villagers sell agricultural and forest products daily.

Situated very close to the capital, the village is well linked by an unmetalled road with the Kohima town and the road is opened to Jeeps and trucks throughout the year. The first motorable road upto the village was opened in 1945. The nearest railway station is Manipur Road which is 46 miles from the town. Kohima town is linked with four important roads the advantage of which is equally shared by the village. The Dimapur Lohima road is the only National Highway which links Kohima with the plains of Assam. The Kohima-Imphal road connects Kohima with Manipur State. There are regular daily bus services between Dimapur-Kohima-Imphal. The other roads are Kohima-Wokha road *via* Tseminyu and Kohima-Phek Road. The village is linked with other neighbouring villages by foot path.

The handicrafts practised by the Kohima villagers include weaving, wood carving, blacksmithy and basketry. Like the Aos of Waromung they do it as a secondary occupation mostly to meet the domestic requirements.

PART TWO

WEAVING

2. Raw Materials and Tools

Raw Materials

Ao clothes though now almost entirely made of the fine thread imported from the plains of Assam, were originally made of entirely local materials. In olden days cotton was grown in small plots near the field or in small patches in the field itself by many households. But in recent years mill-made-yarns are readily available in the bazar at reasonable prices so production of cotton and the indigenous spinning is losing in the face of bazar competition Cotton is grown in small plots either in the field itself or in a separate plot. The annual produce by the individual household in Waromung village does not exceed 15 kg. However weaving has become more popular than before and new designs in the textile have become more varied in recent years.

Broadly speaking two types of cotton cloths are produced by Aos those which are woven out of pure cotton mostly of shalws and the others a little heavier and with different patterns of designs mostly of skirts in which red woollen yarn is used both for the body of the fabric as well as for the border. Cotton no longer being extensively grown locally, the main raw material used by the villagers now is the imported yarn of many colours. Yarn is mostly imported from a few towns in Sibsagar district in Assam notably from Jorhat, Amguri and Naginijan which are situated near the Assam-Nagaland border and in which towns the usual commercial transaction take place between the plain people of Assam and the Nagas particularly the Aos of Mokokchung District. Woollen yarn is also imported from the same places. There is neither an industrial design centre nor a weaver's co-operative society in the village.

It is not possible to obtain an exact proportion of different yarns used in different clothes. However, an approximate proportion of woollen and cotton yarns of different colours commonly used in average sized shawls and skirts are as follows :

1. Decorative warrior shawls (Tsungkotepsu)
   - (a) Black cotton yarn 367 gms (54%)
   - (b) Red Woollen yarn 279 gms (41%)
   - (c) White cotton yarn 34 gms (5%)
2. A stripe cloth (Yongtsungsu)
   - (a) Blue cotton yarn 371 gms (58%)
   - (b) Black cotton yarn 269 gms (42%)
3. Decorative skirt (Tenuk su)
   - (a) Black cotton yarn 360 gms (53%)
   - (b) Red cotton yarn 180 gms (26%)
   - (c) Blue cotton yarn 75 gms (11%)
   - (d) Red woollen yarn 65 gms (10%)

The loom they use is a simple loin loom consisting of a few sticks of bamboo and wood and a beating wooden sword which are stored in a large bamboo tube when not in use. Almost every household possesses one loom for the female members, as it is not at all difficult to acquire one. The tools required for spinning and the different parts of the loom are briefly described below :

Tools

The artisans of the Aos of Waromung use the following simple tools for weaving :

1. *Cotton-Gin* (*Nakrong*) (See fig. 1 after page 12) Which is a cotton ginning machine made of wooden rollers geared to revolve in opposite direction and turned with a crank with the right hand. *Nakrong* is generally imported from the plains and costs about Rs. 12/- At present there are only about a dozen *Nakrong* in the whole village that too laying unused and as the spinning is lost in the face of bazar competition

there is no hope of its being imported or manufactured any more. It stands 50 cm high and the breadth is nearly 35 cms.

2. *Bow (Aiya)* (See fig. 4) String bow is used for carding the ginned cotton by flicking method This is made in the village by male folks.

3. *Spindle Whorl (Apang)* (See fig. 3) Spinning indigenous spindle consists of a pen shaped piece of bamboo stick about 22 cms long tapering to a fine point at the top, and about the thickness of a pencil at the thickest point near the bottom. Just above the thickest point is fixed a whorl made of soft black stone. This is made by rubbing on other stones till it is flat and round. A piece of soft stone is used for the purpose. To make the hole in the middle a man holds it between his toes and twiddles a spear on it between his hands till the iron butt of the spear goes through. The narrow end of the pen shaped bamboo piece passes through the bore and is fitted at about 5 cms from the thicken end.

4. Cup shaped broken piece of earthen pot or little bamboo basket and pieces of rags.

5. *Kalaro* (See fig. 2) This is a double 'T' shaped tool made of a bamboo stick about 40 cms long with two thinner bamboo sticks about 20 cms long attached to its ends in crosswise direction. Used for making skeins of yarn. Locally made by the weaver or her husband.

6. *Pestle* (See fig. after page 28) It may be a ricepounder made of wood nearly 2 metres long and 6 cms thick or it may be a bamboo shootpounder made of bamboo nearly 2 metres long and 8 cms thick the pounding end being broader.

7. Low bench for the weaver to sit on.

8. A stout piece of wood to help the weaver to maintain tension while weaving.

9. Bamboo knife, used for cutting the warp sheet.

10. *Loin loom or back strap loom* — This loom has no frame or superstructure. It consists of two fixed posts two ropes and six bamboo or wood bars a leather belt. The size and the function of these six sticks is as follows :—

(a) *Warp beam* A piece of bamboo or wood nearly 1 metre long and 5 to 6 cms thick in diameter which is fastened on the two fixed posts on wall for winding the warps

(b) *Cloth beam* It is made of hard wood nearly 55 cms long and 8 cms thick in diameter and notched at either end to enable the weaving bell *aphi* to be attached to it. It has got two functions : first the two ends of the strings of the belt are attached at each end of this beam; secondly the warp is wrapped here like the warp beam at the other end.

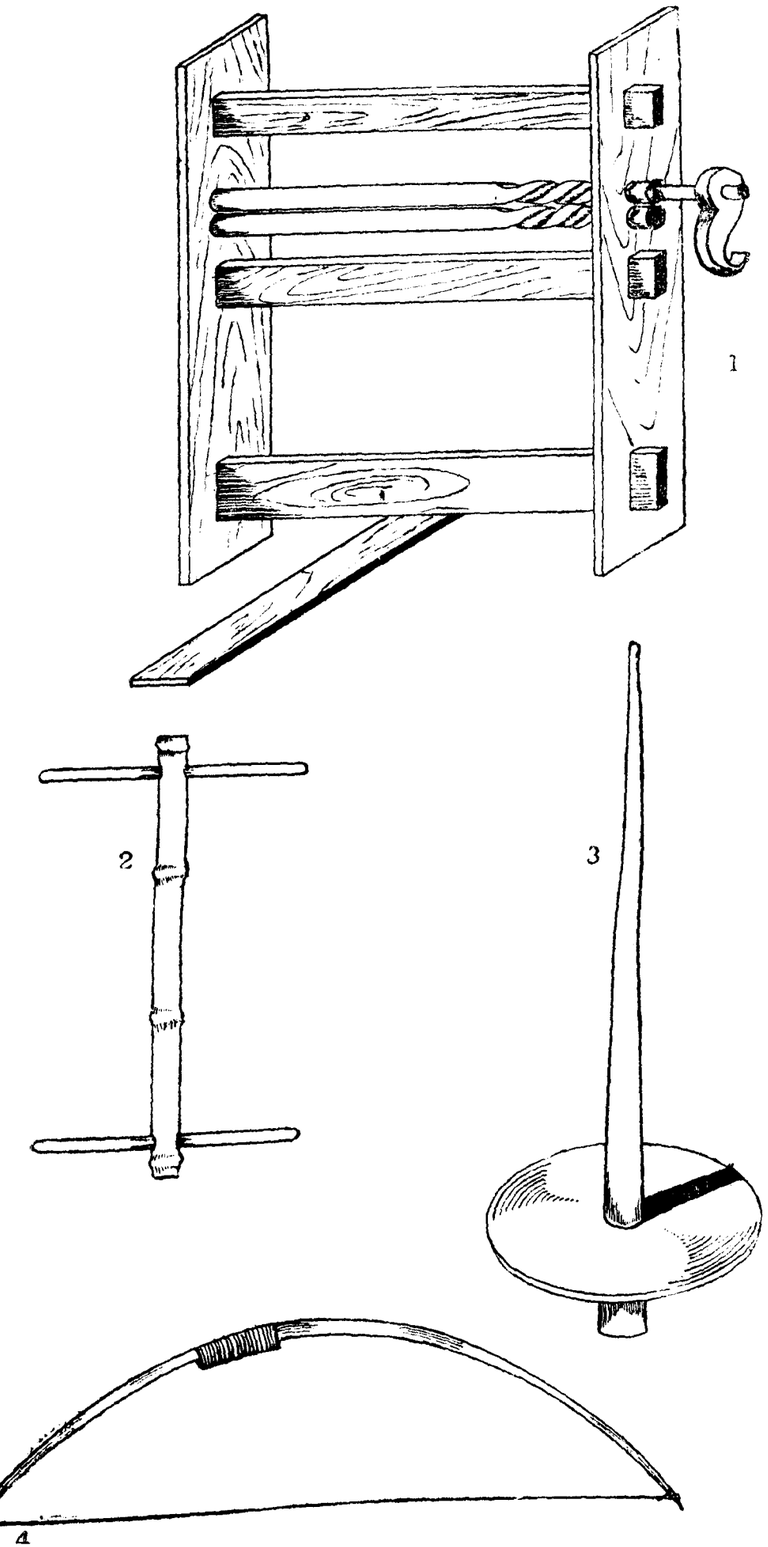
(c) *Lease-rod* It is piece of thin type of bamboo nearly 60 cms long and 3 cms thick in diameter. Its function is to keep the warps in up and down series.

(d) *Heald stick* Usually made of a thick splitted bamboo nearly 60 cms long, and as thick as a pen holder; into it is tied the end of the twine from the coil called *anet*.

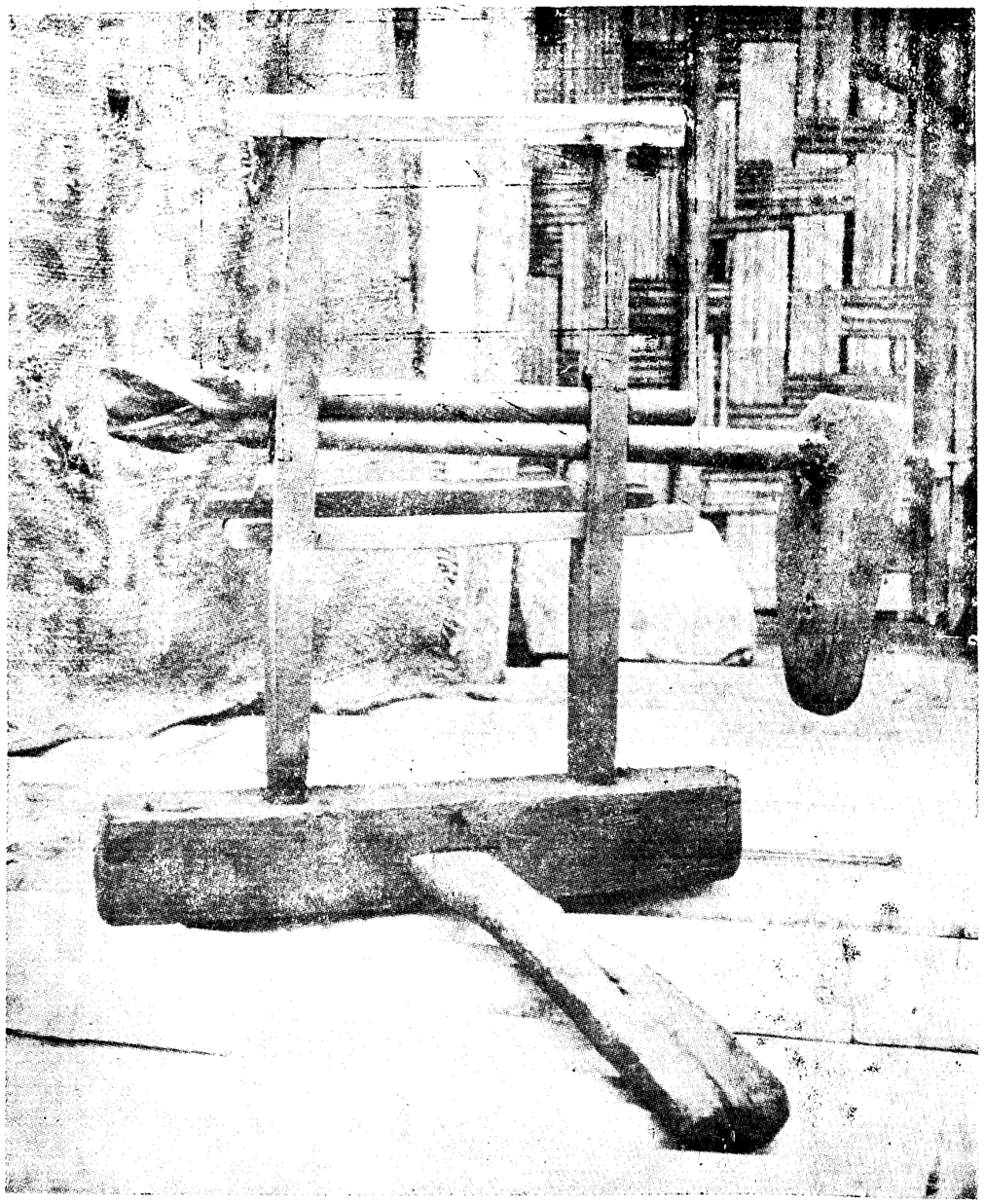
(e) *Beating sword* It is a flat sword made of hard wood nearly 60 cms long, 6 cms broad in the middle the two ends slightly tapering and 2 cms thick at the central region while the edges are made sharp. At the time of setting the loom it is placed in position along with heald stick so that the spiral loops of the twine *anet* should be loose enabling the up and down series of the warps to raise up freely at the time of weaving. After completion of warp setting it is pulled out and used as beating sword.

(f) *Extra warp beam* It is also made of a small piece of bamboo the length of which is equal to that of lease-rod but in thickness it equals that of heald stick. Every warp of the up series is wrapped round it. By this beam the uniformity of the breadth of the cloth is maintained.

(g) *Khotong* Besides these six sticks two ropes nearly 2.4 metres long are used two form the temporary structure of the loom and helps in keeping the sticks in position till the loom is completely warped. These are removed after the warping is finished.



Spinning tools used by Nagas of Waromung, description of the tools at page 11
1. Cotton-ginning machine *Nakrong* 2. Tools for making skiens *Kalaro* 3. Spindle-whorl *apang* 4. Bow for flicking cotton *aiya*



Cotton-Gin (*Nakrong*)

(h) *Weaving belt* This belt is made of the hide of cow or of woven cane or bamboo. In case of hide belt it is prepared as follows: At the time of killing cattle the hide roughly larger than the required size is nailed on a plank of wood by spreading the hide tightly. In this position it is allowed to dry properly in the sun for several days. The required size is then cut out by a and *dao* at the two ends cane strings are attached. The belt without the cane string is 40 cms long and 13 cms wide.

(i) *Shuttle* (*Yangsungi*) It is a thin stick of bamboo slightly smaller than the heald stick, its size being 40 cms long and 8 mm thick. The weft thread is reeled on to this stick from the thread ball by revolving it by right palm against the thigh, while the left hand holds the stick and the thread.

The Angamis of Kohima village also mutatis mutandis use the same tools. Originally the Angamisalso grew cotton for weaving their cloth and the cotton was spun into yarn in the similar way as described above. But now they entirely depend on the imported yarn. Their main import is from Imphal in Manipur State and Dimapur, a small town situated in Nagaland near the Assam-Nagaland boundary.

3. Technique of Weaving

Unlike other parts of India, where much of spinning and weaving is in the hands of men, here spinning and weaving is the exclusive monopoly of women. The whole technique of weaving could be easily studied under three headings—preparing the yarn, setting the loom and weaving.

1. Preparing the yarn

Spinning is performed entirely by women, and every Ao women is expected to weave the cloth of her husband and family. Spinning was largely practised in the past, but now mill yarn is readily available in the bazar at low prices, so spinning is lost in the face of bazar competition. In the whole process of spinning a few tools are used. The cotton is ginned by a cotton gin locally called *Nakrong* consisting of two wooden rollers geared to revolve in opposite direction and turned by a crank with the right hand. The Angamis of Kohima also use the same gin but the Lothas clean the cotton of its seeds by being rolled on a flat stone with a small stick, used like a rolling pin. This work usually falls to the lot of old women, who, being no longer able to go to the fields, eke out their existence in this way. The cotton having been ginned, is carded by being flicked with a small sized bow called *aiya*. The clean cotton after being fluffed out is gently rolled by hands with the help of a round stick over a flat stone or plank into sausages like slivers about 20 cms long, after which it is to be spun into thread. The Ao's spindle is a very primitive affair and is similar to that of the Angamis, Semas and Lothas. Now for spinning the tip of the spindle is wetted with the tongue and operator places the lower end of the spindle in a cup-shaped broken piece of earthen pot or in a little basket covered with a piece of rag and spins it clock-wise with a rotating motion with her right hand against the outside of her right thigh. The sausage of cotton is held in the left hand and the end of it laid against the wetted tip of the spindle till it catches and the thread begins to form. When about a yard has been spun or in other words when the left hand is fully stretched it is unwound from the top of the spindle and rewound just above the stone whorl. The spindle is then worked as before, the cotton being held in the left hand and thread accumulates above the whorl till the spindle becomes full. To make the thigh smooth, powder obtained from a kind of water melon is smeared on the thigh at the beginning. The wound yarn attains elongated conical cake shape on the spindle, and skeins are made by winding off onto the double 'T' shaped bamboo frame *Kalaro* and another spindleful is begun and so on till the *Kalaro* is full. To wind the yarn into skeins *Kalaro* is held in the right hand by the upright bamboo and by the left hand the thread is taken on the upper and the lower cross bars of the *Kalaro* in crosswise direction making a cross on both the sides of the upright bamboo. The *Kalaro* in this process is moved by the right hand to quicken the operation. When the *Kalaro* is full or the skein becomes of a convenient size weighing approximately 250 gms, the two cross bars of *Kalaro* are pulled out and the skein is taken off.

For starching the yarn, the skeins are first damped with cold water and pounded vigorously on a wooden board with a rice pounder or bamboo shoot pounder and next it is soaked in hot rice water for about 5 minutes. Afterwards the skeins are strung on a stick and dried in the sun and are later rolled is held between the knees while squatting and the end of the yarn is rolled on a core made of a stone piece. In winding operation, the stone is held in one hand while by the other hand the yarn is wound on it, moving swiftly both the hands all around the skein in the process.

In case the yarn is to be dyed, which is rather not so common, as mostly the woven cloth is dyed

in this area, the dyeing process takes place after the yarn is transferred into skeins *i.e.* after starching stage.

2. Setting the loom

The loom as has already been described earlier under the chapter on tools is a simple back strap loom with a continuous horizontal warp consisting of six sticks serving the function of warp beam, cloth beam, lease rod, heald stick, beating sword and extra warp beam. For setting this loom, first the warp beam *mongmung* is securely fastened to the wall of the house or any other suitable firm support in a horizontal position at a height of about 70 cms from the ground. On this are slipped two loops *Khotong* of bark string, the length of which is equal to a little more than the length of the cloth normally 2 4 meters long, in which the other bar or *mejang* of the loom is put. This bar may be called cloth beam. The loops, the length of which is adjusted from an already woven piece of cloth, are set at a distance apart equal to a little more than the breadth of the piece of the cloth to be woven. The lower bar or cloth beam is notched at either end, to enable the weaving belt to be attached to it. This belt is worn by the operator in the small of her back. By it, as she sits on a low bench in front of the loom with her feet pressing on a bench or stout wood placed horizontally against the wall or posts, she can keep the necessary tension on the warp. Both the beams being in position and strain having been taken on the loop of the string *Khotong* each string is crossed by the lower string being pulled up and the upper down and the extra warp beam *yangnai* made of a bamboo stick is put in position at a distance almost equal to half of the whole length. This is naturally held firmly in place by the downward pressure of the lower strings and the upward pressure of the upper. Then, working towards, the weaver the lease-rod *Zumnung* is put in close to the *yangnai* by crossing the strings. Below the lease-rod the sword *anem* is inserted, the strings being crossed as in the case of *yangnai*. Another thin stick called *netong* is also inserted alongside the sword in the same loop formed by insertion of the sword. One end of the twine which is to form the heddle-loops *anet* is now tied onto the left end, of the *netong* and laid along it while the coil is placed on the ground at the right hand side beyond the string.

Now the warping is taken in hand, for this process the weaver requires the help of another person. This helper is usually an old woman or a small boy or girl. The helper sits in the right side of the loom or in the narrow space enclosed by the warp beam, extra warp beam and side ropes *Khotong*, with a small basket in hand ready to receive the warp yarn balls. The weaver does the warping upto extra warp beam and this helper works between extra warp beam and warp beam. The ends of warp yarn from two balls are twisted together and joined. The warping is always started from the left side. The weave being simple the warp yarns are divided into two sets comprising of alternative yarns *i.e.* 1, 3, 5, 7 and 2, 4, 6, 8 and the sets operate as up and down series of warp yarns, *i.e.* when a shed is made to throw the shuttle through it one set forms the upper layer of the warp and the other the lower layer of the warp. Now for warping, first one of the ball is held in the lap of the weaver while the other is held by left hand and is passed over the weaver's beam *majang* and heald string *anet* then under the heald stick and the beating sword and again over the lease-rod and under and then round over and under the extra warp beam *yangnai* and dropped in the basket of the helper. The helper in turn takes in over the warp beam and brings it under the extra warp beam and waits there so as the ball be picked up by the right hand of the weaver in the next turn. So it is found that the weaver takes up the warp with left hand while right hand picks the ball from the helper's basket and takes it down and hands it over to left hand just over the *mejang*. While the helper works the first ball the weaver starts handling the second ball and runs it under the sword and headle stick and takes it out over the headle string *anet* then goes under the lease-rod and drops it in the basket of the helper after giving the complete twist on the extra warp beam *yangnai*. The weaver immediately picks up the other ball from the basket and brings it down under the loom upto the weaver's beam and then again treats it in the same manner as was done during the first round. The process is repeated till all the warp has been set. Great swiftness and dexterity are acquired in this by the women. To simplify we can say that the course taken by the individual balls remain the same throughout the whole warping process. It being a continuous warp each warp yarn consists of one whole round from Weaver's beam to warp beam and back. The yarns are alternatively run under and over the heald string *anet* and lease-rod. The weaver, perhaps by constant repetition, moves the hand so swiftly without any mistake that in one minute nearly ten rounds are completed. When the warp attains nearly 35 cms breadth, both the yarn balls are stopped at the extra warp beam *yangnai* and the threads are severed from the ball. The two ends of the warp thread, when all has been set are twisted and tucked in between the warp and *yangnai* The helper now leaves the place. The whole process of warping takes nearly one to two hours.

The weaver by moving a little forward or by bending forward releases the tension a little and the two side ropes *khotongare* removed. The warp sheet is now adjusted in the middle of the two end bars and the beating sword *anem* is pulled out leaving the heald string *anet* very loose forming the loops. In this way the loom is set for weaving and from this stage the third operation of weaving starts.

3. Weaving

The weft yarn has to be transferred to the pirn for weaving but here no regular shuttle is used but a country shuttle made of splited bamboo piece about 40 cms in length and 8 mm in diameter is used. This country shuttle serves both as a pirn and a shuttle. The weft yarn is wound on it directly from the ball. The reeling of this bamboo country shuttle is a speciality. One end of the yarn is tied at any point of the shuttle, the thread is allowed to pass between the first and second fingers of the left hand, while the left hand loosely holds the shuttle. The lower end of the shuttle is placed on the front side of the right thigh and revolved it in clock wise direction by the palm of the right hand; the left hand moves up and down all along the shuttle except at the region of the two ends, thereby the thread is wound on the stick, layer after layer, like the thread reeling in machine. Thread reeling can be done by man also. When the required thickness nearly 3 cms is attained the thread is served from the ball. This is generally done after finishing warping the loom.

To start with the weaving, the weaver grasps the lease-rod together with the heald stick and move them up and down the warp sheet to make them work smoothly. Firstly she inserts the sword along with the lease rod and then turns the sword to its edge and the shuttle is thrown through the shed so caused. This first weft is slowly beaten down by the edge of the sword to the level of the bar *mejang*. Secondly the sword is to be inserted along with the *anet*. For this the weaver bends forward a little and the tension in the warp is released, the four fingers rest on the lease-rod and the thumb raises the heald stick along with a layer of warp and the sword is inserted through the shed so formed. The loom is again stretched. At this stage the warp yarns 1, 3, 5 ... from the upper layer and 2, 4, 6, ... the lower layer. The sword is again turned to its edge and the shuttle is thrown from the left side by the left hand and is beaten twice with certain amount of strength The sword is always inserted by the right hand from the right side but the shuttle is thrown alternately from the right and left sides. The sword is first inserted along with the lease-rod and secondly by lifting the *anet*. The process continues till about 20 cms of the cloth is woven. At this point after loosening the tension the woven cloth if pulled down towards the weaver's beam by holding the two ends of the sword and thus the woven cloth moves below the loom. Now the heald stick, lease-rod and extra warp beam are adjusted to the original position. At the time of weaving the warp are spread apart at the extra warp beam and thus the uniformity of the breadth of the cloth is maintained. When the whole of the warp is woven leaving about 14 cms, it is cut out from the middle of this unwoven yarn by a bamboo knife. This unwoven yarn later forms the fringes *sujang* at the breadth sides of the cloth.

It takes nearly 10 hours for an xpert weaver to complete the plain strip or in other words 30 hours are required to weave a complete cloth. Weaving of clothes with decorative design takes double or even more time, depending upon the nature of the design. The designing is mostly done by using different colours of warp at different stages or by the extra weft weaving method. For extra weft weaving the warp yarns are lifted by a bamboo stick like the knitting stick or by porcupine quill with the fingers of the left hand while by the right hand the yarns is passed through the shed so formed as per the design.

Dyeing and Painting

In dyeing the indigenous colours are giving way to chemical dyes. Moreover the easy availability of different colours of yarn in the bazars does not encourage the necessity of producing the old indigenous colours. Though the production of indigenous colours and dyeing are fast disappearing in the face of chemical dyes, yet a description of the process of production of indigenious colours and dyeing is quite useful. Blue and red are the only two indigenous colours. The blue varies from light blue to about black according to the strength of dye used. No woman is allowed to dye during pregenancy as the belief goes that if she handles the dye, the foetus will be coloured and born with black marks. Blue dye is obtained from the leaves of the *strobilanthes flaoccidifolious* locally called *Mosak* like indigo which is cultivated only for this purpose in small plots. It is cultivated both in the sunny fields and densely shaded jungles. The *mosak* leaves grown in the shade produce a dark green dye colour while those grown in the sun produces a lighter green colour and both are used in different stages of the dyeing process. The indigenous blue dyeing is generally used in autumn

and early winter seasons when the leaves are fully grown. The blue colour is more commonly used than the red and the method of its preparation and the use of the dye is as follows : The leaves of the plants grown in the shade are pounded on the rice pounding table and spread out on palm leaves or bamboo tray to dry. This is kept so in a cool place in the house for a month or so by which time it will be ready for use. The required quantity is then put into cold water and well stirred and then the cloth and the yarn is left to soak in it for three days. On the third day a little wood ash is added and the mixture is stirred well. After dyeing the cloth or the skeins of yarn are washed in cold water, dried and again kept in the dye solution for one more day and finally dried. If the colour so attained is found to be not dark enough, it is soaked in the dye bath for another night. To finish it off it is then boiled in the water with unrounded leaves of *strobilanthes flaccidifolious mosak* grown in the sun, for about one hour. This process too may be repeated more than once. The best dark blue clothes are made of thread which has been subjected to both cold soaking and boiling before weaving. Clothes made of the thread dipped in this way are only soaked in cold dye and are not cooked even if the colour goes away At the time of boiling the cloth is worked over and over with a bamboo stick several times in order to take the colour uniformly. The boiling is done in an iron *karahi*. In the past no stranger was allowed to watch the dyeing lest the colour should not stick for one shawl measuring 1.8 metres long and 1.7 metres broad roughly 30 gms of pounded leaves and nearly 1 Kg of fresh leaves grown in sun are required.

The indigenous red dye is not so common as the blue dye. Moreover, red colour has certain superstitious significance. The colour being of blood, a young woman using this colour in dye operation might die a violent death or lose her head in a raid. Therefore, only old women dye yarn in the red colour. The preparation and use of red dye is known to only a very few old men and women. The dye is obtained from the root of a creeper called locally as *Aozu* or *Aowali* in chungli and mongsen dialect respectively. This is dried and thoroughly pounded, which is mixed with dried and pounded leaves of a tree called *tangshi*, the fruits of which are edible. This mixture is again mixed with the dried and pounded husks of an acid berry of a tree called *Tangmo* which is popular as food and medicine. Water is added to this mixture and the yarn or hair to be dyed red is boiled in it for about half an hour. It is then taken out and dried in the shade. The ratio of the mixture may roughly be :

Aozu	:	*Tangshi*	:	*Tangmo*
2	:	3	:	2

For one shawl or yarn sufficient for one shawl that is 1.8 metres and 1.4 metres broad, roughly 225 gms of the mixture are required.

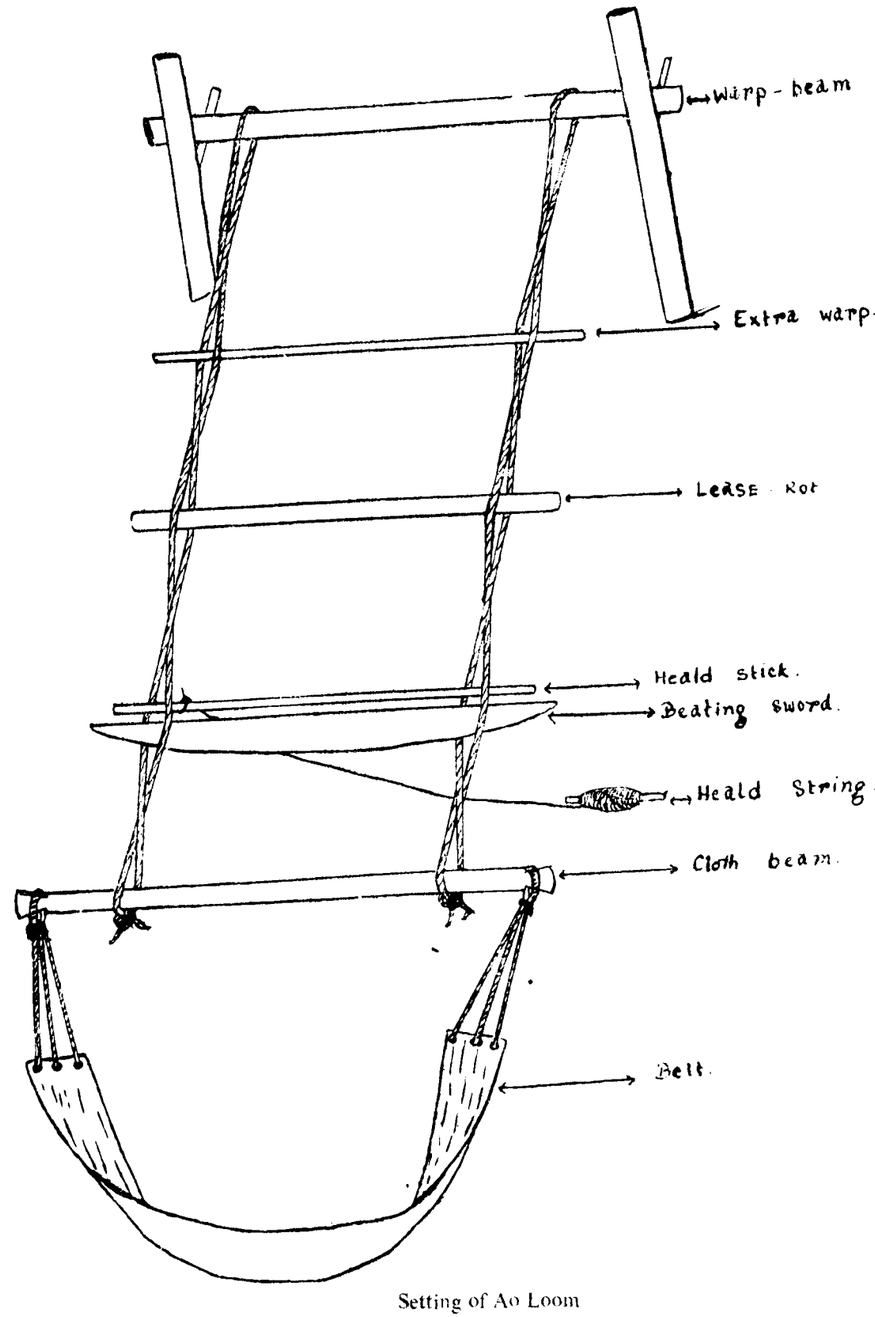
Longsa, one of the biggest Ao villages to the east of Mokokchung, which practically holds the monopoly of the decoration of the median bands of warrior shawl *Tsungkotepsu* uses another due for yarn. For this the thread to be dyed is boiled with the seed of sesame (Sesumum-indicum) and left soaking in cold brew for two days. It is then taken out and dried in the sun. The colour at this stage is pale brown. Next it is boiled in a mixture of pounded bark of the roots of a tree locally known as *Chonglong* and the pounded leaves of a tree called *kosam*. This mixture on boiling turns the thread red. When sufficient colour has been absorbed in the thread it is taken out, rinsed in cold water and dried in the sun.

Painting on Cloth

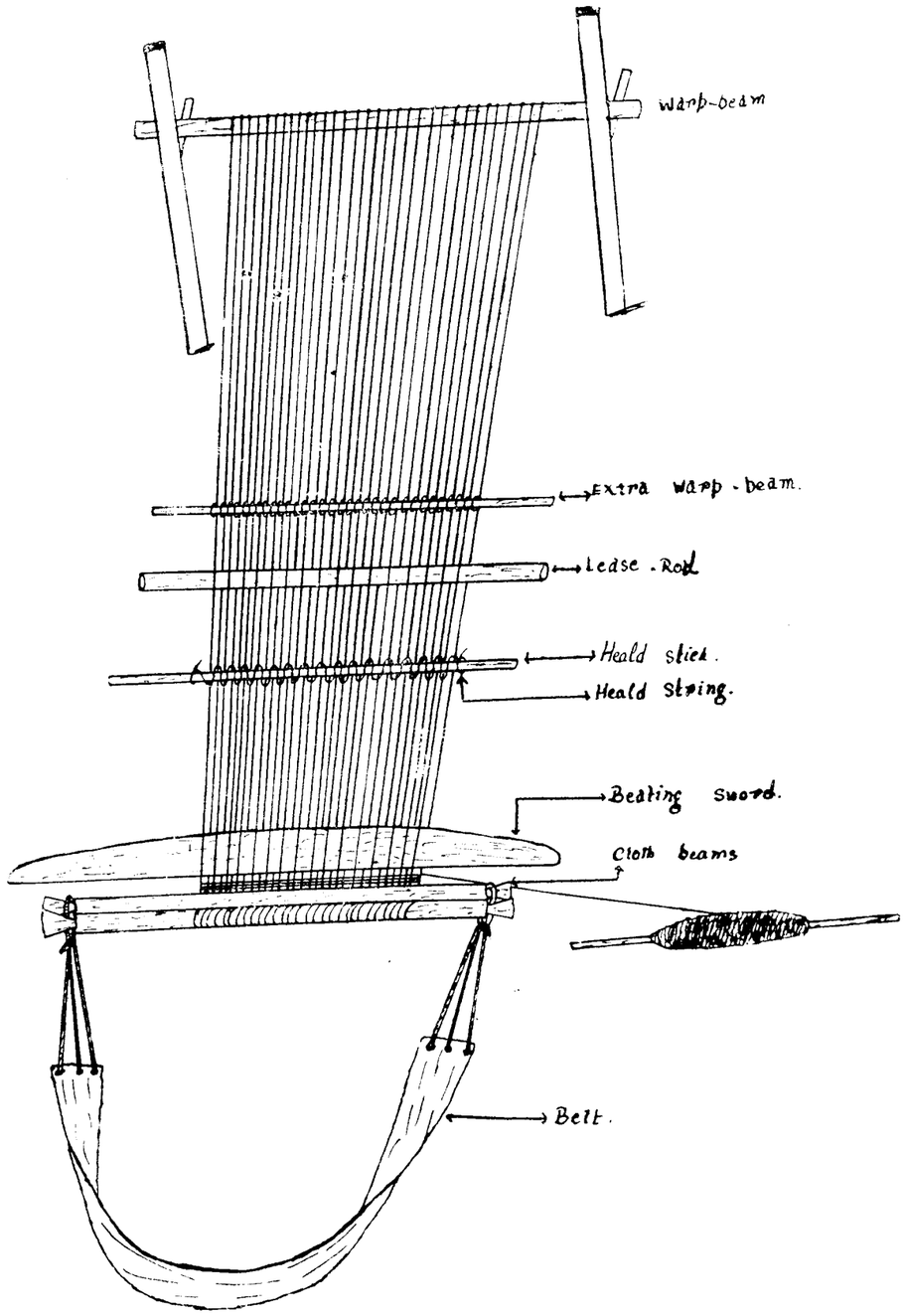
Unlike other clothes, the median white band of famous Ao decorative warrior shawl *Tsungkotepsu*, which can be worn only by one renowned for the number of heads he had taken or who had performed *mithun* sacrifice, is painted on a white woven band stitched at the centre of the cloth. The figure of elephant, tiger, *mithun* and circles representing human heads are thus painted with black on the white median band. Longsa and Ungma villages in Ao area are famous for painting this cloth and practically hold the monopoly of the painting. The colour is prepared from the sap of a tree called in local dialect *Tangko*, which is mixed with very strong rice beer and the ash of its own leaves. Sometimes the ash of bamboo leaves is used in place of *Tangko* leaves. The result is a dark grey fluid which is applied with a pointed end of bamboo stick. The pigment dries black and withstands the weather and lapses of time very well. The operator works free hand on the lines of the thread. It is done only by old men. In recent years instead of the paint women and girls work the median white band with embroidery. It is also done by using different colours of wefts by the extra-weft-weaving method.

Angami Weaving of Kohima Village

A quick survey of spinning and weaving was also made in Kohima village, but it was found that they use the same tools and looms for spinning and weaving. However, a brief report is considered necessary to be included here to bring



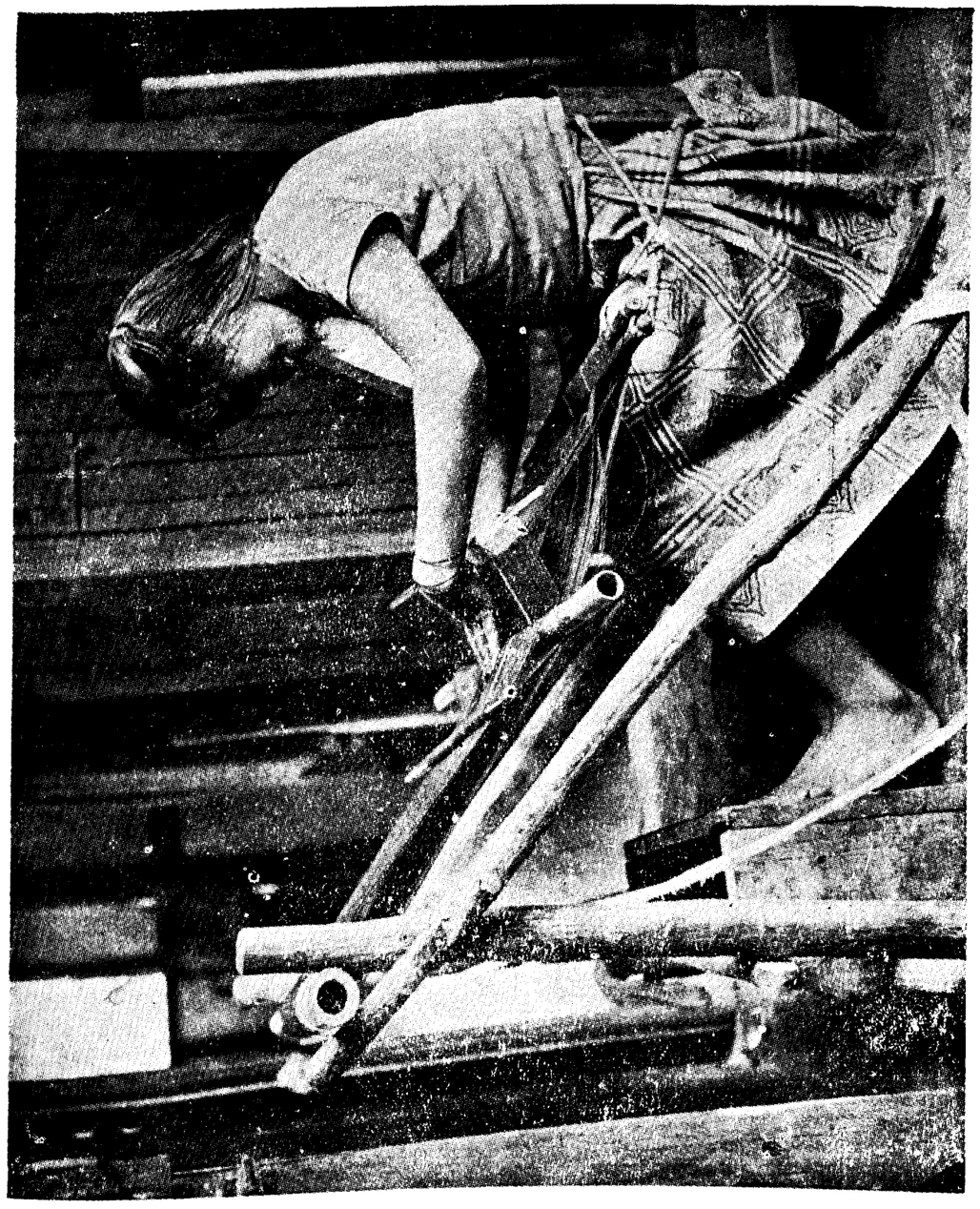
Setting of Ao Loom



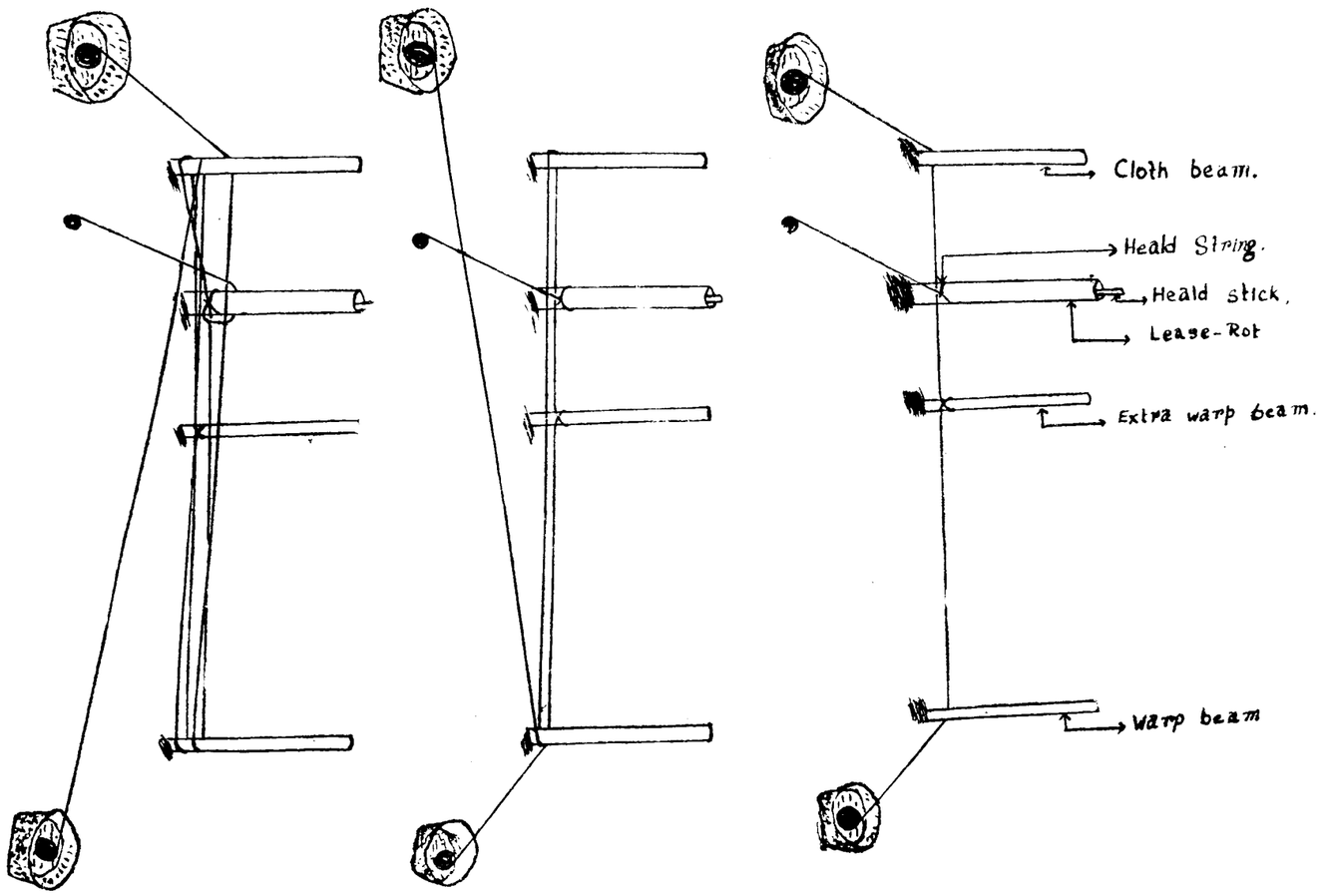
Weaving with Ao loom

An Ao lady weaving

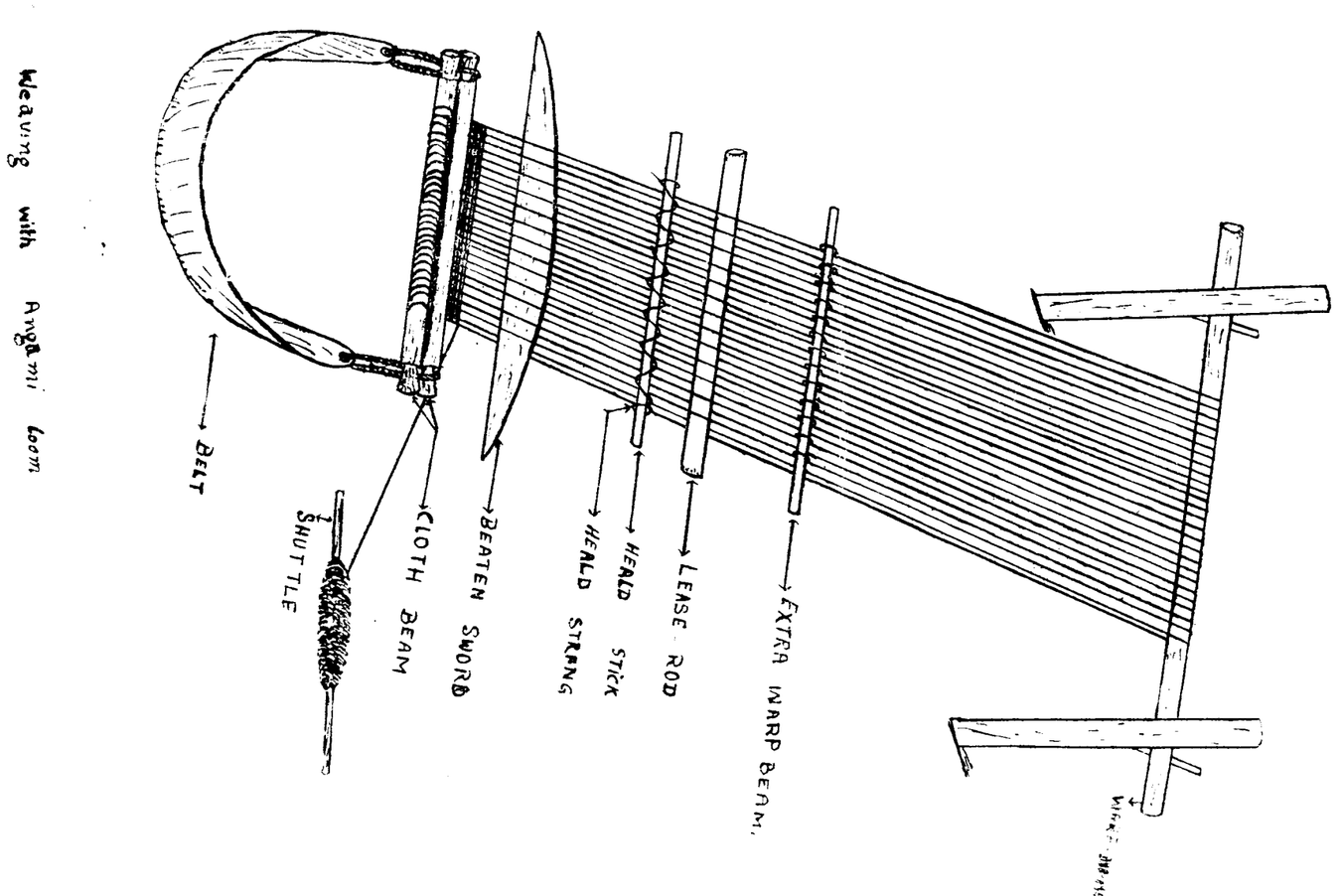
Warping in the loom



Weaving in action



Stages of fixing the warp to Angami loom



Weaving with Angami loom

out the aspects of differences from the Waromung type. Weaving is an important household industry for the Angamis, which is only next to cultivation and is practised by old women. The clothes though now entirely made of the fine thread imported from the plains of Assam and Manipur, were originally made of local materials. The whole operations of spinning and weaving is performed by women and there is even prohibition against the touching etc. of the implement by men. For ginning, flicking and spinning of cotton they use exactly the same tool as those used by the Aos. Their cotton is ginned by the cotton gin locally called *Chanyusei* which the Aos called *Nakrong* and the clean cotton after being fluffed out by being flicked with the string of a small sized bow called *Chaprei* is gently rolled into sausages of the same size as made by the Aos for spinning. This sausage is then spun into the spindle called *themvu* which is exactly similar to those of the Ao, Lotha and Sema spindles. From the spindle the thread is wound of onto a simple tool called *lohousei* for making the skeins. Their *lohousei* are of two types : one is shaped like a double 'T' similar to those of the Aos, which is already described earlier, while the other is more like the letter E, made of bamboo stick which is nearly 40 cms long and the two sticks fixed horizontally at each end nearly 15 cms long. To wind the yarn into skein the upright stick is held by the right hand and by the left hand the thread is wound on the upper and lower sticks swiftly.

The loom is a simple loin loom analogous to Ao, Liotha and Sema type. But there is a difference in warping and in setting the Angami loom. To set up the warp first a bar of bamboo or wood nearly 80 cms long and 30 cms thick in diameter, which serves the function of the warp beam to be replaced by the proper warp beam after warping is complete is set upright on the ground. A similar bar used in place of the proper cloth beam is set up in the same manner at a distance 1.8 metres apart. Next the heddle *Junyu* and an extra warp beam *jurei* of the same length as that of the beams are fixed upright on the ground in line with and between the two bamboo beams. The lease-rod *jupou* which is a bamboo tube of 1.2 metres long and 3 cms in diameter is used at the time of setting the loom as a jacket of the heddle, so that the spiral loops formed by the twine *junyulo* could be made loose. After completing the operation of the setting of warp this bamboo tube jacket of the heddle is removed and used as a lease-rod by inserting it into the warp between the heddle and the extra warp beam.

Now the warp is taken in hand. First, for making the heald, the weaver takes the twine *Junyulo* and ties an end of it on the heald stick near the ground. Next the two ends of the two thread balls which are placed on baskets near each end of the loom are twisted and joined together. See fig. after page 18. She holds the thread by both hands and warp it on the left or cloth beam and takes them to the right or warp beam while on the way one of the thread is wound on the extra warp beam *Jurei* while the other thread goes inside the heald *junyulo* The double threads are wound together on the right beam and brought back to the left beam and the same process is repeated again with great swiftness and dexterity. All the time the thread balls remain in the same place only the hands move. Having attained the required size of warp the bamboo tube used as a jacket covering the heddle is pulled out and the sticks are removed from the ground and the warp set up in horizontal position. The right beam is replaced by a longer and thicker beam nearly 1.2 metres long and 4 cms diameter, which is securily fastened on the wall or two posts planted for the purpose. The other beam is replaced by the cloth beam of hard wood called *Jube* 70 cms long and 3 cms thick. Another *Jube* is placed over the *Jube* which is held together by the belt *Chiepfu* made of cow hide and or cane. Now the weaver by bending a little forwaad releases the tension a little and raises the extra warp beam by the right hand and lease-rod is inserted into the warp through the shed so formed While weaving, the weft is beaten by a sword *Jukrie* made of hard wood 9 cms long 6 cms broad at the middle portion and having tapering ends. The working edge of the sword is thin while the thickness of the opposite edge is about 1.2 cms. Weaving technique is same as already described about the Aos of Waromung.

The only difference is that in the Ao type the different sticks of the loom are held in position by the two loops of string called *Khotong* but in Angami type the sticks are planted upright in line on the ground. After finishing warping, in Ao type the strings *Khotong* are removed before starting weaving, while in Angami type the sticks of the loom are removed from the ground and the warp sheet is set up in a horizontal position. In other words the function of the *Khotong* of Ao type is served by fixing the sticks upright on the ground in Angami type.

Dyeing

The native dye is now being fast superseded by chemical dyes sold in the bazars. Blue, red and yellow are the colours which the Angamis of Kohima village use. Blue colour is obtained from the leaves of *strobilanthes flaccidifolious Zopru*

of a shrub of the genus indigofera, which is cultivated in the garden for this purpose. Nearly one kilogram of leaves is required to dye a cloth of 1.8 metres by 1.4 metres of yarn of that quantity of the cloth. The leaves are first boiled in water in a big pot, then the cloth or yarn to be dyed is dipped in it and boiled for nearly an hour. It is then taken out and dried in the sun. If the colour has not been properly absorbed the same process is repeated twice or even three times.

Red dye is prepared from the root of a local creeper known as *tsenyhu* in the following method. The fresh root which is red in colour is washed in water and pounded on a flat stone by a wooden hammer. The pounded mass is boiled in required quantity of water in a big pot. The cloth or the yarn is dipped at this stage and left boiling for nearly an hour. The cloth is then taken out and dried in the sun.

Yellow dye is prepared from the wood of a plant locally called *athuo*. The plant which usually grows to a height of nearly a metre is found in the nearby jungles. The wood portion is light yellow in colour. First the bark of the plant is removed by a *dao*. The proper wood is then sliced vertically. The chips of wood are then boiled with the cloth or yarn to be dyed in water, which gives light yellow colour the cloth or yarn is then taken out and dried in the sun.

Dyeing of any colour is prohibited just before the harvest. If any one wants to dye cloth or yarn before harvest he or she must do that outside the village gate. The belief behind this practice is to maintain the standing crops without damage.

Designs and Symbols in Ao Clothes

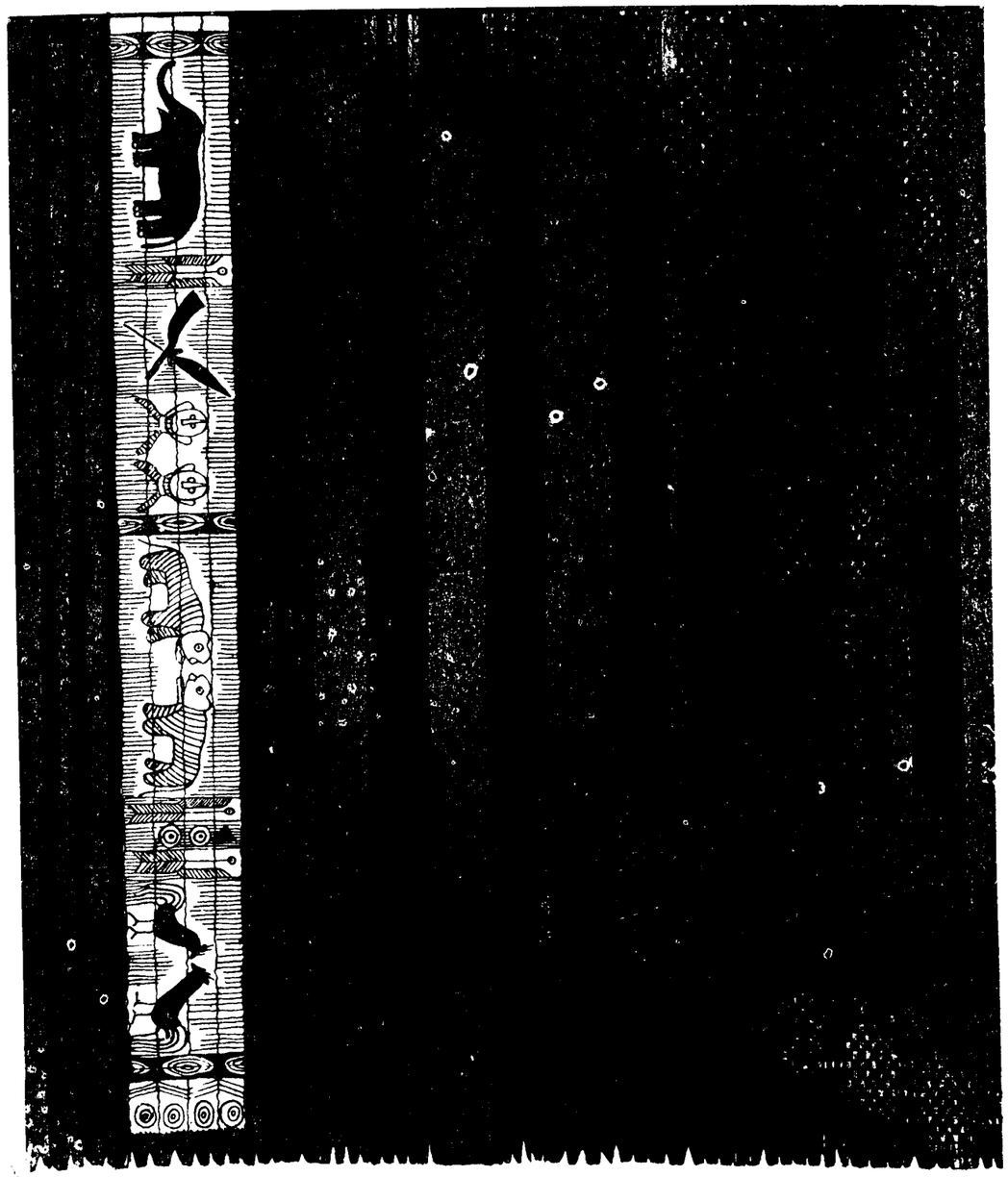
Like any other neighbouring hill women, they are interested in colour and insist on setting the exact shades they prefer, though dependence on outside market for dyed yarns has inevitably modified their colour schemes in woven fabrics in recent years. There are no curvilinear designs in their weaving. As woven design perforce is the direct result of interlocking a system of vertical warp threads at right angles to a system of horizontal threads the weft, they are exclusively of an angular geometrical type. The designs vary from a formal arrangement of lines and band to elaborate patterns of diamond and lozenge shapes *tenik* . With the gradual break-up of the Ao textile traditions, some of the designs are becoming a little fancy, their simplicity disturbed by the addition of more representational flowers and other ornamental motifs. The simple and straightforward lines, strips squares and bands are the most traditional design motifs, their escape from monotony being effected by varying their size, colour and arrangement. Contrasts and combination of colour sare chosen expertly. If on skirts and shawls the stripes and bands are usually horizontal, this is because of a fine eye to the way in which these "lines of direction" drape on the body when worn.

Their shawls range from a very simple white cloth to the elaborately designed one called *Tsungkotepsu*. The ordinary cloth consists of a plain white cloth *subosu* which can be worn by anybody without restriction. A plain dark blue cloth *sunaksu* is another ordinary cloth which is more popular among old men and women. When the white cloth becomes old and dirty, it is dyed black in *Mosak* the colour obtained from the *strobilanthes flaoccidifolious* and is then worn as a da blue cloth.

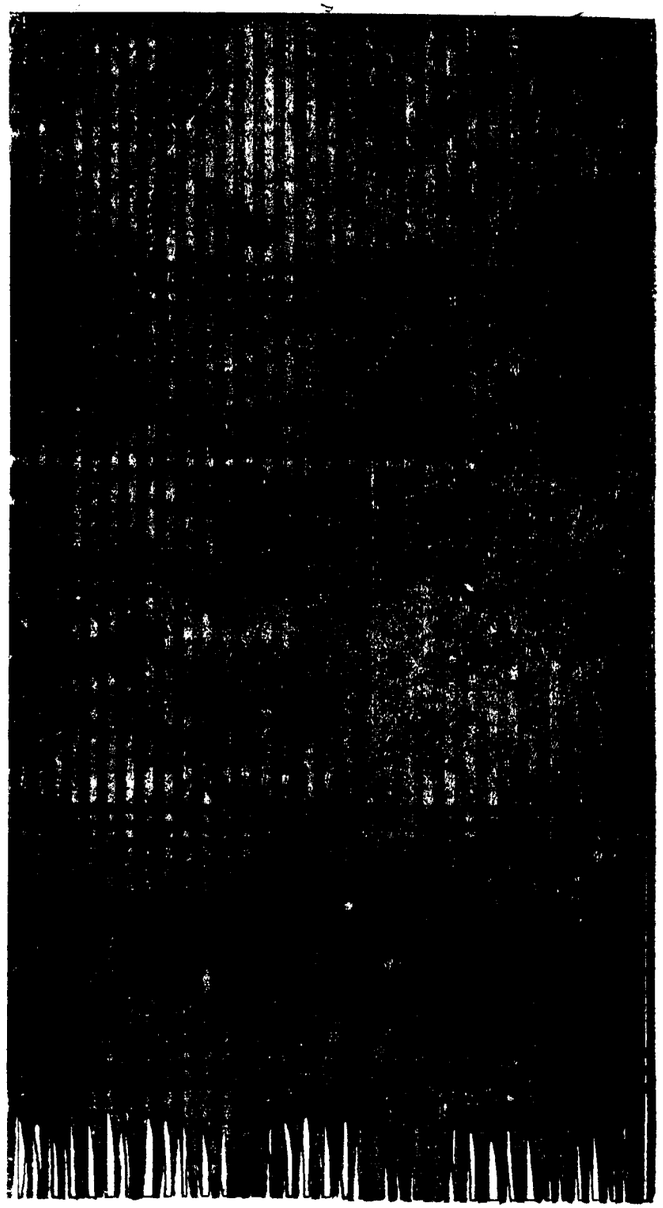
Yongtsungsu gets its effect from the use of narrow, horizontal blue bands alternating with narrow black bands. There are also narrow vertical black bands at 5 cms intervals. This is worn by all without restrictions. The length is nearly 1.8 metres and the breadth about 1.2 metres.

The decorative warrior shawls *Tsungkotepsu* of the Aos is the most characteristic shawl which has on either side of the median white band horizontal bands of contrasting black, red, and white. On a general dark base there are five broad red bands close together at the top and bottom, six or four narrow red bands in the middle of the cloth and a broad white median band painted with a pattern in black which as has already been mentioned includes figures of *mithun*, elephant, tiger, spear and *dao* crossing each other in the middle, and including the human heads. The median white band is woven separately and painted first before stitching. The median band is 8 cms broad and the length is equal to the length of the cloth which is about 2 metres. This cloth is worn in the past only by those who have taken heads or sacrificed *mithun*. These days it is worn by any body who can purchase it. It is exclusively a male shawl.

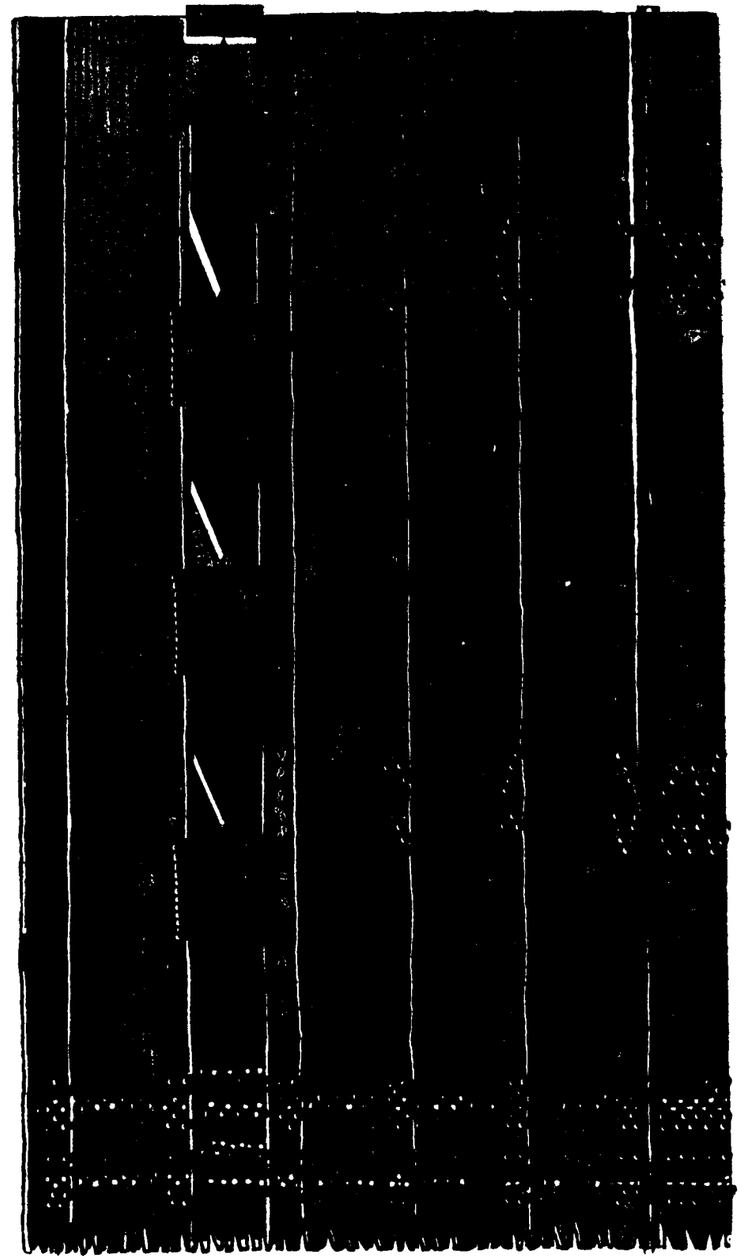
Chue-husubang is a red cloth with very narrow dark blue bands and a broad white median band embroidered with large red lozenges. Sometimes blue bands, indicate that the wearer has not only taken heads but has done the *mithun* sacrifice as well. This is worn by old men of a particular clan only *viz*, Mulir clan. The size of the cloth is nearly 1.9 metres long and 1.3 metres broad.



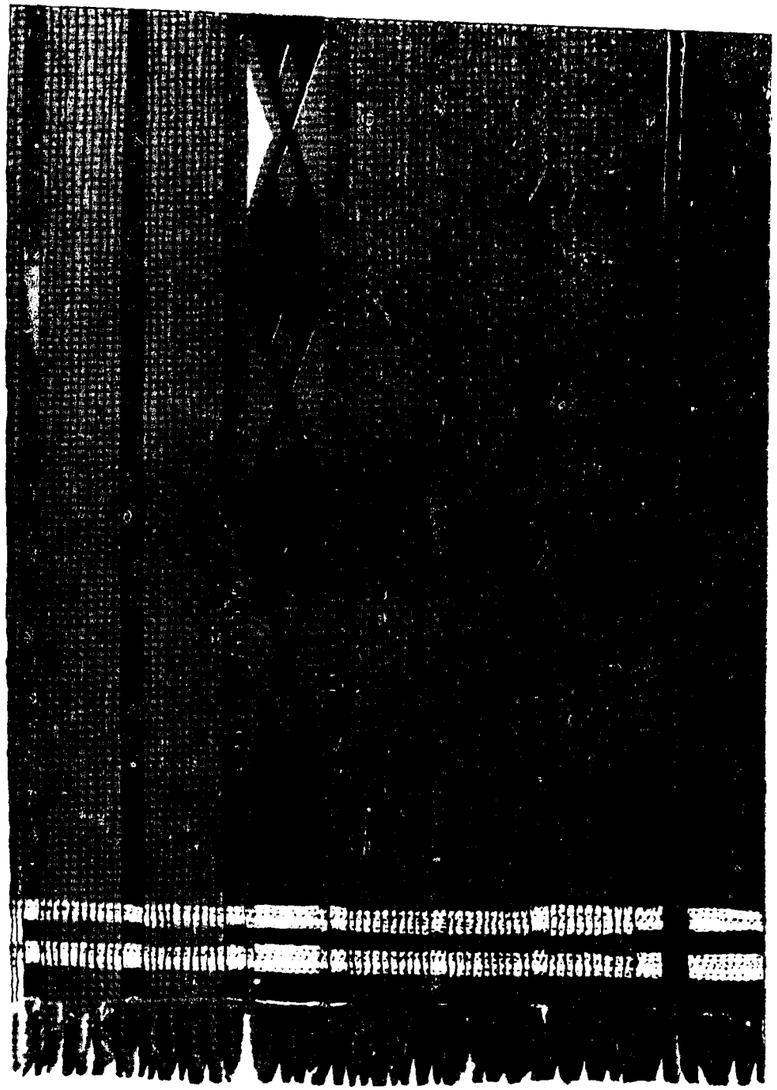
1. Ao warrior shawl *Tsungktepsu* size 2 x 1.3 metres



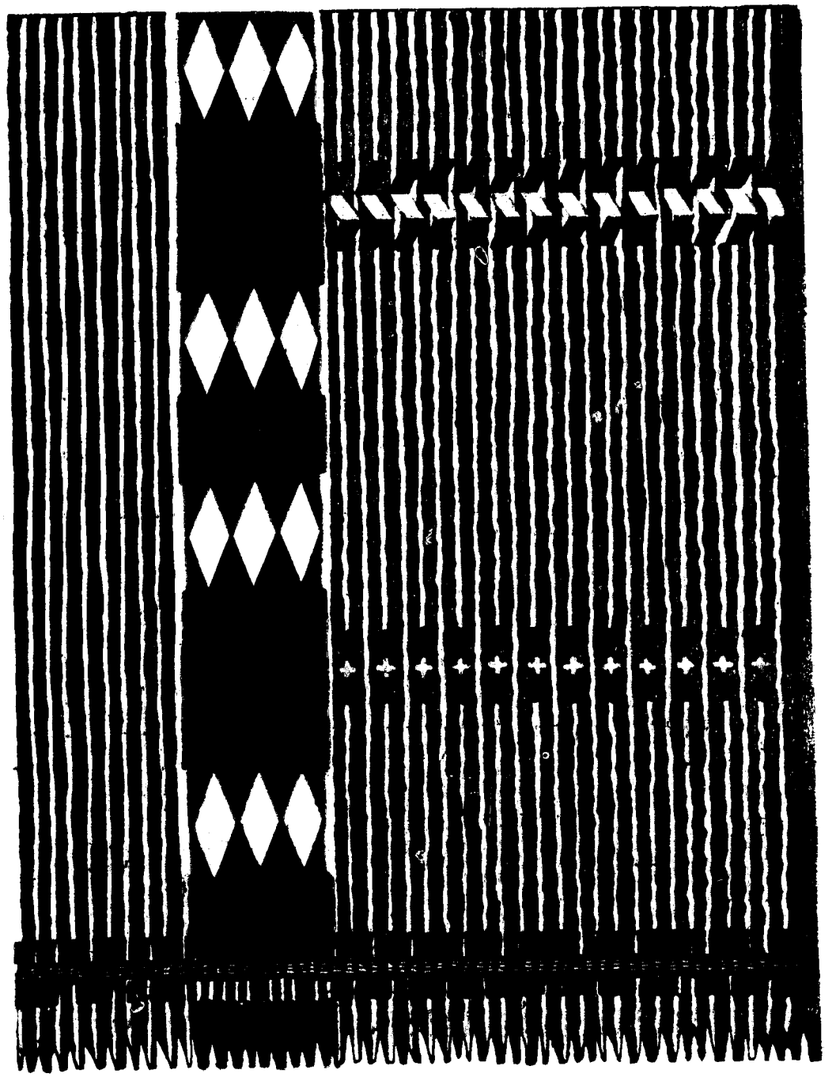
2. Stripe shawl *Yongtsungsu* size 1.8 m long 1.2 m broad.



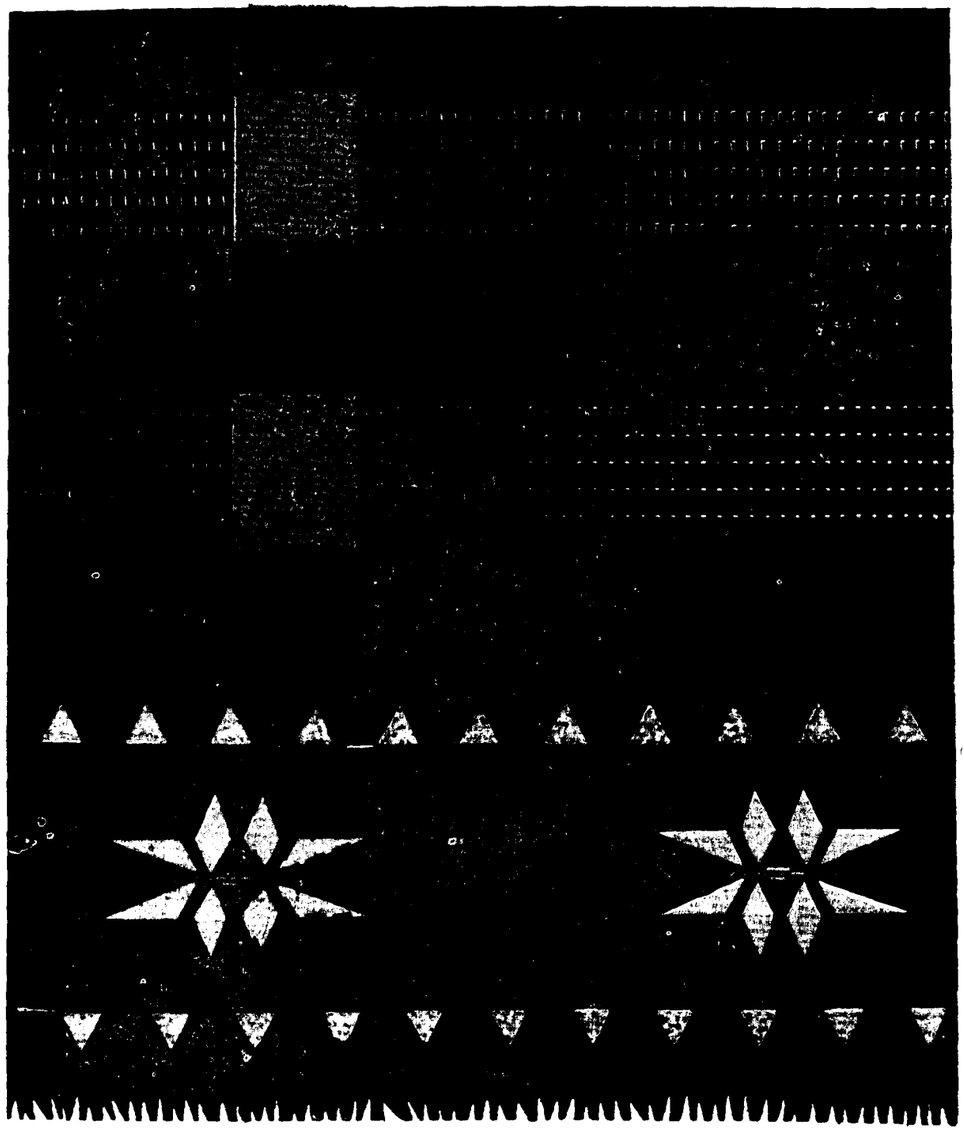
3. Ao skirt *Temik su* size 1.5 m long, 1 m broad.



4. Ao skirt *Tenuk su* size 1.5 m long, 1 m broad.

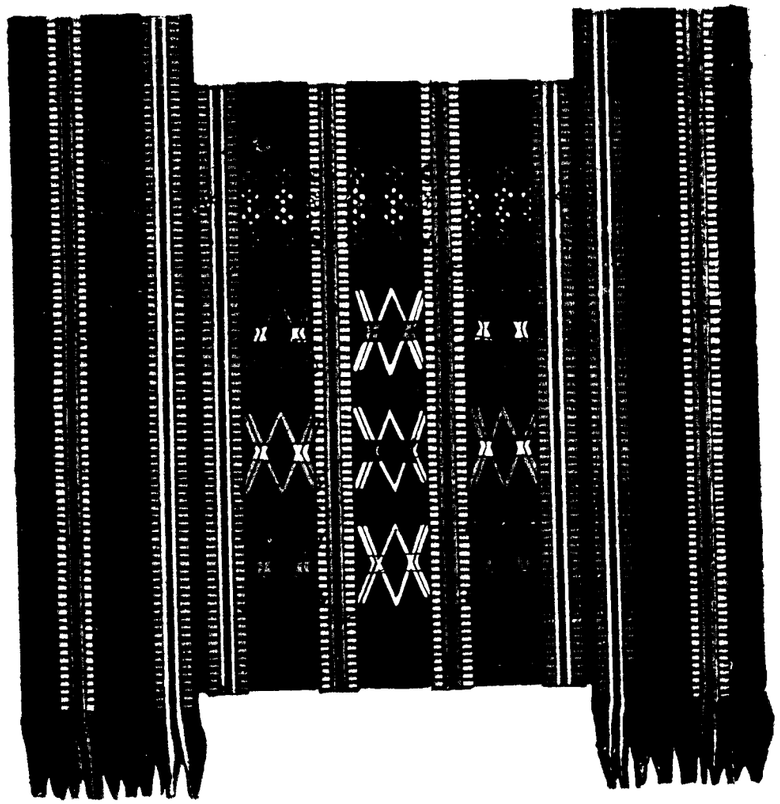


5. Ao skirt *Yongzujangsu* size 1.5 m long 1 m broad.



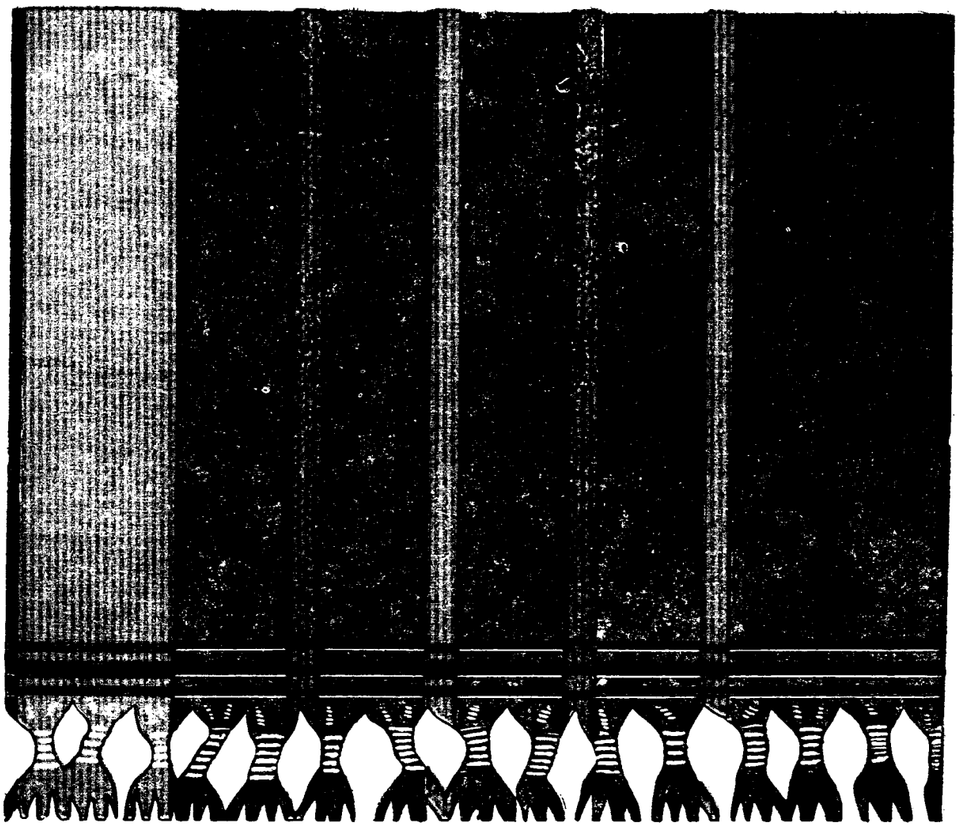
6. Skirt worn by Changki villagers size 1.5 m long 1 m broad.

Different Ao shawls

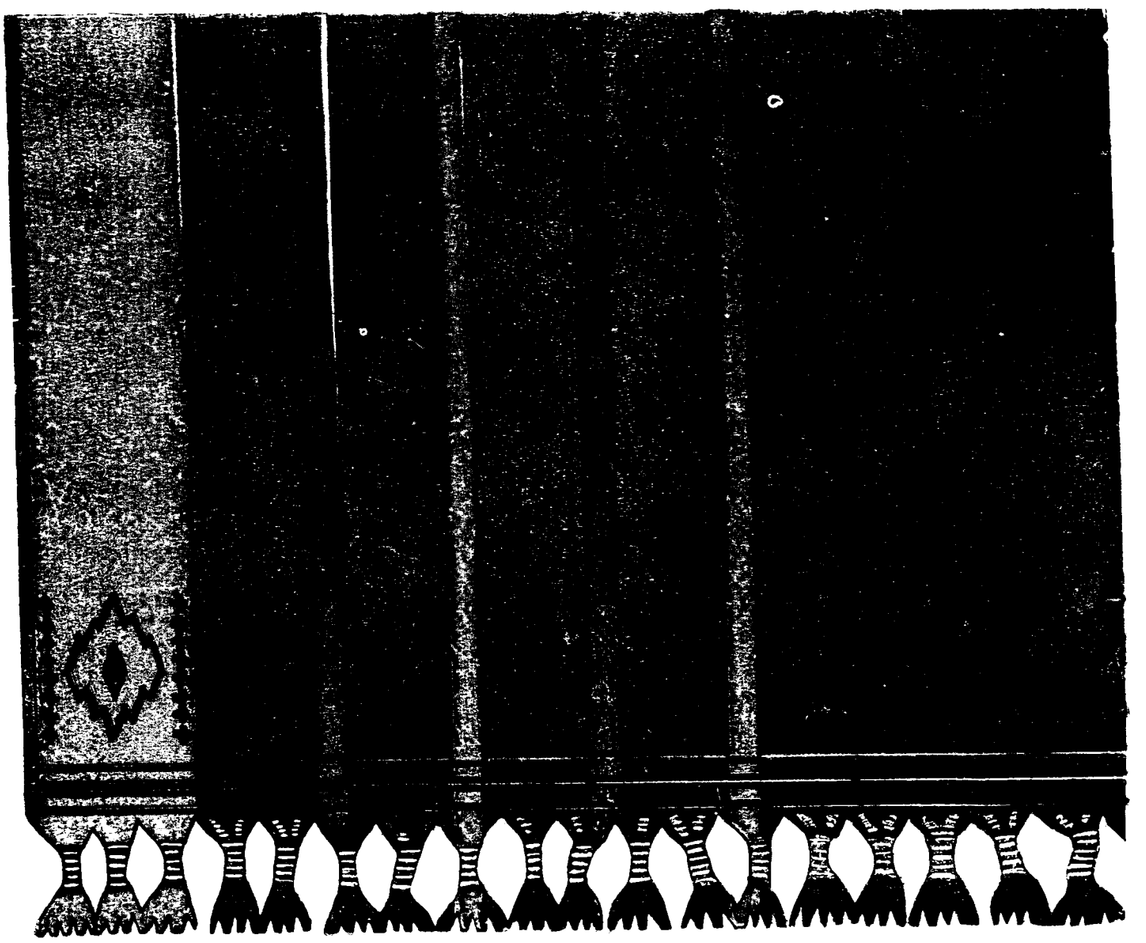


7. Ao bag *(yangko.)*

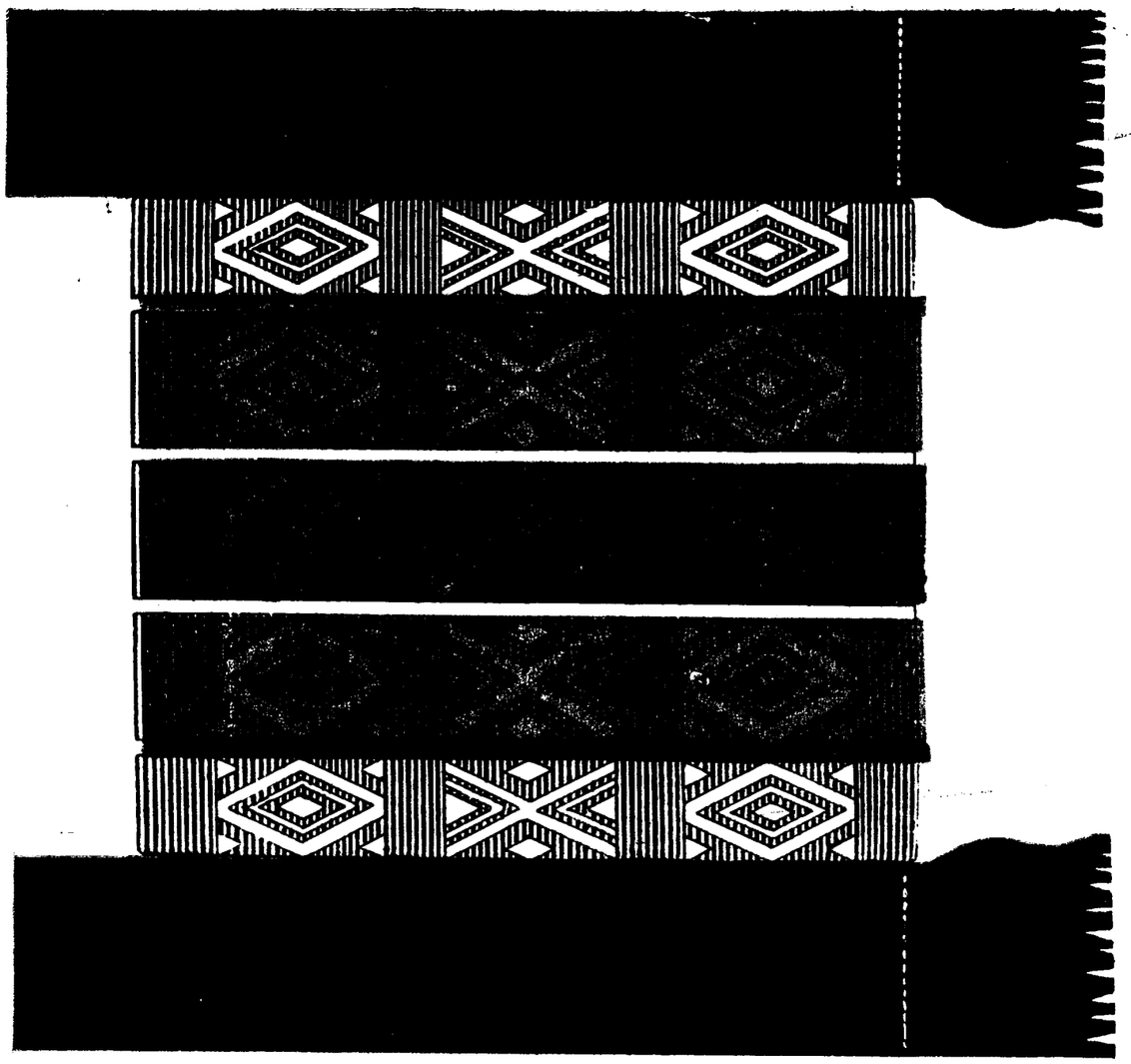
Ao Bag



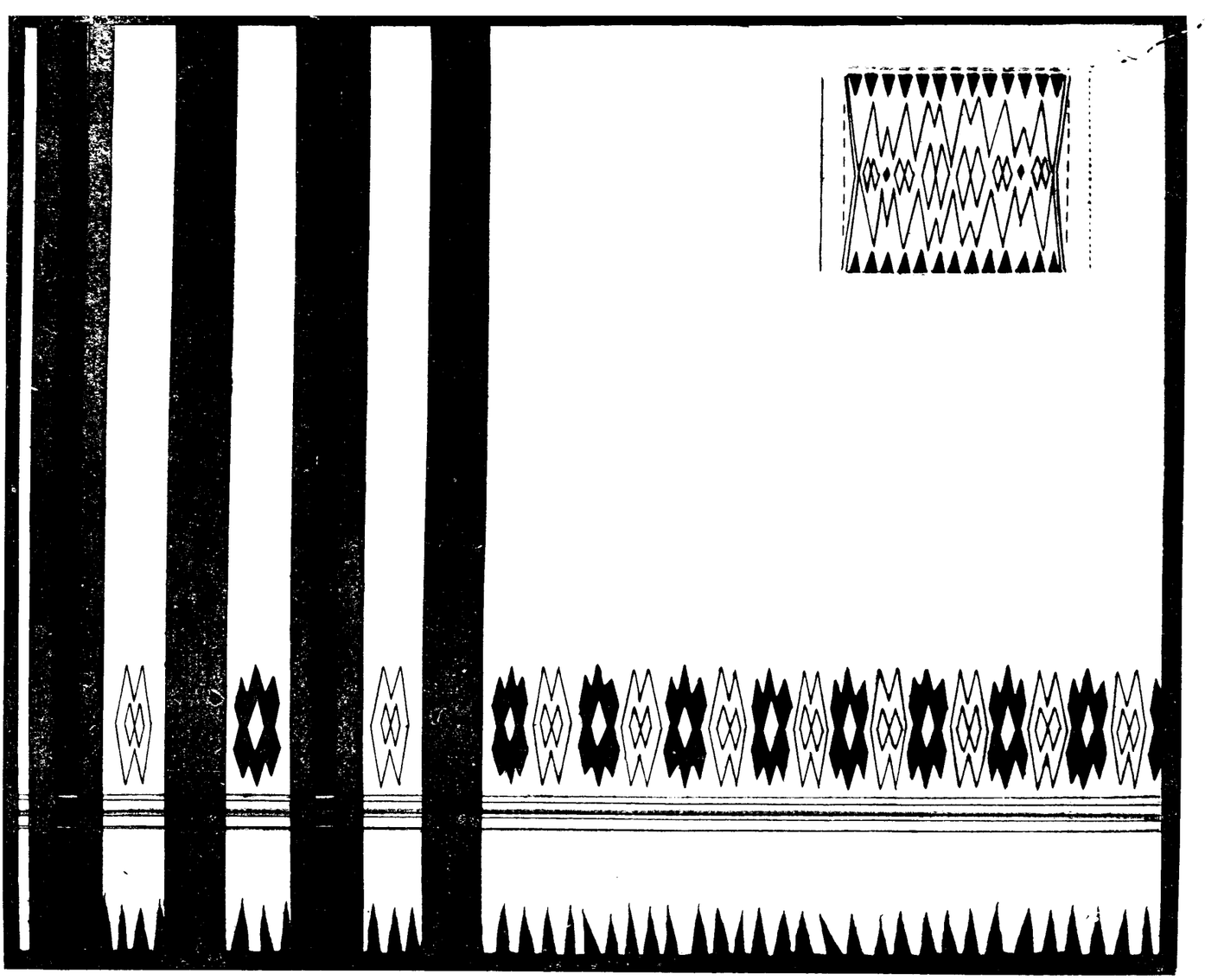
1. Traditional Angami shawl *Loke* size 6 ft long 3½ ft wide same design is used as skirt also.



2. Angami shawl, *Lohe* with border designs, which are of recent introduction



Angami Bag



. Angami shawl *Loramhoushu* size 6 ft long, 3½ ft wide. In original cloth border design is absent. This is used as skirt also. (Description s e at page 21

A dark blue cloth with horizontal red bands and a broad light blue median band is another shawl worn generally by old men.

Another kind of strip cloth is a white shawl with horizontal and vertical narrow blue bands at 6 cms intervals. This is generally worn by boys and girls. Size of this shawl is the same as that of *yongtsungsu* described above.

The commonest Ao skirts again their effect by a combination of large number of narrow horizontal lines of black and red. At regular intervals narrow black bands are set. At intervals there are 5 to 7 designs on blue band on which the design of eyes *tenik* enhanced by combination of triangle and diamond shaped designs are woven with red wool in extra weft weaving method, On traditional skirt the eye designs half on which is red woollen thread and another half black cotton thread are produced by extra weft weaving method. The border decoration consists of a few lines of red and two lines of blue. The cloth is 1.5 metres long and 1 metre wide.

Another skirt, worn by the women of Mulir clan only, is a black cloth with a large number of narrow horizontal lines of red at regular distance from each other. Another kind of skirt woven in red on a black background is known as *yonzujangsu* or cucumber seed skirt. The designs on the cloth looks like the seeds of cucumber. At regular intervals three diamond shaped designs with red woollen is woven on blue bands by extra weft weaving method. Each design looks like a seed of cucumber, this is why the cloth is known as *yongzujangsu* or "cucumber seed skirt".

The *Changki* skirt which was originally worn by the women of Changki village, is woven and worn by a few women. It is simply a blue or black cloth with a rectangular design woven with extra weft method with red wool.

Although in the main, the fabrics still today retain their own attractive pattern yet external influences in colours and designs are evident. In recent years, familiar objects are also added to their original designs and the weavers have adopted a large number of designs of other tribes, some of which are very good. Neckties and table mats which were unknown to them in the past are commonly woven now and have become excellent rupee earners. Bags with various designs are woven now. The ordinary bag *Yangko* which is meant for rough use is a plain blue bag. The villagers use it generally to carry *pan*, tobacco and parcels of rice for the mid-day meals while going to the field or jungle. Fire making instruments, either match box or flint box are also carried in it. Besides this there are bags of solid colours, such as white, with a variety of designs, some of which lavishly ornamented. There is no particular traditional design for the bag. As a matter of fact, the ornamentation of these bags is of recent introduction. The designs vary from a formal arrangement of lines and bands to elaborate diamond patterns, lozenges and flowers, enhanced by repeating forms and other decorations.

Scale

The shawls and skirts do not have any standard size. Depending on the size of the individual weaver as well as that of the use the size and the designs are also adjusted. There are always slight difference in the size of every piece of cloth. The length of the warp of the cloth is adjusted from an already woven piece.

The average length of a man's shawl is 1.8 metres while that of the breadth measures a little over one meter. In the case of the woman's shawl, the average length is 13 cms shorter and 15 cms narrower than that of a man's shawl. It goes without saying that the size is much smaller in the case of shawls for children. Individual variation in the size of skirt is also very common. The average length and breadth of a skirt measures 1.5 metres and 1.0 metre respectively.

Pattern of Designs in Angami Cloth

Both men and women wear the same kind of shawl. The Angami shawls are generally of kinds: (a) A white cloth *Loramhoushu* generally of 1 metre and 85 cms long and one metre and 8 cms wide with four black mariginal bands close together on both edges, each band about 2.5 cms wide. On each of these black bands there are pink or red narrow lines. The cloth with the same pattern of design is worn by women as skirt, but the size intended for skirt is usually smaller.

Another cloth in vogue is a plain black cloth *Lohe* of the same size as described above with marginal stripes red bands of 2.5 cms wide. Close to these red bands there are narrow green bands and two narrow red or pink bands alternating one another at an interval of 2.5 cms. This is also worn as skirt by women. The border design in both the cloths is similar, but in traditional cloth the border design is absent.

Another kind of cheap shawl used by men and women for rough wear is a black shawl *ratapfe* of 1.6 metres long and a little less than a metre in breadth.

Men invariably wear a kilt *neitho* which is a plain black cloth about 1 metre and 18 cms long and nearly half a metre broad. In some of the kilt a portion of the outer surface is ornamented with three horizontal lines of cowries each line about 30 cms long at an interval of 10 cms and a vertical line of cowries 20 cms long at one end of the kilt. A kilt with four lines of cowries indicates that the wearer has killed an enemy. It is also worn by young men during the time of festival.

The dress of a woman consists of (i) petticoat called *neikhro* (under loin cloth), a plain white cloth with a narrow red and black bands on both the margins, which is wrapped round the lion and tucked in so as to keep it from falling, the size of the dress being 1 metre and 22 cms long and one and 30 cms wide, (ii) a sleeveless bodice called *Vatchi* made out of a black cloth of nearly 2 metres long and 1 metre wide crossed under one arm (usually left arm) and fastened on the opposite shoulder, the lower end being tied round the waist, so that the folding end hangs down round the level of the knee and covering the *neikhro* and (iii) a white skirt *Pfemhou* made by wrapping a cloth round the waist and tying it or tucking it in so as to keep it from falling, and covering the *neikhro* and the lower part of the *vatchi*. This skirt which measures 1.6 metres long and 80 cms wide has marginal stripes of black bands and three narrow pink or red bands at an interval of 5 cms. In the middle of the cloth there is a pattern of bands enhanced by two narrow black bands with a pink or red line in between. Women use it as skirt, while small girls wear it as shawl.

4. Economic Aspects

As already mentioned elsewhere there is neither a weaving centre nor a weaver's co-operative society in the village. Therefore, the present monograph is simply a study of household industry. Agriculture is the main and primary occupation and all others are secondary and practised leisurely. They generally weave clothes for the use of family members, but sometimes some women weave them for sale also. It is therefore, very difficult or even impossible to accurately asses the economic aspects of weaving for individual weaver or for the village as a whole. However a statement furnished below will be of help and interest for the readers in assessing the value of different shawls and skirts.

Apart from the daily wages of the weaver or the wages to be paid for weaving, the factor which determines the cost price of the wolen clothes is the price of the different colours of thread, the market price of which as found at the time of the survey is as follows :

Colour of cotton thread	Price per skein *mota* roughly weighing 227 gms	
	Rs.	nP.
Black	2	50
Red	2	50
White	2	00
Green	2	50
Yellow	2	50
Rose	2	50

Labour and Earning

It may be of interest to note the extent of labour involved and the amount of earning derived from the industry. A weaver pays nearly Rs. 12/- for the cotton and woollen thread sufficient for a skirt of average size that is 1.5 metres long and 1 metre wide and usually spends 7 days or pays Rs. 15/- in lieu to weave it into cloth, which is sold usually at the rate of Rs. 30/- bringing a total income of Rs. 18/-. This works out approximately to a daily wages of Rs. 2.57 nP. which is at the higher level of income considering the present day-labourers pay at the rate of Rs. 2/- in the village.

Nearly Rs. 8.50 nP. is required to purchase thread sufficient for an ordinary stripe cloth *yongtsungsu* and spends Rs. 6 or 3 days to weave it into cloth, which may fetch an amount of Rs. 16/- at present day rate, bringing a total income of Rs. 7.30 nP. This works out roughly to a daily wages of Rs. 2.50 nP.

In weaving the decorative warrior shawl *Tsungkotpsu* measuring 2 metres long and 1 metre and 30 cms broad, a weaver spends nearly Rs. 23/- for the cotton and woollen thread and takes nearly 10 days or spends nearly Rs. 20/- for weaving it into cloth which may be sold at Rs. 50/-. There is a total income of Rs. 27/- in 10 days which comes to a daily wages of Rs. 2.70 nP.

Thus if Rs. 2/- which is found to be the prevailing rate for a woman day labourer in the field at the time of the study, is taken as the index of daily wages for women then it is found from the above statement that there is a net profit of 15%, 10% and 16% respectively for weaving a skirt, a stripe shawl and a decorative warrior shawl.

The cloth meant for sale is not taken to any market but is simply kept in the box of the weaver till it is sold out. In the meantime, she informs her friends of the cloth she is having for sale. Sometimes the cloth is sold in the Emporium located at Mokokchung.

PART THREE

POTTERY

Raw Materials — Tools

Like weaving, pot making is exclusively women's work. In Ao Area pots are only made in a very few villages, notably Chanki, Japo and Longsemdang villages. Strictly speaking, making of pots was taboo for any Ao other than the women of Changki dialect speaking group which constitute the above mentioned villages. Ao include those who speak the Chongli, the Mongsen and the Changki dialects, and these three language groups undoubtedly represent different waves of immigrants speaking different dialects and having their own set of clans. The changki speaking group alone at first know the art of making pots. The present study as has been mentioned earlier is very limited and no village of the Changki speaking group is surveyed for this purpose. Thus no information is available for the antiquity of this art. In recent years the art of pottery is spreading over to a few Ao villages among the Christian community, yet the non-christian Aos still observe the old restrictions.

Like many other Ao villages women of Waromung village also did not know how to make pots till 1920. It was in that year one man from Changki came to Waromung with his wife to work as Church Pastor of the village. His wife being a woman of Changki was an expert potter and she taught the art of pot making to a few christian women of Waromung. Now there are a dozen women in Waromung who make pots occasionally for domestic use. It is said that prior to 1920 a woman of Waromung learnt the art of making pot from the women of Longsemdang village and made posts, but she died without any issue. Thereby the earlier taboo was confirmed and the villagers dare not to take up this new trade which were unknown to their forefathers. But with the spread of Christianity the old taboos were overcome and a few women make pots though in a very small scale.

The Ao pottery is rather course and is generally limited to the plain round cooking pot with a flattened out turned rim. It is made by hand alone and they do not know the method of pot making by wheel. Generally pots are made in winter mostly in December.

In Angami area also pots are only made in certain villages like Viswema and Khuzama, where clay is available. Those villages have almost a monopoly of earthen pot making for the Angami tribe. The people of Kohima village never make pots.

Raw Materials

A good sticky plastic light brown clay is used for making pots. At Waromung, the clay is available at a distance one and half kilometer away to the east of the village. It is carried home by women in carrying baskets locally called *Akhi*. There is no restriction on the part of the men also to carry the clay.

Tools

The Tools are also made locally.

1. Carrying basket *akhi* (*see* fig. after page 60). It is used to carry the clay home. It is roughly conical in shape. It consists of two parts — the basket proper and the carrying arrangement. The basket which is about a metre high and nearly 45 cms in diameter at the mouth is made of fine splitted bamboo. The other end tapers gradually almost to the size of a tea-cup. The basket is strengthened by seven supporting sticks. It is generally used to carry agricultural products. One side of the basket is made flat smooth for the comfort of the back of the carrier at the time of carrying it.

A thin layer of the bark of a tree nearly 2 metres long and 5 cms broad is stripped for carrying

string. This is tied loosely round the basket obliquely in such a way that its middle portion is placed just above the flat of the basket.

2. Wooden board—It is cut out of the trunk of a hallowed tree. The length is nearly 65 cms and the breadth 30 cms the average thickness being 5 cms.

3. Pestle—It is actually a bamboo—Shoot pounder made of bamboo. The bamboo for this purpose is cut right from the root so that the expanded root portion may be used as pounding end. It is 2 meters long and 8 cms thick in diameter.

4. Shaping sticks — These are of two types :

(a) The first shaping stick which is used for rough work is a narrow flat piece of wood with a smooth surface. The flat surface is 5 cms broad 7 cms long and 2 cms thick. The handle which is about 17 cms long and 2 cms in diameter is made by prolonging the flat surface.

(b) The second shaping stick — with broader ends like a double paddle is also made of the same wood. The two ends of the shaping stick are broad and hexagonal in shape each measures 8 cms long 6 cms broad and 2 cms thick. The four flat surfaces of the paddle ends are groved in squares, lozenges and oblique-cross-hatching. The groved surfaces give rough prints on the surface of the pot thereby producing a design of its own.

5. Stop—It is a mush-room shaped tool called *Utungba* and is made of baked clay. It is nearly 7 cms long about 6 cms broad at the working surface.

6. A piece of rag to spread on the laps of the potter over which the prepared clay is placed.

5. Historical Background

Raw Materials — Tools

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A good sticky plastic light brown clay is used for making pots. At Waromung, the clay is available at a distance one and half kilometer away to the east of the village. It is carried home by women in carrying baskets locally called *Akhi*. There is no restriction on the part of the men also to carry the clay.

Tools

The Tools are also made locally.

1. Carrying basket *akhi* (*see* fig. after page 60). It is used to carry the clay home. It is roughly conical in shape. It consists of two parts — the basket proper and the carrying arrangement. The basket which is about a metre high and nearly 45 cms in diameter at the mouth is made of fine splitted bamboo. The other end tapers gradually almost to the size of a tea-cup. The basket is strengthened by seven supporting sticks. It is generally used to carry agricultural products. One side of the basket is made flat smooth for the comfort of the back of the carrier at the time of carrying it.

A thin layer of the bark of a tree nearly 2 metres long and 5 cms broad is stripped for carrying

string. This is tied loosely round the basket obliquely in such a way that its middle portion is placed just above the flat of the basket.

2. Wooden board—It is cut out of the trunk of a hallowed tree. The length is nearly 65 cms and the breadth 30 cms the average thickness being 5 cms.

3. Pestle—It is actually a bamboo—Shoot pounder made of bamboo. The bamboo for this purpose is cut right from the root so that the expanded root portion may be used as pounding end. It is 2 meters long and 8 cms thick in diameter.

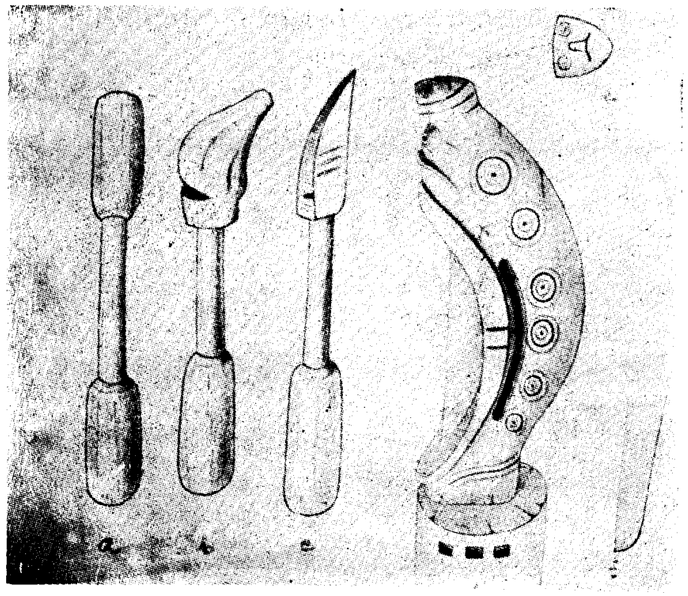
4. Shaping sticks — These are of two types :

(a) The first shaping stick which is used for rough work is a narrow flat piece of wood with a smooth surface. The flat surface is 5 cms broad 7 cms long and 2 cms thick. The handle which is about 17 cms long and 2 cms in diameter is made by prolonging the flat surface.

(b) The second shaping stick — with broader ends like a double paddle is also made of the same wood. The two ends of the shaping stick are broad and hexagonal in shape each measures 8 cms long 6 cms broad and 2 cms thick. The four flat surfaces of the paddle ends are groved in squares, lozenges and oblique-cross-hatching. The groved surfaces give rough prints on the surface of the pot thereby producing a design of its own.

5. Stop—It is a mush-room shaped tool called *Utangba* and is made of baked clay. It is nearly 7 cms long about 6 cms broad at the working surface.

6. A piece of rag to spread on the laps of the potter over which the prepared clay is placed.



a, b, c different levers used for beating the log-drum; d. head of the drum. e. snout of the drum, f. the tail of the drum (after Mills)

Shaving stick and stop of baked clay used by Ao

6. Technique of Pot Making

Preparation of Clay

Clay is dug up at a distance, carried home, weathered and dried for a year or so. It is pounded on the wooden board with the pestle and the coarser impurities picked out with the hand. The women of Changki village instead of using one clay alone mix red and grey clay, which are locally available, with a slightly larger proportion of the red clay. The clay is then moistened and pounded vigorously. The pounded mass is then well kneaded with water by the hand into a very stiff solid dough, which is ready for use. This dough is then rolled into a round cylindrical lump about the size of the pole ball, or a little bigger or smaller according to the size of the pot to be made.

Actual Operation

The cylindrical solid lump is gently rammed from the top on to the flat bottom with the right fist. To keep the clay moist and pliable, water is often springled on it. Then it is worked with the right hand over the clenched left hand till it forms a sort of a cap. Thus having given the proper shape to the rim, it is placed with the rim upward and worked further with damped fingers of both hands. While working on it the left hand is kept inside and the right hand outside all the time. With the two hands an upward scraping motion and circular motion around the pot are given till a rough shape of the finished article is arrived at. It is then left in the sun to dry for some time. Hitherto, the clay being very soft, nothing but the fingers have been used to shape it.

The final shaping is started after it has hardened a little in the sun. For this the operator is seated and a rag is placed on her lap. Over it is put the pot to be finally shaped. A mushroom shaped stop (*utongba*) made of baked clay is held against the inner surface with the left hand. The right hand holds the narrower smooth surfaced shaping stick (*utepba*) and taps the rather rough and thick surface from outside. Slight outward pressure from inside with the stop and tapping from outside with shaping stick is applied at the same place simultaneously. Then another stick which has groved surfaces is applied in a similar way till the requisite shape and thinness have been obtained. The groved surfaces give rough prints to the surface of the pot, thereby producing its own design. Except this, no ornamentation of any sort is added. The pots when finished are round bottom with an overturned rim for lifting them off the fire during the time of using. The size of the pots meant for cooking curry is generally smaller than those for cooking rice. The finished pots are then dried in the sun for several days before firing.

Firing of Pots

Making and firing of pots are done during mid winter in December and January, when every possible precaution is taken against the outbreak of fire which is a common feature in Ao villages. So, as a rule, firing of pots is done outside the village at about sunset, or early morning, when a forest fire would be easier to control. To fire the pots, a low rough platform of dried bamboo about 10 cms from the ground is built on the ground. On this layers of pots are laid upside down and dried bamboo and reeds piled on them covering all sides and fired. The firing takes nearly two hours. A few cracks at the time of firing. The firing is also done by the women but there is no restriction for men doing it. There is no restriction

as to any body, even strangers, being present nor is there any particular food barred to the workers at any stage of the proceedings, but a pregnant woman is taboo to make pots less the foetus be effected.

The pots having been fired, are stored first in the tray *koso* over the hearth. At this stage, they are not used for cooking purposes until they are fired again. For this, five or six handfulls of paddy husks are put into the pot meant for use and is heated over the three stones embeded in the hearth of the hourse. Due to the heat thus produced the husks inside the pot catch fire and are allowed to burn for half an hour or so.

Next, when the pot is properly cooled, a cup of rice water is poured into it and boiled till the rice water overflows the pot.

The pot is now ready for use. Burning of husks and the boiling rice water in the fired pot are to remove the smell of newly baked clay and to ensure durability.

Earthern lids *unermo* are also made out of the same clay. Nothing but hands are applied in shaping the *unemro*. The covering surface is more or less flat. The round margin of the cover is smooth and thin which gradually becomes thicker and reaches its maximum at the centre. The handle for the lid is attached to the upper surface near the centre. The upper surface is covered with the design of dots. The dots are produced either by nail of the potter or with a stick As the size of the mouths of the pots vary only slightly, the same cover can be used for two or three pots separately during cooking. Hence very few lids are made. The lids *unemro* are fired along with the pots and before use, rice water is smeared over the flat surface.

Sema Pottery

The Sema pottery is also limited to the plain round cooking pot with flattend out-turned rim. It is made by hand alone without the aid of any wheel. The clay is dig up from the bank of some stream, carried up home and allowed to season for nearly a year. It is then broken up and mixed in the proportion of 3 to 2 with the remains of old pots which have been pounded to fine dust. This mixture is moistened and kneaded into a round lump of convenient size. The beating is done with a wooden slat bound with strings.

The clay is moistened with a slip of water pounded in small quantities from a gourded ladle, and the whole moulded by the hand into a more rounded from with a lip round the top, the outside of the pot being beaten over with the wooden slat already described. The pot is then placed upon the upper of the two screen-shelves that inter-vene between the hearth and the roof, and left there for several days.

Upto this point the whole process is performed by women, men not being allowed to touch the pots or even to approach t o closely during their preparation, as this would cause them to break in the firing.

The basis of this fire is made of fuel piled upto about 18 inches from the ground to form a sort of platform. On this a layer of pots is placed covered by a layer of sticks on which again are pots and sticks in alternate layers. The top is covered with thatch, dry leaves, and similar light fuel, and the whole fired.

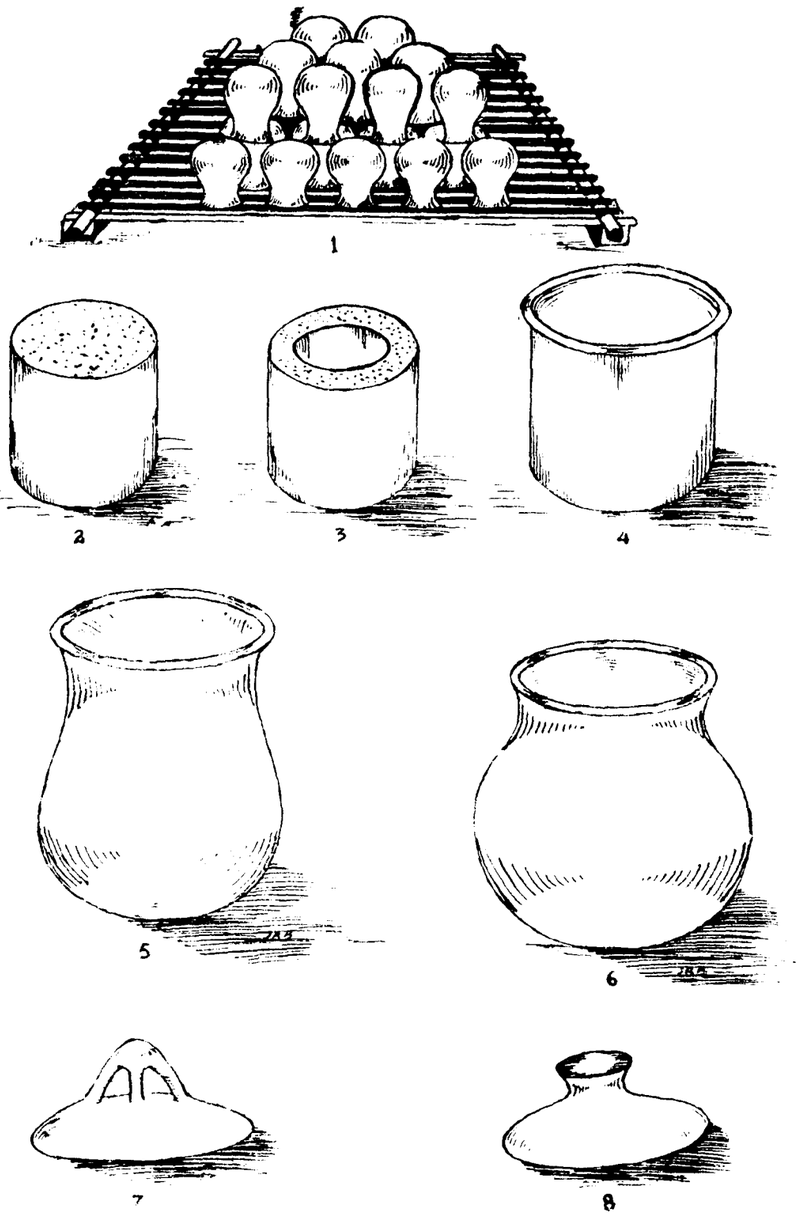
Lotha Pottery

Lothas also make their own pots. For this grey and red clay, are used. The former is much better as it is more sticky and plastic but the latter is not so good. Clay is obtained from the banks of small rivers. Only women can make pots. Their pots, like the Ao type, are round and slightly contracted at the top with a curved rim round the mouth by which they can be lifte t off the fire. The clay is broken up and kneaded on a stone with a little water After being left-over-night it is again moistened and kneaded. A round base is first made by hand. A wall of clay is built into this and kneaded well into the base with the left hand, the wall being supported on the outside by a small stick *phutamphen* held in the right hand The pot is then shaped with the left hand and stick, and put to dry in the sun while other pots are being made.

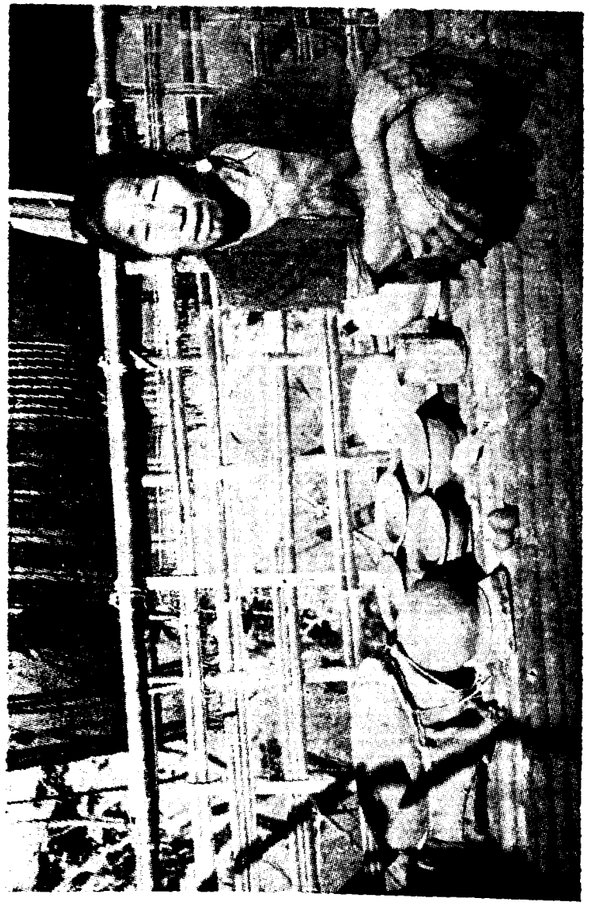
After the pots have been dried in the house for three or four days a rough platform of wood is built on the ground outside the village. On this the pots are laid upside down and twigs and rubbish and rice straw piled on them and fired. In this kiln the pots are left till next moring, when they must be taken away before dawn. Certain precautions have to be observed. The woman making the pots must refrain from sexual intercourse, and must not eat any strong-smelling food, such as beef, goat's flesh, dog's flesh, dried fish, or "stinking dal" while she is so engaged, for, to eat these things would cause the pots to crack badly.

Angami pottery

Pots are made only in certain villages of Angami tribe, notably Viswema and Khuzama.



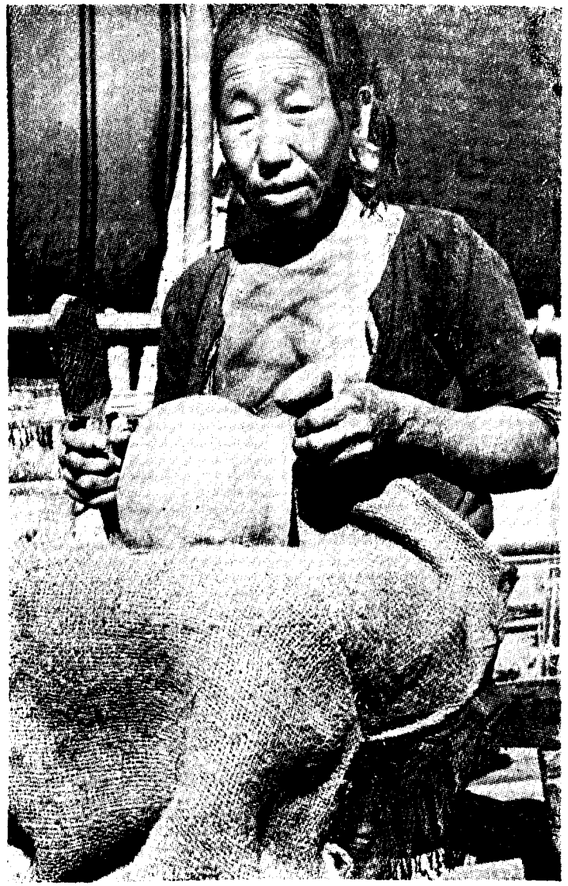
1. Arrangement of pots for firing.
2. 2 to 6 stages in the process of pot making.
3. 7 and 8 earthen lids.



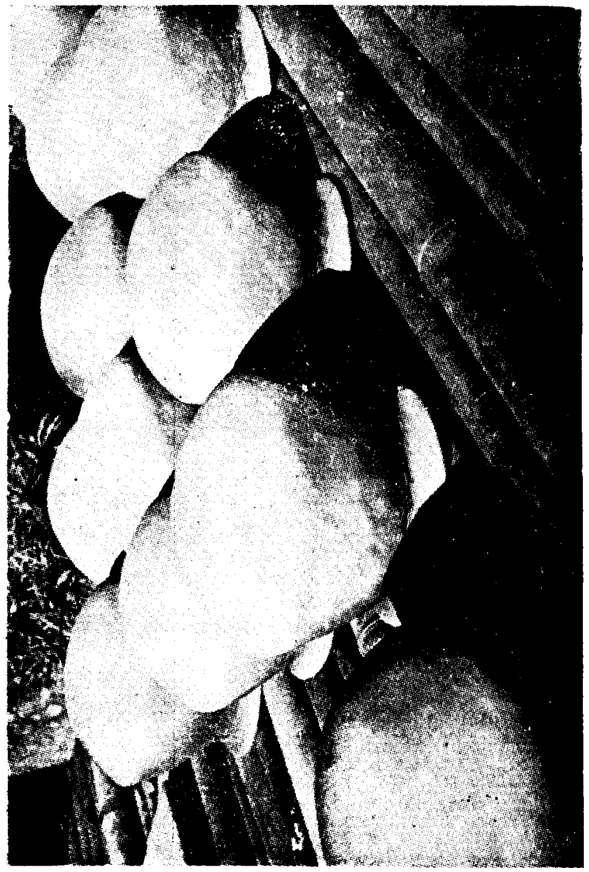
The potter with her pots and tools

The potter at work

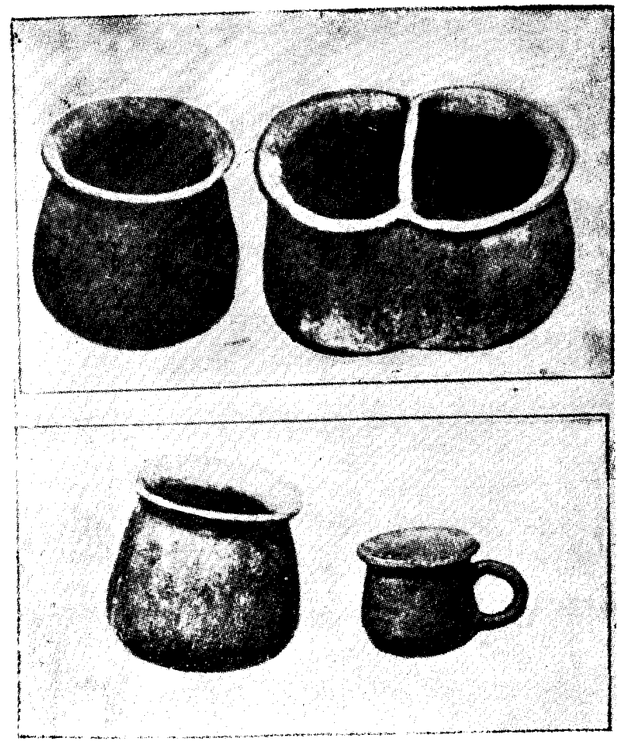
The potter at work



The potter at work



Refined pots



Sema pots (Photo after Mills)

The pots modelled from the lump of clay by hand without the aid of any wheel are roughly round with a somewhat greater circumference near the base than at the mouth, the lip of which is turned outward. They are made into different sizes and those for liquor have narrow necks. After the clay is broken and kneaded with a little water, like the Lothas, a round base is first made by hand. A wall of clay is built into this and kneaded well into the base with the hands. The pot is then shaped by placing the left hand inside the pot while the right hand works with a shaping stick. Usually four sticks are used in different stages. First a thicker smooth surfaced slate nearly 30 cms long and 6 cms wide and 1.5 cms thick is applied to the rough surface. Secondly a thinner and narrower smooth surfaced stick is used. Lastly a stick roller is used to smoothen the surface. All through the inner side of the pot is worked only by bare left hand. The outturned rim is shaped by a thin stick 28 cms long 9 cms wide and 0.5 cms thick.

After the pots have been dried in the sun or in the house for several days, a frame of a rough platform of wood is made about 60 cms high on which dried twigs and bamboo are placed. The pots to be fired are placed inside the platform and as the fire burned the pots are moved round to fire it uniformally.

PART FOUR

WOOD CARVING AND WOOD WORK

7. An Introduction

A great deal of the art of Naga Wood-carving is associated with religious beliefs and practises and as latter weakens, the art also weakens with them. The disappearance of the folk art, whether it be dancing, song or carving is largely due to Christian influence. The art of wood carving which is as old as the history of their traditional origin may be considered under two main heads connected respectively with head-hunting and Morung institution.

The *ariju* is a village guard house or a barrack in which youngmen of the village sleep at night, who are supposed to be in readiness to repel any night attack on the village. At night they gather and sleep there, but in the morning they go back to their respective houses and carry on their usual work. The house usually 50 feet long and 20 to 25 feet wide is situated is a conspicuous place. It is not only a guard house but a club house too and play the most important part in the social life of the village. The *ariju* is thickly and firmly walled with bamboo sticks. Immediately inside the front door a barrier of bamboo matting is constructed across the house to hurdle the enemy intending to attack its inmates. There are two fires places inside the building, the one nearer the front door was reserved for the senior inmates and the rear one for the younger inmates. On all sides of the fire line of beds are made for the inmates. The house inside has a good supply of dry reeds in bunches for torches at night. The main post and the upper beam of the *ariju* is covered with carvings of elephant, tiger hornbill and human head. The symbol of sun and crescent moon is also carved. Portable village drums are kept here. In all villages there are two *arijus* one for Chongly group and the another for Mongsen group. A large village may have even more than two. The *arijus* are placed inside the stockade and near the chief entrances to the village. It is not deemed proper for a woman to enter an *ariju* house. The dominating element of the *ariju* was martial but since the conversion of the Aos to christianity this marshal element has been dropped.

Generally a *morung* was rebuilt every 6 years and repaired once at the interval. The members of the *morung* purchase pigs and cattle when the *morung* was to be rebuilt. The animals were ceremonially killed by the *ariju tir*, a sort of captain of the *morung*, who is an elderly person, saying "may my sons of this *ariju* flourish and grow like cans-shoots and banyan trees and become wise". For doing this the old man also get a share of meat from this and they are *genna* for 6 days. The carving of the main post and smearing on it with soot and blood of the killed animal is done by the old men of *ariju*. It is not be done by those whose wives are pregnant nor could it be by unmarried persons. On the last evening the *morung* members made a feast outside the *morung*. At the *Moatsu* festival, the blood of the animals killed by the *ariiu* people is smeared yearly abaut the base of the *ariju* main post.

The people who belonged to the *ariju* as an institution is known as *Ariju Nunger* or people of the *ariju*. It is purely military and has nothing to do with civil affairs. On attaining the age adulese of adolescence all the boys of the village born within a period of 3 years enter *ariju* and become the member of the institution. A boy once entered the *ariju* should continue to be a member of it till he gets married.

Of the working orders of the *ariju*, there are three; the term of service of each rank is for three years and each of the orders is supposed to sleep in *ariju* at night. Two higher orders called *sangremin* and *pener sensong* may sleep where they chose

in *ariju* or not and each of these two sinecure orders have a three years term.

The first and the lowest of the *ariju* orders is the new entrants or the *Sungpur*, who have various menial duties to perform till they are relieved by another new group who enters the *ariju* after three years. They are kept under the strickest discipline in *ariju* at night and their courage and bravery is also tested at the death of night by their *ariju* elders. They work like slaves for the elders bring wood and water for the *ariju*. If the elders come in tired at night, the *sungpur* have to shampoo or massage them and wait on them. As this sort of work lasts for three years the discipline amounts to something especially as parents cannot interfere with the discipline of the *ariju*. No boy who did not serve his term as *sungpur* could hope to get any important office in the village.

Tenabanger or *Tanabang Zungar* is the second of the *ariju* orders, they have to teach the *sungpur* their work and do a considerable drudgery. *Tenabanger* allots and look after the work of the *sungpur*. Formerly they were not supposed to marry during their time of service as *Tenabanger*.

Tebui, or *Tebui-zungar* is the last and highest working order. They rejoice to be master and rid of irksome duties and punishments. *Tebui* may mean entered into the rank of masters, and *tebui* may mean more than ordinary masters, grant masters. Usually only a few of the *Tebui* are married and these are mostly sons of wealthy parents.

Above the *Tebui* were the *arijuin* or *Sangremin* (Mature bachelores). These were mostly bachelors and usually called *aruiner*. If a boy entered the *sungpur* at 18 years of age, then on leaving the *Sangremin* order he would be twenty-five so that is probably few men formerly married before twenty four or twenty-five years old.

Pener, or *pener sensong* was the last of the *ariju* orders and the last two orders were mostly sinecure. Of the *pener* rank one of each clan was made a *sensong* and of these one was made *Unger* (chief) It is possible that in the age group or order of *pener sensong*, there may be several members from the same clan. In which case the eldest of them is made chief or *sensong*. *Unger* is selected only from the highest clan. If there is and clan of *pongen* phratry, *Unger* is selected from that clan. In the absence of *pongen* a man of the of clan *Lungkum* phratry becomes *Unger*. If the clans of both phratry is absent in a village then the *unger* may be a man of the clan of *Jami* phratery. *Pener* means complete or last order *sensong* means chief groups or a group of chiefs. Of the animals killed by the *ariju* the *Unger* had the head, and after this and the viscera had been removed, the animal was split in two halves along the line of centre of back-bone and of these halves the *sensong* had one as theirs, but of their half the *sensong* were accustomed to give a piece to the *Unger* for himself and family. The *sensong* with the *Unger* held office three years, and had control of all the property of the *ariju*. On retiring each *sensong* gave 6 basket of paddy to his successor. The ex-senson were entitled to no share of *ariju* meet.

The *ariju unger* will occasionally go as such to a rich man's cultivation and be paid for this work in grain. This will be deposited in the *ariju* Grannary and be loaned at 100 p.c. interest if an opportunity offers. In this way they provide for their feasts. As the higher order goes out of office every three years and a new set comes in as *sungpur*, so after harvest of third year the stockades, *ariju* house etc. are in fair condition, then there is a big feast of what grain, or cattle belong to the *ariju* and the *sensong* with farewell instructions to their successors retire.

A sort of captain known as *ariju tir* of the *ariju* people is appointed so far as making war is concerned. He may not go with the war parties but he is consulted and advises as to going or not going. He is supposed to consult omens (*amtsu*) and know what is best in the matters. He holds his office during life or till age prevents his serving effectively. The *ariju tir* was sometimes worshipped when living or at his grave after death. Chongly and Mongsen *ariju* may each have a *tir*.

The *ariju* house, the big tree drum, the smaller and portable drums and trumpets, the stockade and the village gates come under the care of the *ariju* organisation as well as general matter, especially the *ariju* people see that the village gate is properly fastened at night. In village battles, all the orders above the *sungpur* (first age group) were to attend unless disabled by sickness or wounds. If able bodied do not present, a fine was imposed and the persons disgraced. The *ariju* appoints and furnishes the lemener or night watchmen. But the day watchmen of a village called *tsudimunger* are not appointed by the *ariju*. The day watchmen, may be three or four men from each *khel* stay in the village by rotation during the day time. Thus the village is kept day and night under strict vigilence by the *ariju* men at night and *tsudimunger* during day time.

Though head-hunting no longer exists now, it was of fundamental cultural and religious importance in their life in the past. To take a head in a raid was the greatest honour for a man and thereby earned him the right to wear certain dress and ornaments, which are not entitled to others. Carving of human heads of the beams and pillars of a Warrior's house and *morung* and painting of human head on the white median band of *Tsungkotepsul* and on the door of village gate show that head-hunting is the inspiration not only of carving but of painting as well.

The second source of inspiration is the necessity of decorating the *morung* for purposes of prestige and magic. In the past *morung* as the centre of all social activities and also the guard house for the village. Head taken is first brought to the *morung*, the village young men slept here and kept vigil throughout the night.

There are no guilds or clans of wood carver, but certain men take up the art and acquire skill in the work. Wood carving is practised by older men alone. A few primitive tools used in wood carving are as follows :

1. *Dao* (see fig. after page 48) a cutting tool, is used by every naga for manifold purposes. The Ao *dao* has a longish handle and is carried slung in a wooden carrier on the buttock with the edge upward. It is drawn with the right hand from the right side not over the shoulder like a *dao* of chang tribe. The most prevailing type of Ao *dao* has more or less a straight back and straight top and right angles to it about 9 cms wide from which the blade gradually narrows to the tang. The length of the blade is nearly 25 cms while the tang proper is 12 cms long. The tang is socketed into the bamboo handle 31 cms long and 3.5 cms thick in diameter the end of the handle being bound with cane, iron or wire to keep it from splitting.

2. *Adze*—It consists of the blade proper and the handle. The blade is nearly 7 cms broad at the working end which gradually narrows to the size of a pencil at the other end. It is nearly 12 cms long. The narrow end is fitted into a socket of the handle made of a piece of bamboo nearly 35 cms long.

3. Chisel—Generally two types of chisels are used. (a) An *adze* blade fastened to a long bamboo or wooden handle nearly a metre or more long is used as a chisel. (b) A small chisel made from an old *dao* tang sharpened down, is used to cut smaller holes and slits.

4. Axes are also of two types :

(a) One is a long and thick blade of iron nearly 18 cms long, 8 cms broad at the working end while only 3 cms wide at the butt end. It is about a centimetre thick at the butt, but the working end is much thinner. The narrow end is inserted in a socket in the wooden handle of 45 or more cms long.

(b) In the case of the first axe, the axe is socketed in the handle but in the second case the handle is fitted into the socket of the axe. The axe is very thick at the butt end, nearly 2 cms, but the working end is thin and sharp. It is about 15 cms long and 11 cms broad. At the thick end there is a hole into which the handle nearly 50 cms long is fitted.

5. Leaf : Sometimes carvings are polished with a rough leaf of a tree locally known as *Metongmezuba* which serves well as a sand paper.

Actual Operation

Carvings of heads of human beings, tigers, elephants, hornbills (*dichoceros bicornis*), Pythons and *mithun*, with which the Morung pillers are adorned, are done in very high relief. The working tools are of primitive type and considering the tools the carving are well done. Carving of round figure is usually crude, but the conventional human heads, tigers, elephants, pythons and hornbills, are carefully done. In the past, the house of warrior or a very rich man was also decorated with such carvings. A post which is to be so treated is first roughly squared with a *dao* but more often figures are carved almost completely out of the actual wood. A kind of wood locally called *Kumisung* is preferred for this work. The outline of the desired figure is first sketched with charcoal on the post and the rest of the surface cut away sufficiently to leave in high relief. Though there is no guild or clan of craftsman, carving and colouring are done conventionally by elderly men.

The Morung carvings are always in high relief and since they are carved on large pillars and beams, some of them are even life-size. The carvings are coloured with soot and blood of pig or cow. Colouring is not done by bachelors.

The Great Indian Hornbill (*dochocros bicornis*) is carved in life-size. Among the Naga tribe the beak and feathers of hornbill are considered

symbolic of their magical powers or as symbols of courage and splendour. The wearing of its feather is the prerogative of a man who has taken a head, one feather being allowed for each head taken, it is taboo for any one else to wear it In its carving the chief attention is paid to the head and tail. The head and its beak are very skillfully carved so as to exactly represent every detail of the natural one. The body is represented by a rough rectangle. with the posterior slightly narrower. The tail, which is an alongation of the body itself, not attached on the beam or pillar, is simply a flat one, striped with black in the middle. The colour is obtained from soot and pig's blood. Sometimes powdered charcoal is used in place of soot.

Human being is carved usually in smaller than lifes-size. The features are carved in high relief and are fairly realistic. Noses are usually broad and nostrils are also represented. The ear is made prominent, the eyes are narrow ovals, and the eyebrows are sometimes painted black. The mouth is shown as a slit with no tongue, sometimes teeth are represented with vertical ridges.

Elephant and tiger are regarded as the symbol of valour and some representation of these great animals appears in pillars and beams of Morung. Fiercely striped tiger is carefully carved. The head is round with a pair of prominent eyes, and the mouth is shown as a deep slit. The fangs are often represented with ridges. Legs are also carved and paws represented by vertical ridges. The tail is a long bar and very prominent. It is carefully striped with black and white alternately. The whole body is painted with black stripes.

Carvings of elephant, especially the head portion is realistic but the legs are more or less conventional. The trunk and tusks are skillfully carved so also the back side of the body. The tail is also roughly represented.

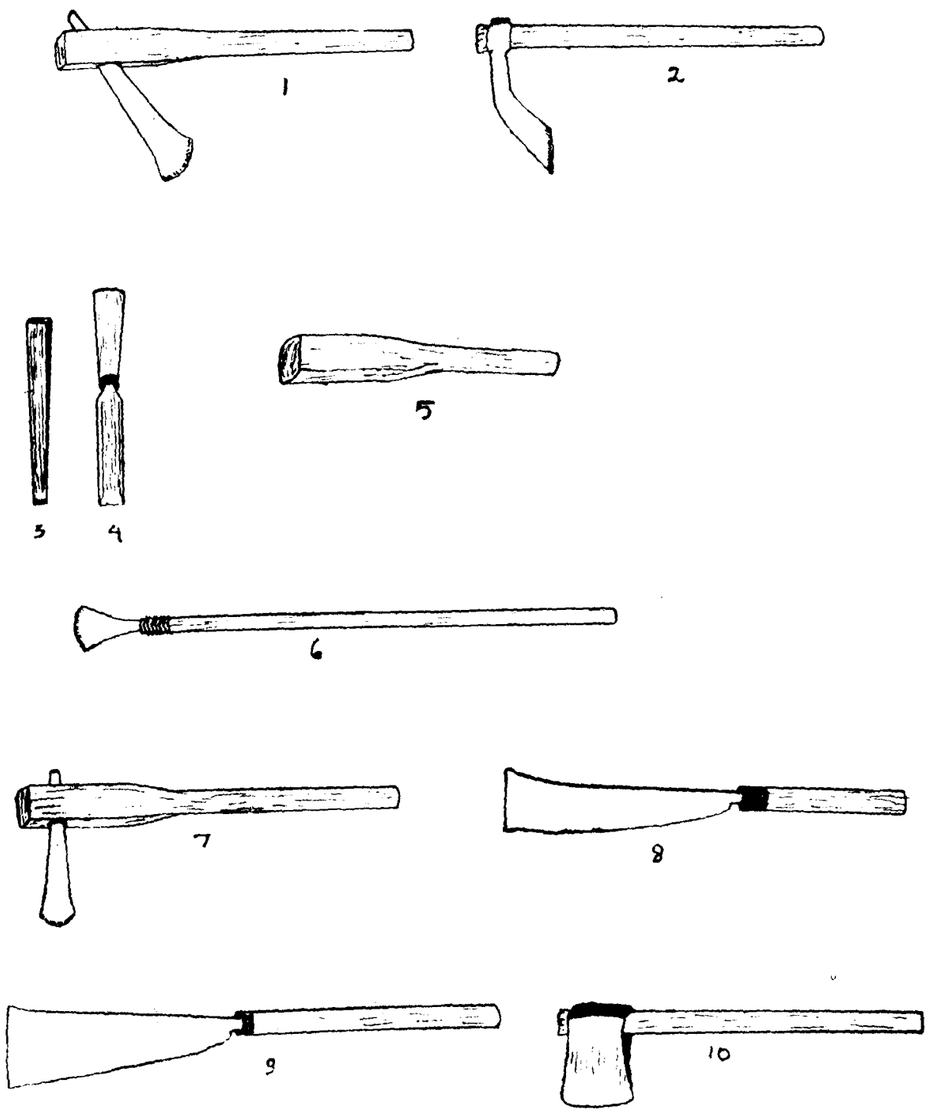
Pythons usually in pairs are carved in high relief. The whole length is made zig zag to appear like moving. To distinguish the two bodies a deep groove is made between the two, but the heads are separate. The head portion is detached from the beam or pillar and the two eyes are distinct, the mouth is shown as a small slit or simply by men as of a black line. The whole body is covered with black spots to look like the natural skin.

While the Elephant, Tiger and Hornbill are the symbols of valour, the *mithun* is the symbol of wealth, and some representation of this animal or their skulls appears as a decorative motif. *Mithun* a massive animal (the *boas frontalis*) is a domestic animal and in some of the tribes is used almost as currency to settle a marriage or to pay a fine. In Naga traditional life this animal undoubtedly symbolises wealth. A central feature of traditio al Naga life, is the giving of what have come to be known as Feasts of Mer t, in which the splendour colour and extravagance of Naga Life is depicted. these feasts consist broadly speaking, of a series of ceremonies in a rising scale of importance, leading finally to the sacrifice of the *mithun*. The feasts bring the donor honour both now and after death and he can hence forth wear special clothes and ornaments, and decorate his house in a special way. Only a married man can give one of these feasts, for his wife must take a conspicuous and honoured place in the ceremonies Representation of *mithun* sometimes is painted on the front beam of a rich man's house who had sacrificed *mithun* in the past.

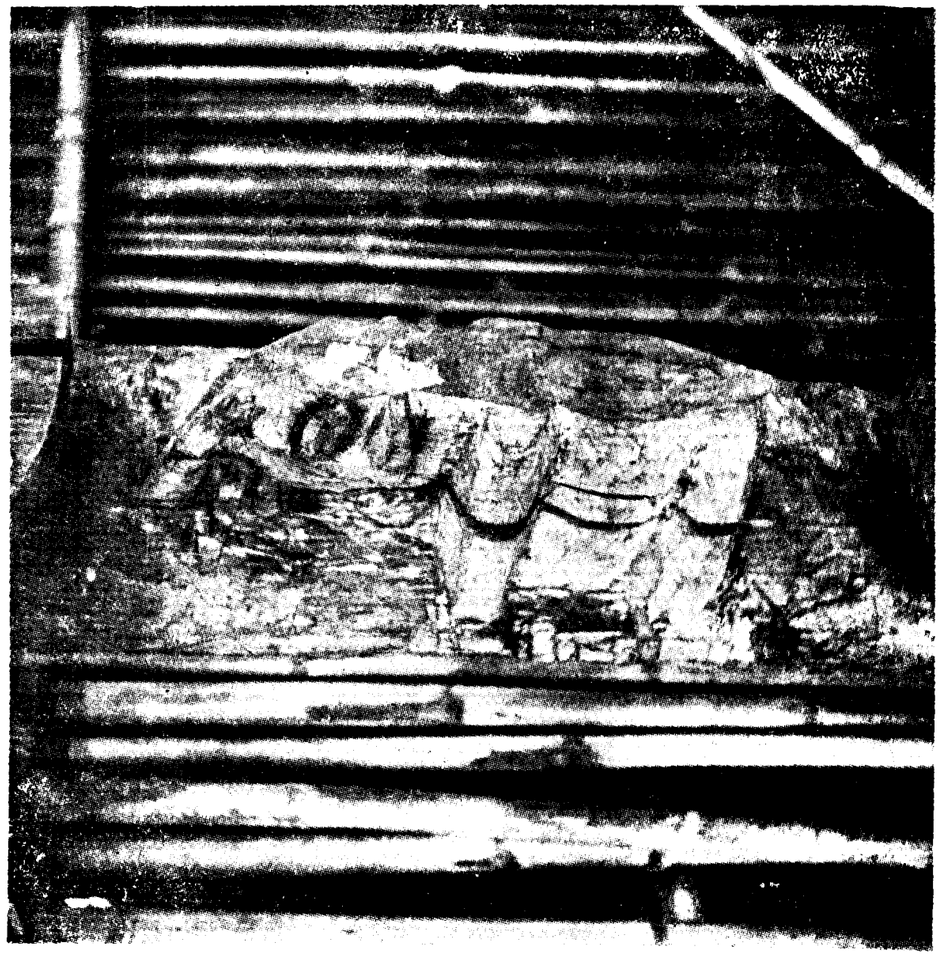
Carving of Log Drum (Xylophone)

The Aos Mokokchung district presents a characteristic not found in some of their neighbouring Naga tribes. This is their having the huge Xylophone labouriously hewn out of as single log. Though its primary function is that of a drum, it is treated with reverence almost like an idol. The Xylophone is called as 'Tongton' and 'Sungkong' respectively in Mongsen and Chongli dialects. This is inseparately associated with head-hunting and Morung institutions, which are in turn associated with religious beliefs and practices. Due to christian influence the practice of head-hunting and Morung life was given up and along with those the importance of log drum also disappeared. Though it is preserved in many villages as an object of interest, its utility no longer exists. In almost all the Ao villages there were two Xylophones side by side with the Chongli and Mongsen Morungs.

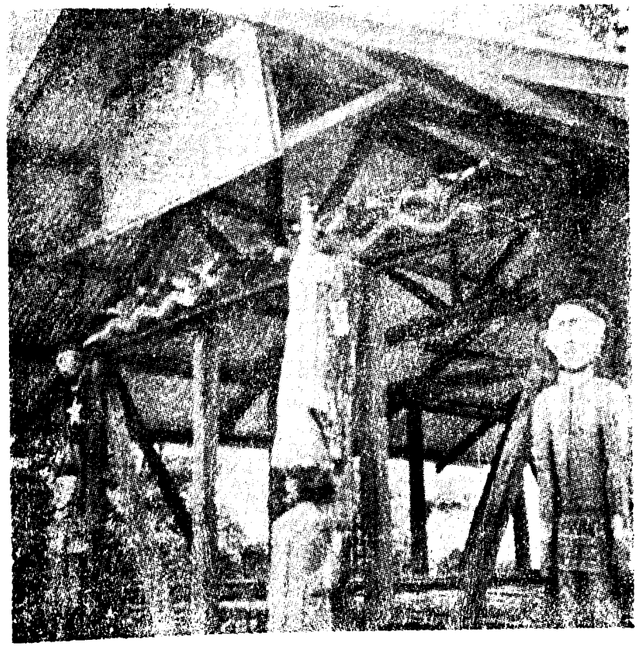
With an average dimension of 11 metres long and 4.2 metres in girth, the drum is indeed very huge. It is labouriously hewn out from a single log. To make a village drum a search is made in nearby jungle for a suitable big tree. Having located the tree, it is cut down and the required section is cut out from the trunk. The whole carving is done in the jungle. There are no special tools for carving it. The ordinary *dao*, adze, axe and chisel already described above are the only tools. A long slit running down the length of the body of the drum is dug out. Through this lit the whole cavity is hewn out. One end is carved to represent the head of the drum. The head of the drum might have been carved to symbolise the head of the *mithun* as some of the written information suggests, but quite a few do not agree with this. It is difficult to say exactly what it symbolises. There is no representation of the horns. The eyes



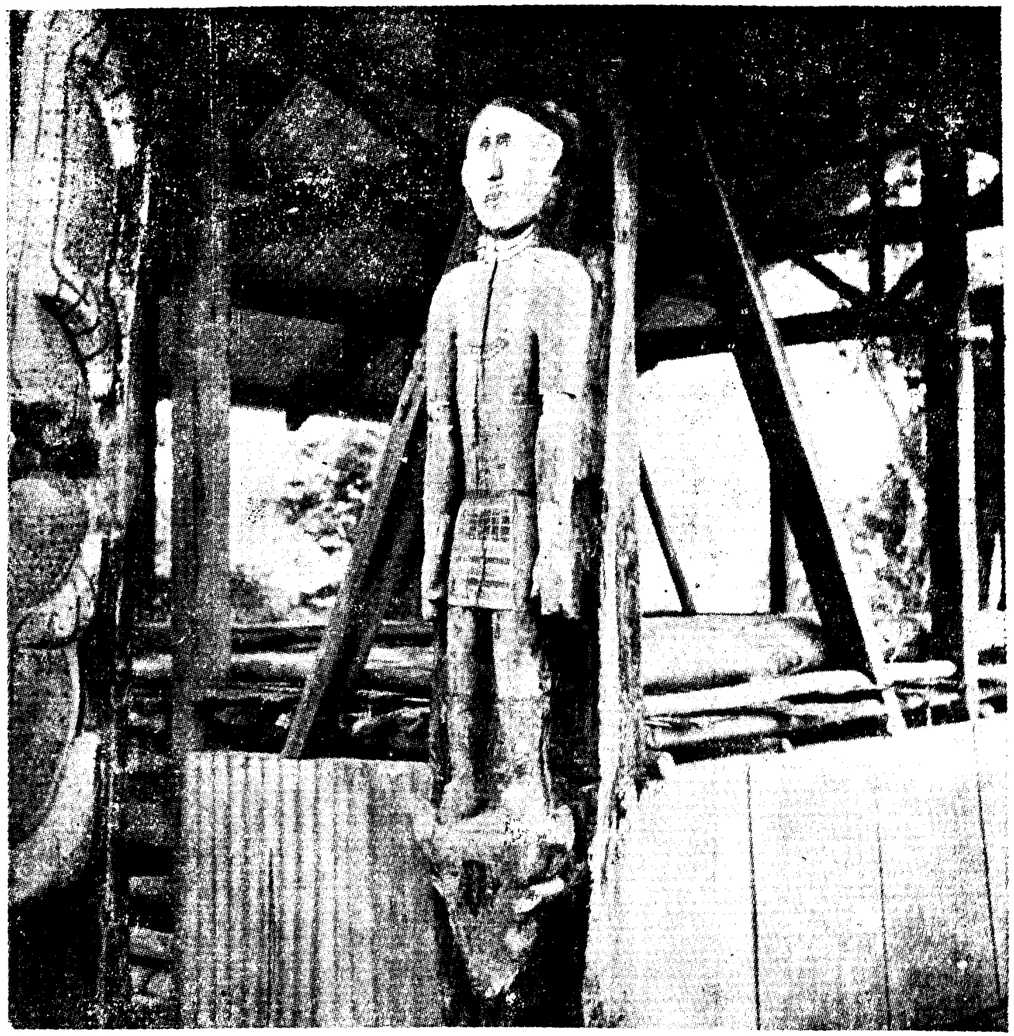
Tool used for Wood Carving
No. 1, 7 and 10 — different kinds of axes,
No. 2 adze 3, 4 and 6 chisels No. 5 Wooden hammer
No. 8 Angami *Dao*, No. 9 Ao Dan



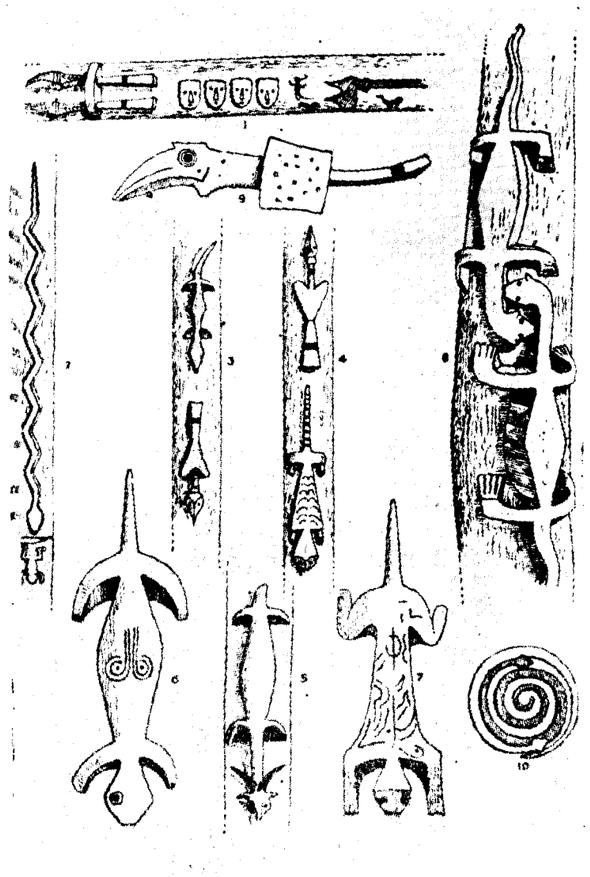
Wood carving symbolising horn bill



Wood carvings

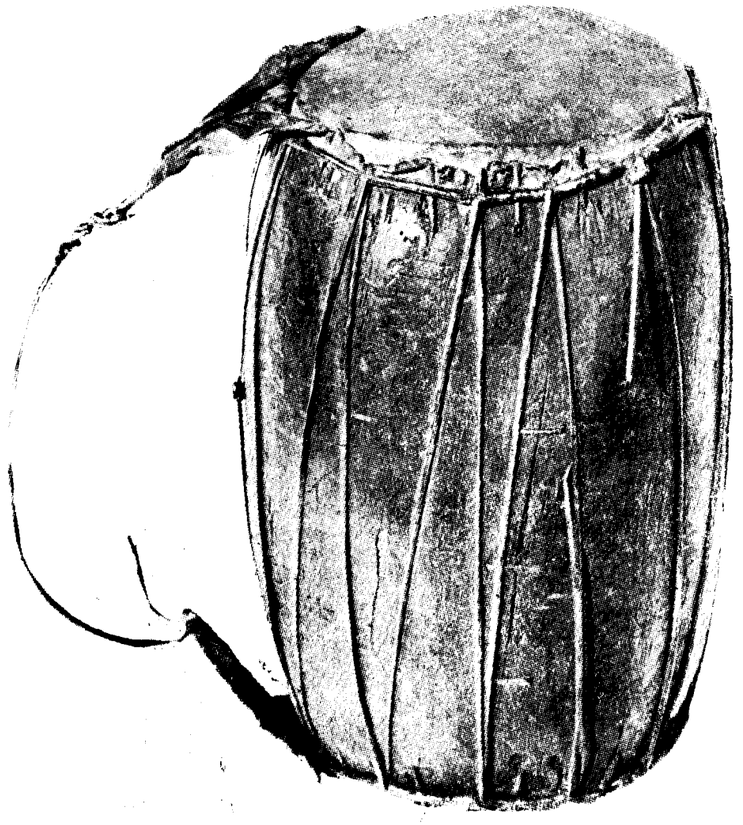


Wood Carvings

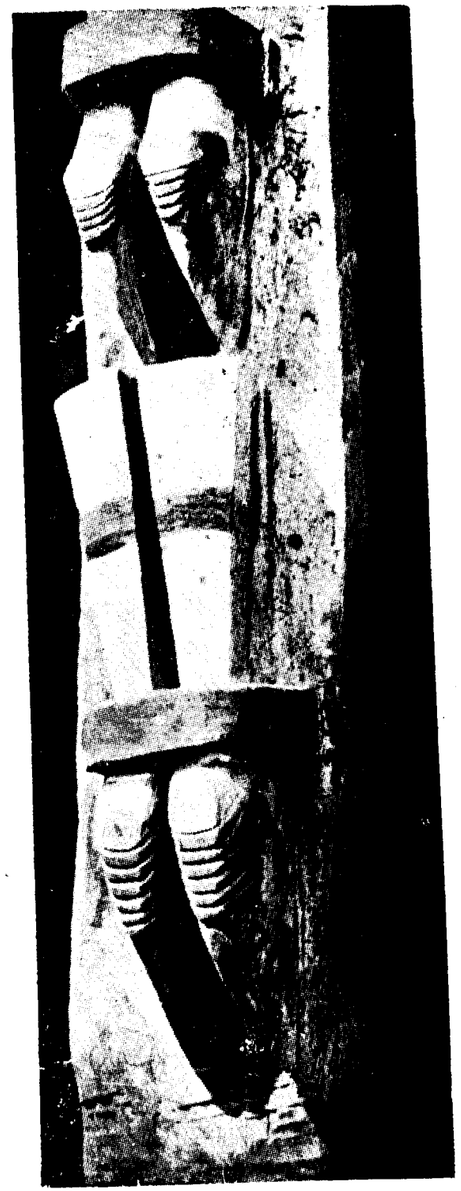


Wood Carving (After Mills)

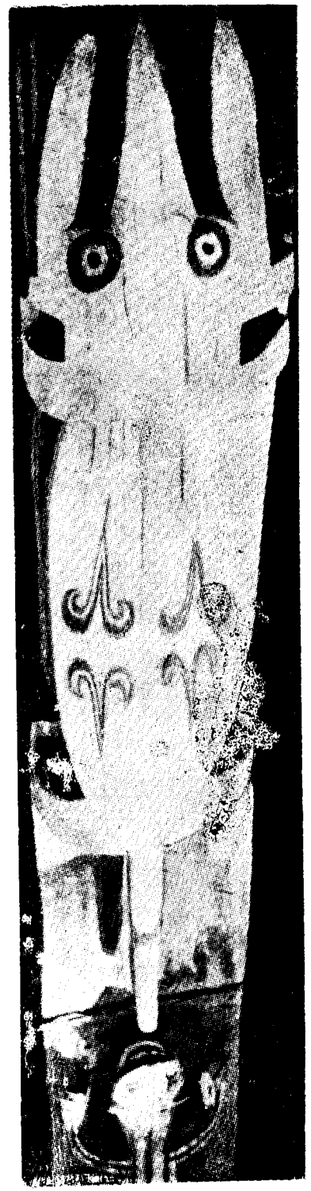
Log drum of Waromung village (Photo after Mills)



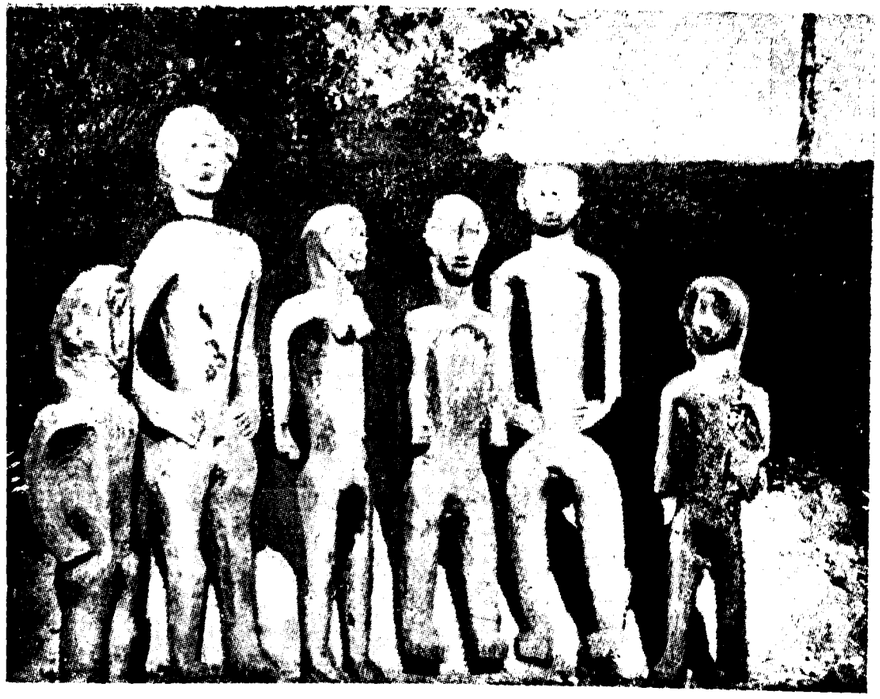
Portable drum



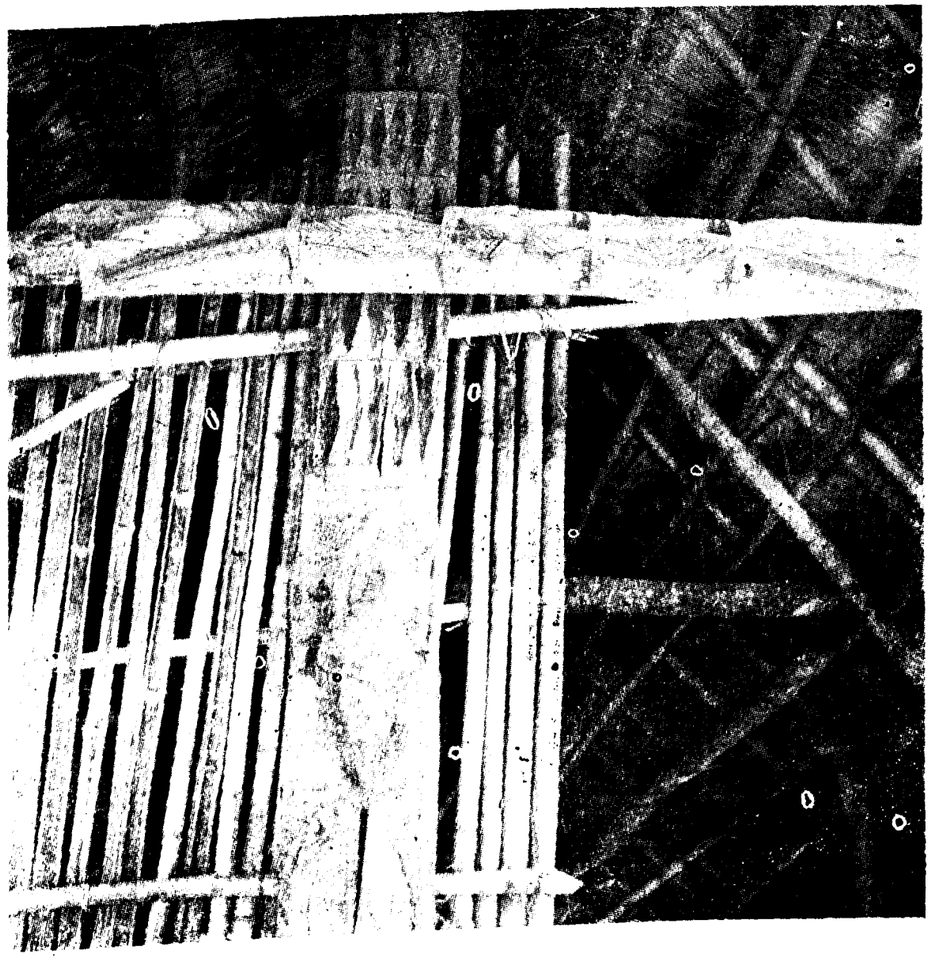
Wood carving symbolising horn bill



Wood carving symbolising
Elephant



Wood carving (after Mills)

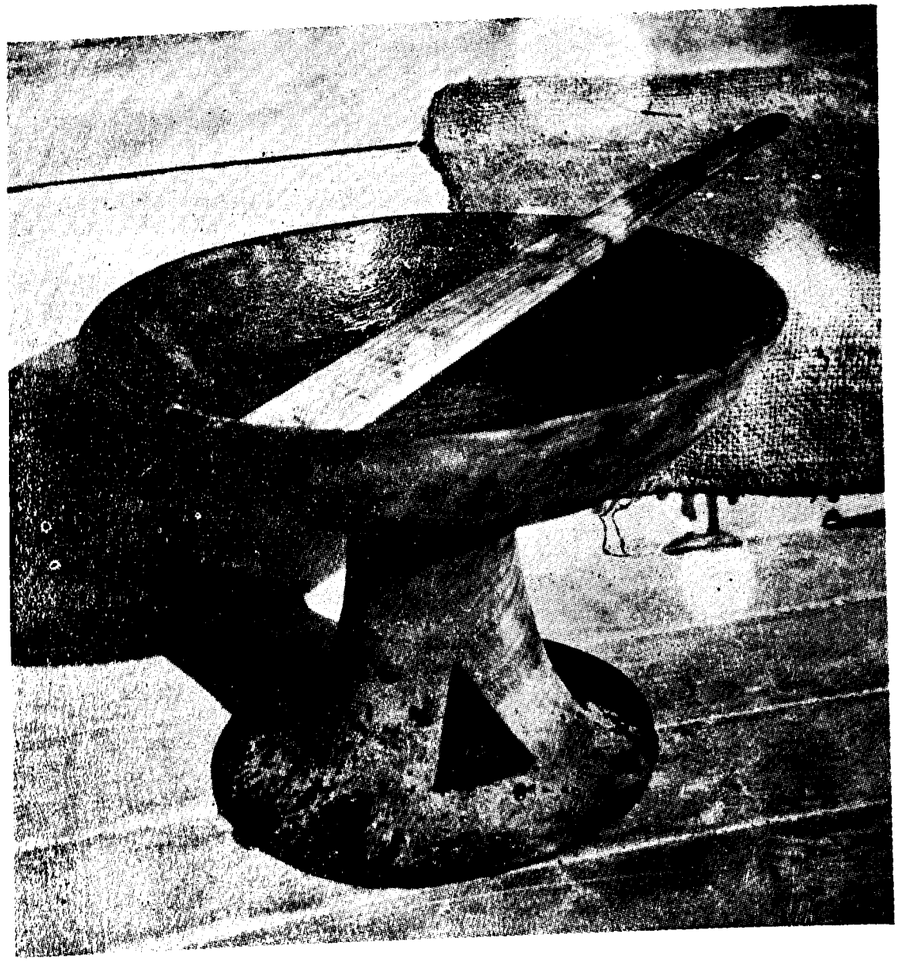


Wood Carvings

Wood Carvings (After Mills)

Wood carving of Mithun Head

Dao Case



Wooden platter

and mouth are respectively represented by painting circles and lines with black paint The ear is prominently represented by carving crescentic shapes on both sides. As a matter of fact, the head of the drum does not look like the head of any creature. Except for paring with the *dao* the body of the drum is not worked.

The drum is always kept near the Morung in whose charge it is, and is placed in a hut to protect it from weather.

It is said that enormous labour was required to make the drum and drag it up to the village. All men above the age of 13 participate in the dragging with much feasting and drinking. It is too big to be carried like other posts or pillars so it has to be dragged. Wooden rollers are placed under it to make it possible to move but sometimes the drum is regarded as having its own will as a living being not to make any move, at a snails pace, then it is dragged to the village. Having arrived at its destination, it is dragged and lifted on to four or five logs prepared for it. The logs are laid transversely to give the drum greater reasonance and thus be heard from a long distance. After placing the drum with the slit at the top in the site selected, it is fenced round and the drum may not be beaten, or the fence removed, till the young men of the village have brought in a human head to the village. Blood of the beasts killed in the Morung is smeared on it saying: "Let good people grow in the village and let there be no epidemic and pestilence; let good young men be born and let there be prosperity; let us be blessed with human heads, tigers, elephants, wild boars and hornbill"

In beating the drum, the men of the Morung line up along it One strong man gives the time with two levers which he raises and allows to fall on the drum, while others drum and roll with large wooden strikers. The drum is beaten at the edge of the slit. It is to be beaten only on auspicious occasions such as to celebrate the taking of a head and feastival or to give alaram in time of danger, like the appearance of enemies or burning of houses. It is also beaten during the lunar or solar eclipses. Different sounds are produced to indicate the different occasions and people at far distance can readily distinguish from the sound whether it is an alaram or an occasion for rejoicing.

The tools used by the Angamis for carving wood are their *dao*, adze and chisels similar to those of Aos. The carvings on wood are also of conventional designs like the Ao which slightly vary in different villages. The prevailing form of figures and symbols specially those carvings on the wooden door of the village gate are in very high relief, but carvings in low relief are also not uncommon. In certain cases carvings almost flush with the wood are also found. In such case they are sometimes coloured with the colours used for dyeing cloth and for white paint with lime. The commonest conventional form of all is that of the *mithun* head, which is symbolic of wealth as is the hornbill feather of valour. The head of the *mithun* is usually represented with rather exaggerated horns. Square projections for ears, and a purely conventional nose. The representation of human head is also very common. The carving of a pig's head is still more conventional being little more than a lozenge with the ends squared off. Another carving which is symbolic of prosperity is the paddy plant with ears. Sometimes full figure of human being in dancing dress is also carved. These carvings and others are seen in large number on the great wooden doors of village, on the front gable and wall of the houses and on the beams of the rest house on the road side to the field.

Other Wood Works

Besides wood carving other wood work consists of a variety of articles used as utensils rice pounding table, musical instruments etc. For the making of all articles the same tools already mentioned are used.

The rice-pounding table is indispensible in the life of a Naga. It is hewn from the trunk of a huge tree and has to be carried to the village by owner's kinsmen and friends, who go en masse to fetch it which they do to the accompaniment of melodious voices. In size it may vary from tribe to tribe as for example, the Ao rice-pounding table which they called *Semki* is of one and a half to two metres long and 70 cms to a metre long with two to three round holes at an interval of 12 cms dug into the wood by an adze in which the paddy is pounded. This table is shaped from the trunk by *bao* and axe. The Angami rice pounding table *Chiekhe* is a massive object of 2 to 3 metres long with a broad wooden keel of 60 cms to a metre wide and several holes about 50cms apart dug into by an adze.

A round section of a tree trunk with a large single hole and three low legs are used to pound bamboo-shoots. It is nearly one metre high and 35 cms in diametre. The Angami liquor vat made from a hallowed section of a tree with three legs hewn in block is similar to the Ao bamboo shoot mortar. The hole is dug out by the long handled chisel. For ceremonial purposes rich men prepare liquor in huge liquor vats, *Kouzuo*, with enormous dimension of 3 to 4 metres long and a

diametre of 70 cms to 1 metre, hallowing out the trunk of a tree like a dug out banoe, with a slit about 20 to 30 cms wide running all along the vat and a projecting handle to both ends. The hallowing out is done by axe, adze and chisel.

Various sizes and several patterns of wooden platters are carved by the Nagas. The wood is cut by a *dao* or an axe and the shaping is done by the dao and chisel. Little wooden saucers are used as appetiser dishes and large ones as plates from which to eat. The most popular is a round four-legged pattern cut from solid wood in all sizes from 15 cms to 45 cms in diametre and from 7 cms to 30 cms in height. Another similar dish is an one-legged pattern of many sizes cut from solid wood. Some Angami wind the wood round with a fibre rope and the two ends of this are pulled to make it revolve against a *dao* and it is thus cut circular with a waist. Others shape it circular merely by hand with *dao*. The top is hollowed by a chisel. It is then rubbed smooth with stones; some tribe like Aos and Lothas use a curious rough surfaced leaf of a tree *clerondendrum-scratum* .

Several patterns of *dao* carriers are made of wood. First a miniature box like solid wood of 15 cms long and 8 cms broad on both sides is cut with a *dao* from a solid wood. It is square in cross section. First a narrow slit is bored with a narrow chisel through the wood to carry the *dao* slung. Next with the same chisel another shallow slit is made on one of the sides of the wood to fasten it to the carrier by means of thread. It is carried on the bullock of the carrier.

Drums are made of wood and hide. A round section of a hallowed trunk of a large sized tree is cut for this purpose. The size of average drum is 70 cms long and 50 to 60 cms in diametre. The two ends are slightly narrower while the central portion is slightly bulged. Hide of cow is stretched tightly on both the ends.

Rough planks nearly 2 metres long and 1 metre wide are hacked out with an axe and a *dao*, a most wasteful method as the whole thickness of tree has to go to make each plank.

PART FIVE

IRON SMITHY

8 Origin and Tools

Origin of craft

Smithy-craft is not old in Nagaland and there are very few smiths in the land. A historical background of this craft in Ao area of Mokokchung district is given below: The information was given by Merangtsulak (82 years) and Sakulemba (80 Years) of Waromung.

Formerly metal work was not known to the Aos, but later certain wanderers from the plains of Assam introduced it in the land. About nine generations ago, it is said that a body of immigrants came up from the plains and established villages in the river valleys of Tsurong and Mening. After about four generations, these people went back following the valley of the river Melak and on their way back left six persons behind them. Those persons later settled in Melingmen, a village in Langpangkong range, a few kilometres from mening river. From there one went to Chungtia village another to Mopungchuket village and two persons by name Bholai and Rongsangba stayed at Waromung. They abandoned their religion, which probably was Hinduism, adopted Ao customs and absorbed into Ao clans, but did not keep up the art of smithy. Gradually few men learnt this art from them and became blacksmiths. Thus, in due course, it spread to a few Ao villages. At first the Aos were reluctant to adopt a trade unknown to their forefathers, but now-a-days with the breaking down of old customs and the establishment of a technical school at Kohima, a considerable number of small smithies have been started. Except individual smithies, there is no co-operative production centre or training centre in the Ao country.

The process of iron smithy conducted in different localities of Ao area and for that matter in the State is broadly the same, and the description of one of them would *mutatis mutandis* suffice for all except in respect of the operations of Angami bellows which is described later. Thus for close examination and detail survey of the subject the study has been confined to the blacksmith of one particular Ao village, Waromung.

Waromung has only one full time blacksmith, but this does not mean that blacksmithy in his traditional occupations. He had not undergone any training to learn it, but during his boyhood, he often went to a smithy that was located near his house. During his leisure hours he used to go there and playfully handled the implements of the smithy. Somehow he took an interest in this art and gradually started his own smithy. His present skill in blacksmithy is mostly due to his inner compulsion to constantly work at the craft.

Iron

The Aos do not know the process of iron smelting; neither is there any iron ore in the land. So, the raw materials are all brought from the plains of Assam in the form of cheap spades, and wrought by the smith into weapons and implements of soft steel easily kept sharp by whetting with water on a stone. It is gathered that usually the iron is supplied by the local consumers themselves. Of this, half is given to the smith as making charges and from the other half the required articles is made for the consumer. Often an old hoe is used in shaping a *dao*, an old *dao* is similarly used for making an adze or a sickle.

Charcoal

Besides, iron, the other raw materials used for smithy is charcoal from wood and coalr. The blacksmith is an expert charcoal burne. He makes it from sal *Shorea robusta* oak, and othre

hard wood. He moves about in the forest trying to locate dead and dried-up trees which are bigger than two feet in circumference. Smaller trees and twigs and small branches are not used for the production of charcoal, because they may either get completely burnt to ashes or get reduced into too small a size for producing purpose, which are uneconomical for use in the furnace. The dried up trees are chopped into pieces of one to two feet long. These are piled up and fire is set to it. It takes about 2 hours to burn into charcoal. When the flame is subsided, the fire is quenched with water and the charcoal is collected in a carrying basket and brought home. The burning of charcoal is done by males only. In the whole process of iron smithy woman does not take any part. Smith craft is also an exclusively man's work like basketry.

Another process of burning charcoal underground is also common. For this a large pit is dug near the place of dried up trees. Another side hole connecting the main pit to allow air to enter into the pit, is dug. The choped piece of wood is piled up in the pit and is then covered with earth except for a little hole for smoke to escape. The fire is set from the side hole. In this connection, it is left for a night. When the wood is burnt into charcoal, earth is *banked* over the charcoal, and thereby the fire is extinguished. The charcoal is collected the next morning. The quality of charcoal thus obtained from the pit is much better than the open burning. But if the pit not properly made there is every danger of the whole lot being burnt to ashes.

Forging fuel

Sometimes what is known as steam coal is burnt in the furnace in place of charcoal. It is readily available on the surface of the ground at about 5 kilometres to the east of the village. Coal is found at almost equal distance to the west of the village. But the distance and steep track always stand on the way in the matter of its transportation where mechanical means of transport is nil. Moreover, burning coal produces more smoke than that of charcoal and emits an acrid odour, because of this the charcoal is always preferred to coal.

Workshop

A separate forge, *Yinchem ki* in local dialect, the diamension of which is 4.5 metres long, 4 metres in breadth and 3 metres high, is constructed just at the back of his dwelling house. It is a very simple hut, the four walls being built of loose bamboo matting and the roof of palm leaves without a ceiling. It requires only four persons to build this hut.

The bellows

The first object that attracts a visitor's attention on entirely the smithy is the bellows. This is the ordinary hand-bellows called *Meyang* in local dialect. The bellow is made of a section of the trunk of a tree shaped so as to be 28 cms in diameter on the front and 26 cms at the back with a length of 1.2 metres. The inside of this piece of trunk is dug out so as to make a cavity of 20 cms in diameter all through. Usually a hollow trunk is preferred instead of labouriously digging out the cavity. Two circular pieces of plank are chiseled so as to exactly fit the two mouths of the cavity of the trunk. Five slits, each the size of the small finger, rebored through the chiseled plank of the back side, while a single hole is bored on the front one to pass the feathered piston. A flap of hide or thick cloth works as a value from inside against the five holes in the back. The piston is a thick bamboo stick, covered with feathers arranged tip downwards to give the necessary valvular force. At the side of the bellow is fitted two bamboo cylinders to serve as outlet pipes, the mouths of which are embedded in clay and unite at the furnace.

Working of the Bellow

When the piston is pulled, out the flap inside allows the air to get into the cavity. Next, when the piston is pushed in the feather-arrangement of the piston forces in the air, and as result of this the flap closes the holes at the back and the air is forced down the two cylinders. Thus the fire is continuously blown as strokes are given by the piston.

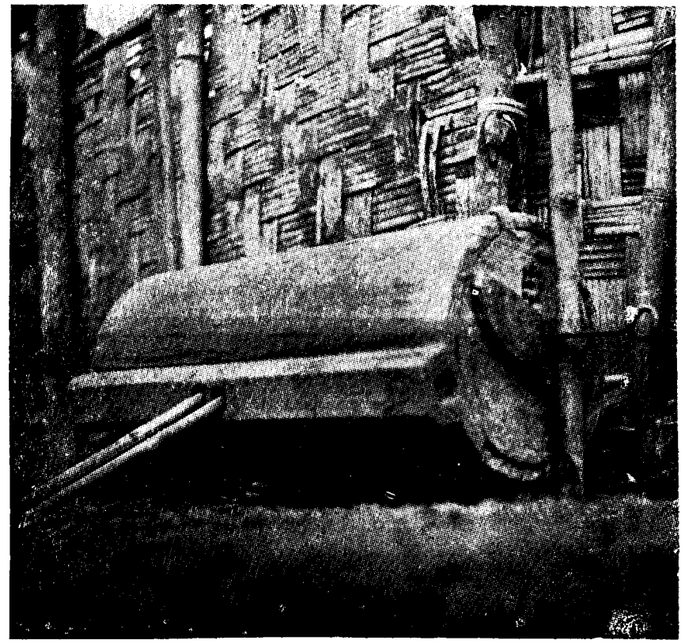
A slab of stone or clay is moulded about 25 cms high just at the mouth of the two bamboo cylinders to protect the pipes and bellow from fire and also to hold the charcoal.

Water is stored in a hallowed out log to quench the finished articles. All other tools used are of foreign manufacture.

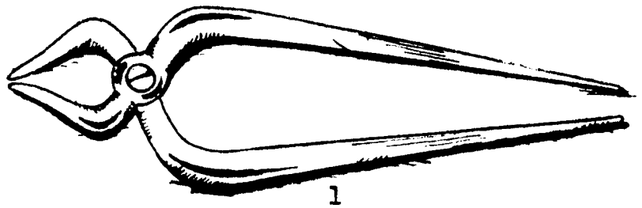
Forging Tools

Among the tools and implements necessary for forging and allied works, the most important ones are the hammer and anvil.

Near the hearth is fixed the anvil *yinchemba*, a large bar of iron 12 cms in diameter and 20 cms



Bellow used by the Smith of Ao Naga



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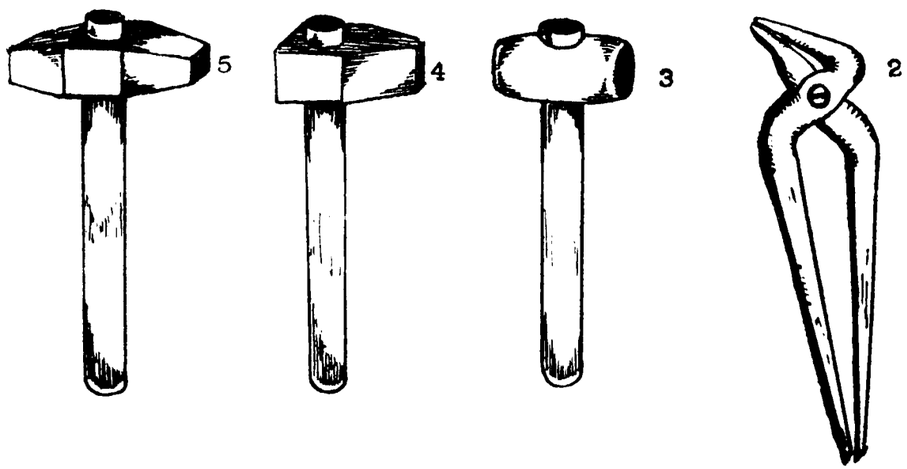

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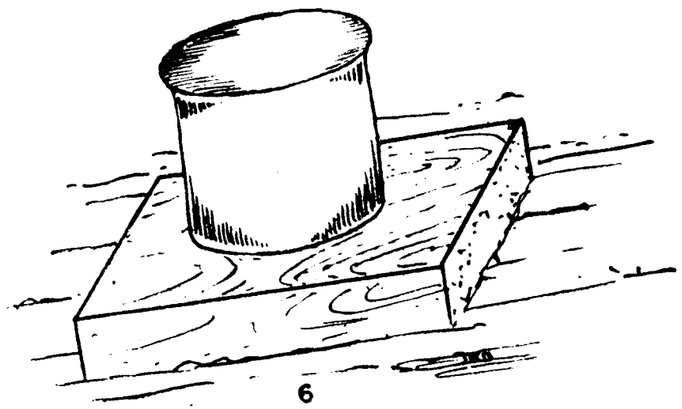


6

Tools for forging
1. Fig. 1 Tongs with straight lips 2. Fig. 2 Tongs with curved lips.
3. Figs. 3, 4 and 5 Different types of Hammers 4. Fig. 6 Steel Anvil (Yinchem)

Different tools of the Blacksmith

The Blacksmith.

The Black smith at work

The Black smith at work

in height. The upper end is flat, forming a surface on which the red-hot-iron's hammered to shape. The other end is planted firmly into a log which embedded in the earth. A flat steel anvil serves to straighten the articles.

Hammers *Phathuri* are of usually three types. The heavier one which can hardly be lifted with one hand is a solid heavy block of iron slightly tapering towards the working end and having hole through the opposite ends in order to hold the wooden handle. Both ends are blunt and are square in cross-section but of different dimensions. It measures nearly 25 cms in length and weights about 5 kg. Without the handle, the wooden shafts is 34 cms long and 5 cms in diameter. There is another medium sized hammer which weights 2 kg. with wooden shaft. The other hammer is small in size and meant for lighter work and is used in shaping tools and implements.

The *yinmejepba* or tongs are of two different types, one with straight lips and the other with curved lips. Both the types have long arms for giving a more effective grip with the lips which are pointed. It is shaped from iron rod by the blacksmith himself and is usually 45 to 60 cms long. There are several other tools, which are necessary at different stages.

9. Technique of Production

The local demand is confined mostly to the tools and implements of agriculture and a few household articles. So the artisan makes generally those articles and a few tools and implements for himself. The mental is first heated red-hot in the fire of the forge and the blacksmith starts hammering it skilfully. It is subjected to heating and hammering process a number of times till an approximate shape of the articles intended to be manufactured is attained. It is flattened, rounded or elongated or curved or bent according to what shape may be necessary for the intended article. The process is rather slow. Besides the artisan, another man is needed to operate the bellows.

Shaping Daos

The time-table of the manufacture of a *dao*, for example, to ascertain the amount of labour involved and the income derived is given below :

7.40 A.M.—The fire was lit at the hearth and is covered with 1 kg of charcoal. Immediately the other man operated the bellows. At first, a few long and slow blasts from the bellows were given to ignite the charcoal. Thereafter, the bellow's operation took a regular rythmic form.

7.43 A.M.—An old hoe is placed in the fire for heating.

7.52 A.M.—It is brought out and placed on the anvil for fitting it into two halves. The blacksmith takes two tongs, one in each hand. The left tongs hold the red-hot iron in position, while a blunt chisel is held by the right tongs in such a way as to place the working end of the chisel on the red-hot iron at a point intended to cut. The man working in the bellows operation then takes the heaviest hammer and 9 clow and heavy strokes are given on the head of the chisel. After each stroke the blacksmith changes the position of the chisel, Then the iron is put back into thc fire place for re-heating.

8.02 A.M.—The same process is repeated 8 times when the iron was almost cut into two. Finally, with the help of the tongs, the smith makes several up and down movements and breaks it into two halves. Both halves are then re-heated together.

8.12 A.M.—Takes out one half and hammers 16 times continuously by the smith himself and put back for re-heating.

8.14 A M.—Hammers the other half 18 times and re-heated.

8.23 A M.—Takes out the other half and hammers 19 times giving the strokes all the time on the tang portion to straighten it and then re-heated.

8.25 A.M.—The other half also undergoes the same process.

8.37 A.M.—Takes out and hammers 18 times all over it. The bisected old hoe is now a flat piece of metal with the tang narrower.

8.40 A.M.—Similar attention is given to the other-half.

8.55 A.M.—Send back one of the two to the fire for heating.

9.07 A.M.—Takes out and hammers 2nd time giving more attention to the tang and put both halves for re-heating.

9.18 A.M.—Hammers 15 times on the tang portion, the strokes being lighter this time. Send back to fire again.

9.30 A.M.—Takes out and works on the blade by hammering 20 times and then is re-heated. The process of alternate heating and hammering continues till.

10.50 A.M.—When the *dao* is properly shaped lastly. The cutting edge is made thin, it is refined on thc flat anvil with light hammering after heating.

About one kg. of charcoal is added at every 45 to 50 minutes interval and the ash removed from the forge. When the fire becomes very bright water is sprinkled on it with a broom of palm leaves.

The *daos* shaped out of the hoe are always preferred by the consumers due to its durability. *daos*, which are in demand in all seasons and are very useful in the life of an Ao are also shaped from other metal. The process of heating hammering and shaping being the same, time taken differs depending on the nature of the raw metal.

The shaping of the *dao* having been completed, it is now ready for quenching. The process of shaping two *daos* from an old hoe to the quenching takes nearly three and half hours. But if it is to be shaped from some thicker spade of iron much more time is necessary. Average time taken for manufacturing a *dao* is said to be 3 hours.

Quenching

The blacksmith by sheer experience of many years knows well that if a piece of iron in its high temperature is rapidly cooled by dipping it in a q enching liquid, it will acquire the properties of hard steel and thereby make the article more durable. The quenching liquid used is water. For this purpose the finished article is re-heated. When red-hot, it is taken out by the tongs and about 1 cm of the working edge of the *dao* is dipped for a second and the brittleness closely observed. After a few seconds, the while article is dipped in the same water and remains there for 9 seconds. When the quenched *dao* is closely observed, the working edge, which is dipped first, is more brittle than the rest.

The price of a *dao* is Rs. 4/- to Rs. 5/- in the village. Quite a good number of *daos* are also brought from the plains of Assam.

Articles Manufactured

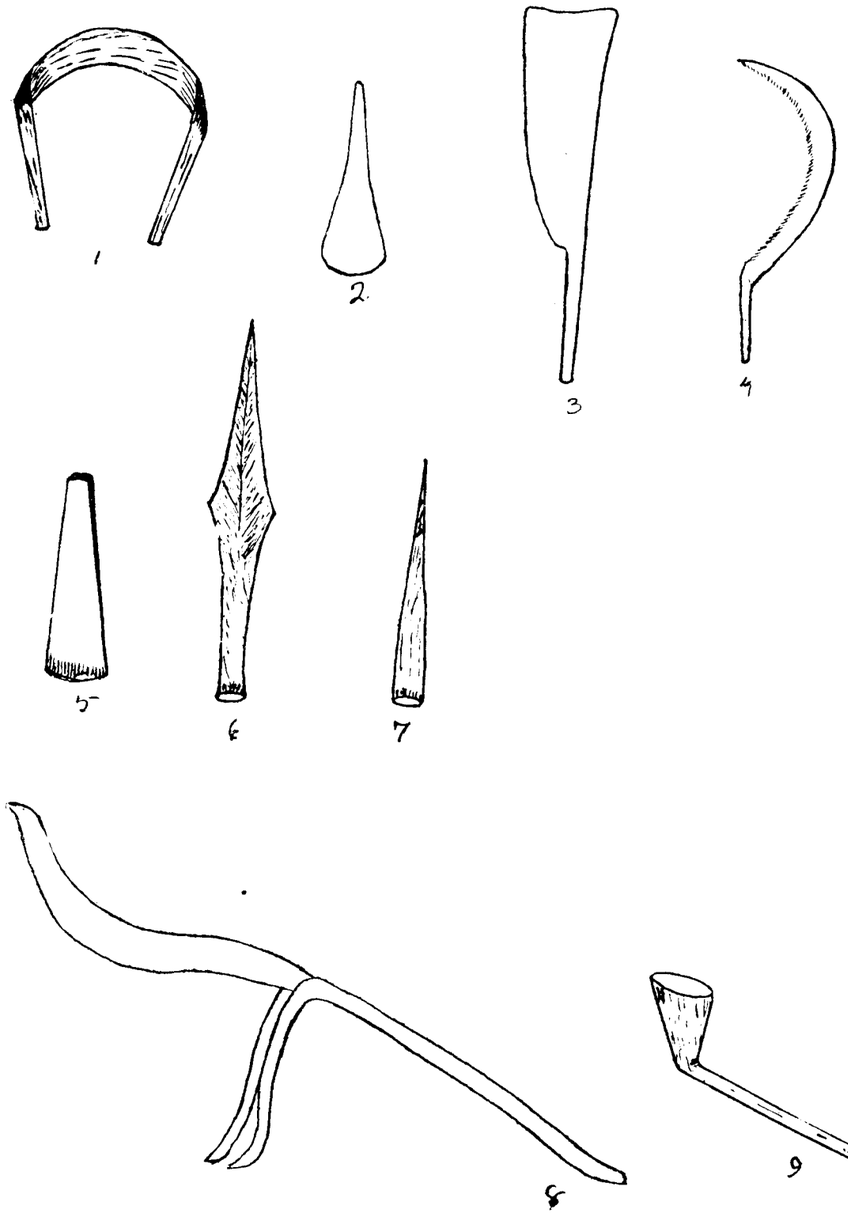
Besides the *dao* several other articles are manufactured by the blacksmith. The items of manufacture depend on the local demand from season to season. But there are certain household articles which are in demand throughout all seasons, such as meat-cutters kitchen knives and smoking pipes. A spade-shaped piece of metal is cut out, heated and bent, the handle of the spade forming the stem and the blade the bowl. A little bamboo mouthpiece bound in with cane, completes the pipe. Agricultural implements, such as sickles, adzes and scrapers are in heavy demand in their own seasons, These are manufactured mostly out of old *daos*. Quenching of these implements in water is similar to that in the case of *dao*. The customers are satisfied with the quality and make no complaint about it. Weapons like spear heads and butts are also made for sale. Most of articles are made on special order as there is no market for their sale.

Axes and hoes are imported from the plains of Assam, though occasionally a flat axe is made in the smith's own forge. This axe is fitted in the hole of the wooden shaft and used to chop wood and out holes in the house beams during the time of house construction.

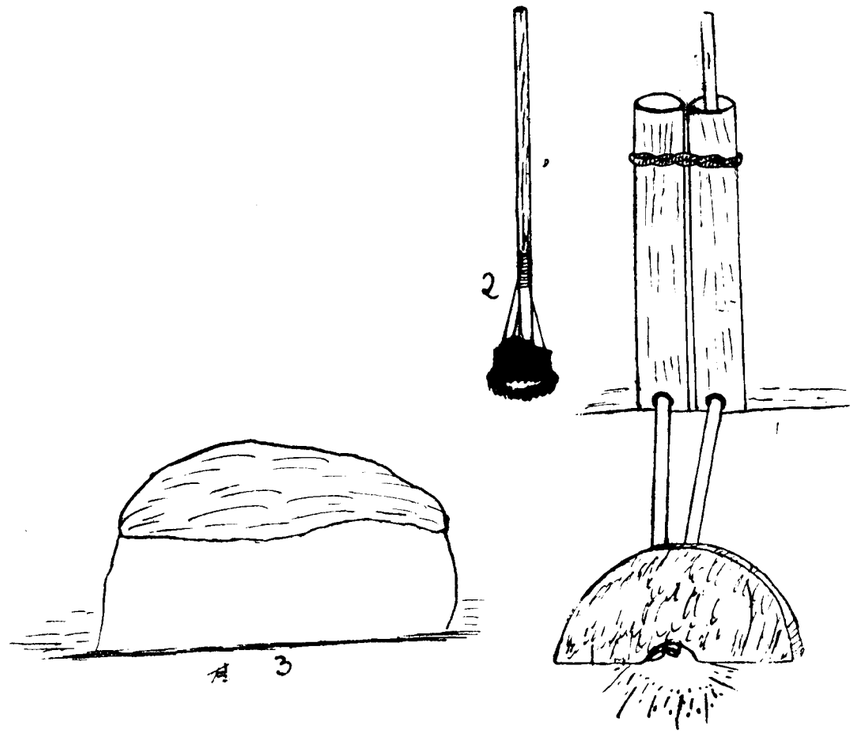
Whenever a cutting instrument loses its sharpness due to long use, the blacksmith is ready to recondition it in his forge often free of charge and sometimes just for a nominal payment.

The process of the manufacture of a scraper is also watched (the result of which may be found below). An old *dao* is heated and cut into two pieces. The one with the tang is re-heated and hammered so as to make it thin, flat and elongated about a foot long. Then the end intended to work is re-heated while the other end is kept outside of the fire. When red-hotit is taken out and the tang is worked. The sharp margin of the anvil is quite useful to make the curve of the tang. In the next re-heating the other tang is worked while making tang, only light strokes are always given. Having finished the two tangs, one at each end, the whole thing is heated again and straightened on the flat anvil and then re-heated to curve it. This time, care is taken to see that the whole blade is uniformly red-hot. Two tangs are then taken and gripped at the bases of the tangs of the scraper and slowly bent giving same force with both hands, so as to curve it like a letter "U". In this state it is re-heated. When red-hot, the smith takes two tangs again. While the tong in the left hand grips

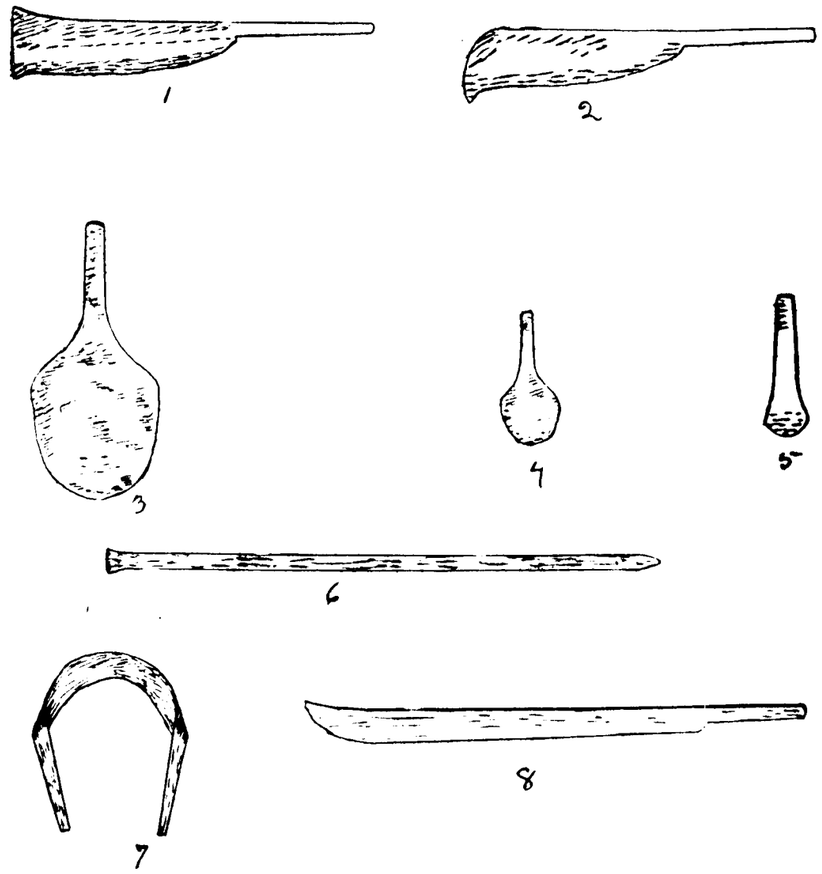
Agricultural implements produced by the Blacksmith.



Articles manufactured by the Blacksmith
1. Iron Scraper, 2. Adze, 3. Dao, 4. Sickle, 5. Axe, 6. Spear head.
7. Spear butt, 8. Meat cutting knife. 9. Smoking pipe.



1. Angami Bellows 2. Pestle 3. Stone Anvil



Articles manufactured in Kohima village
1. *Dao*, 2. Dan, 3. Hoe, 4. Small hoe 5. Axe,
6. An Instrument used to dig holes at the time of house construction.
7. Iron Scraper. 8. Long knife for cutting grass at the terrace walls.

tang near the blade and bent it is a little down. The other tang is similarly bent. Finally it is re-heated and the curved working edge is quenched in water like that of the *dao*. It takes nearly 40 minutes for the blacksmith and his helper to manufacture one scraper, which will fetch Re. 1/- in the village.

In Kohima village smith-craft is practised by about a dozen men, whose primary occupation is cultivation. Their principal productions are *daos*, axes, spade-hoes, spear heads and butts, knives and sickles. The iron which is used for making such articles is brought from the plains in the form of cheap spades and wrought by the smith into weapons and implements of soft steel easily kept sharp by whetting on a stone with water. The blacksmith's anvil *Rukreitsie* is a large flat stone generally about 3 feet long 2 feet wide and one or more foot thick brought from the river side. His hammers *seivu* were in the olden days made of smooth oblong or egg-shaped stones of various sizes. But now iron hammers imported from plain are used. It is said that in very olden days a split and flattened bamboo used to serve the purpose of pincers *Jube* but now iron-tongs with curved as well as straight lips imported from the plains of Assam are used. His bellow consists of two wooden tubes, about 4 ft. long and nearly 5 inches in diameter, which are fixed upright on the ground side by side, so that about 3 feet will remain overground. At the point of the ground level there is a hole in each of the tube into which is fitted a bamboo tube making the joints air-tight, The two ends of these bamboo tubes are brought to a point where fire is made. The piston consisting of a handle of wood nearly four feet long is made by fixing at one end a disc made of a node of bamboo covered with feathers, to produce the necessary valvular force. While operating the man stands near the tubes and holds handles of the piston one with each hand and alternate strokes are given so that the fire blast continuously.

Sema Nagas also use similar bellows. However, though the bellows consisting of a pair of vertical tubes, are more often of bamboo than of wood, the pump that fits into them sometimes consists merely of a cane frame covered with bits of old cloth kept in place by more cane work ever the top of them, though it is more often made of chicken feathers.

10 Economic Aspect

It may be of interest to note that the amount of earning derived from the craft is the primary means of subsistence for the blacksmith. The other members of the family work in the field. Women never take part in the metal work. Even his wife does not work in the workshop with him. Often his sons are employed in the bellows operation. His earning from the craft is spent partly in the work of the shifting cultivation to employ labourers.

There is no agent to supply metal, so his work depends on the metal brougnt by the customers for manufacturing articles. Manufacture of agricultural implements is the best business for him. The villagers, being primarily cultivators; there is always high demand for those implements. Next highest demand is the spear head.

A list of principal aritcles manufactured by the village blacksmith with approximate price of each is furnished below :

Name of articles		Approximate price		Approximate number produced annually	Approximate time taken for making each
English	Local	Rs.	nP.		
Dao	nok	4	50	90	3 hrs.
Spear head	nu	2	50	60	3 hrs.
Axe	pu	5	00	5	2 hrs.
Adze	mertsung	1	00	90	1 hr. 30 min.
Iron Scraper	alulem	1	00	95	1 hr. 30 min.
Sickle	linok	1	00	80	1 hr. 30 min.
Meat cutting knife	Shiarangba	4	00	2	2 hrs.
Pipe	pung	1	00	15	1 hr.

Total production in a year 437.

The above articles are described elsewhere in the report. Serial No. 3 to 6 are implements for agriculture. Serial No. 1 is used as implement as well as weapon. Serial number 2 is purely a weapon. His annual production is roughly 437 articles of which nearly cent percent are sold out in the village thereby bringing him an annual income of Rs. 862/-. This works out at an average monthly earning of Rs. 72/- which is fairly good in comparison with his fellow cultivators. Sometimes he can manufacture even 4 *daos* in a day thereby giving him an earning of Rs. 16/- or more but half of it goes to the client in case he supplies the raw material. Usually his work starts at 8.00 in the morning and continue till 4.30 in the evening with an hour's break for mid-day meal. He does not work on sundays.

The finished articles are not disposed of in the market but if there is any surplus, they are kept in his house till somebody comes in and demands it. As he is the only standard blacksmith in the village, there is always a large demand for agricultural implements and spears and he could hardly cope with the demand. Sometimes people from neighbouring villages like Dibuia and Imchenkimung also come to the blacksmith with the raw materials. They give the blacksmith either half of the raw materials or in lieu of that, the working charge.

The blacksmith remains quite content with his present profession and believes he can depend upon it for all time. His attachment to his forge is unfailing.

PART SIX

BASKETRY

Legend

The story of the first use of baskets is lost in the remote past. The making of baskets and mats, at which the Nagas are expert, is a task reserved exclusively for men and boys. There is no particular group of people, which are basket makers by tradition, but every man produces baskets for his own domestic use. As a matter of fact, a man who does not know how to make baskets or mats of domestic use is looked down upon by people as one who does not know a man's work. The legend connected with the origin and development of this craft is that once there lived a magician in the Ao country who was known by the name Changkichanglangba. In his life time he used to perform miracles He told the people to open up his grave on the sixth day after his death. When, on the sixth day after his death, the grave was opened out all the designs and patterns of basketry work were present there. The people copied it and started doing it.

Raw Materials

Living in a land where cane and bamboo are plentiful the Nagas are naturally expert basket makers. Every man can make his own household baskets but the manufacture of difficult things such as *Japas* is generally left to experts.

The raw materials used in basket work are the cane and bamboo splints. The bamboo splint is extracted from a particular type of bamboo which grows locally in the jungle and fallow lands. Four types of bamboos are grown in Ao area which are as follows :

1. *Longmi* : is a thick type of bamboo, which grows upto 40 ft high and is used for the purpose of house construction mainly for matting the floor and other frames like ribs. This type when splitted is very rigid and brittle and as such it could not be used for making baskets. This type is planted by men near the village.

2. *Ashi* :—is another type of bamboo grown by men like Longmi near the village. This variety grows wild in the distant jungles also like Longmi its splint is also fragile and is not suitable for making baskets. This type is a little thinner than Longmi and is used as materials in house construction.

3. *Anni*—is a thin type of bamboo grown wild in the distance jungle as well as planted near the village. Its splint is rather brittle and is not used for all basket work. However, winnowing fan is made out of the splints of this variety. Its main use is in making walls of houses.

4 *Aowa*—This type generally grows wild in distant jungles and fallow lands. The best kind of splints for making a variety of baskets are extracted from it. Its splints are very pliable and durable.

5. *Cane*—is far more valuable and is reserved for articles meant to last a long time. It is also collected from distant jungles.

Tools necessary for basketry

1. *Dao* or (nok) already described on page 37.

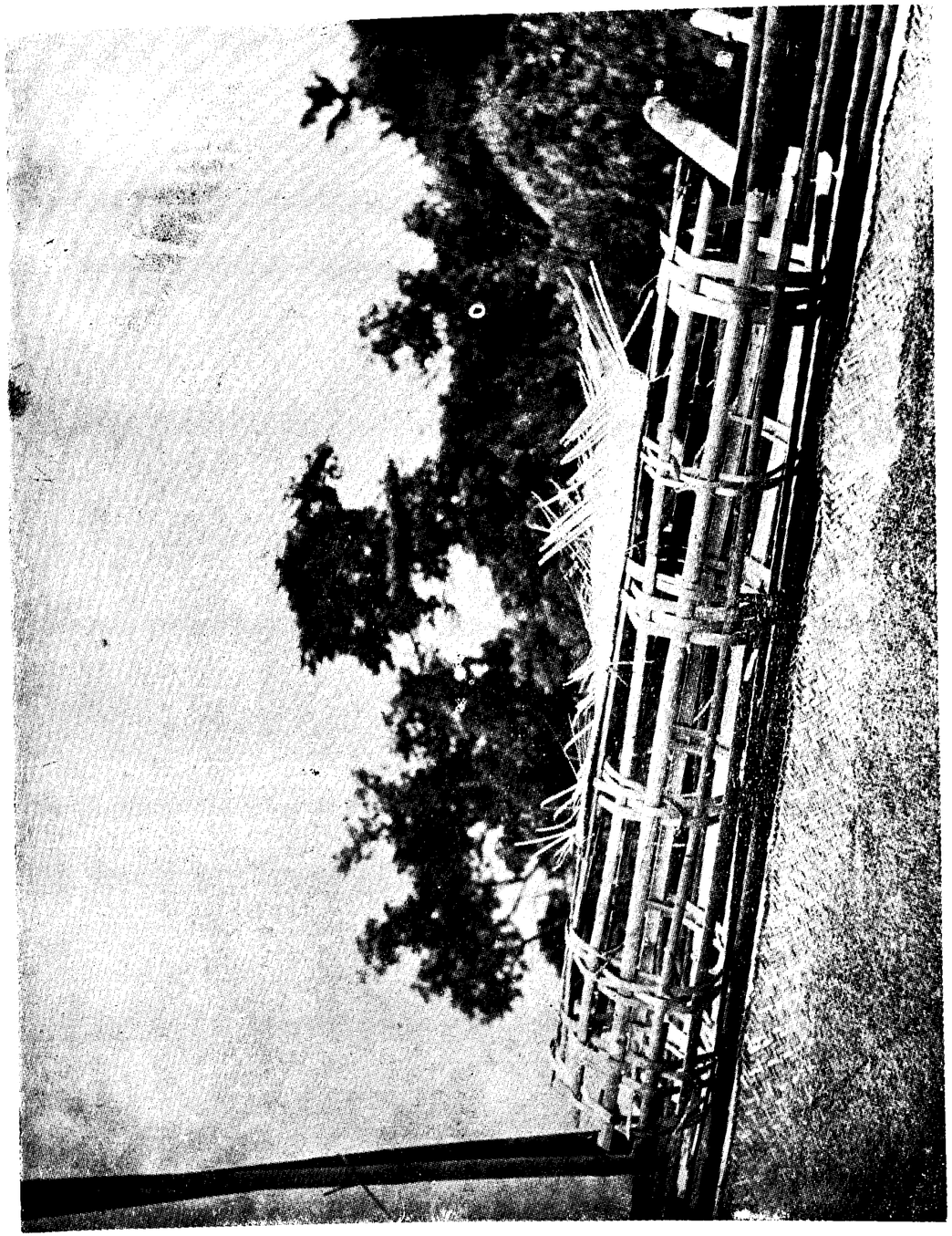
2. *Knife* : ordinary knife imported from plains of Assam is used to split the bamboo into finer splints. It is used for smoothening the splited bamboo. Usually *dao* serves the purpose of knife also.

3. *Yipra* a spike of cow or dog's bone or an iron spike collected from the smithy is used for

piercing holes wherever a rim is necessary. It is about 8 cms long one end is pointed while the other end is thick.

4. *Pakza* It is a roller made of splitted bamboo, which is used at the time of weaving mat. The mat to be woven is tied on this roller and placed in front of the artisan. As the mat is woven the finished part is rolled on the *pakza*. It is nearly 2 metres long with a circumference of nearly 20 cms.

5. Forked stick, a small forked stick is sometimes used to tighten the rim of winnowing fan.



The *phakza* (roller) on which the mat is tied at the time of weaving.

12. Technique of Production

Different stages are involved in the preparation of baskets and mats. It includes collection of raw materials from the forests, making of splints, colouring of the splints, if necessary, and weaving of the baskets and finally giving the finishing touches.

The main raw material used by the Ao Nagas of this village is a kind of bamboo locally known as 'Aowa'. During the months of July to October when they are a little free from the normal economic pursuits they get bamboo from the forests. Generally a few people go together. Bamboo of about an year old is generally selected for the purpose but bamboos beyond three years old have become brittle and are not at all used. The selected ones are cut with the help of a *dao* or *nok* at a place where the inter-nodes are longer. The bamboo is now cleared off of the branches and leaves, if any, and then cut into pieces having four to five nodes in each. Each piece is now splitted into bigger splints of about one inch in breadth. The bamboo is cut in such a way that the lower portion has no node and this portion is then splitted with the *dao* and finally breaks off with the help of the hand. While breaking it off bristles are formed at the base. Now these splitted bamboos are bundled together after removing the internal protruberances etc. and brought home.

While splitting the use to which the splints are put into is also taken into account. As for example, in case of mats, the splints are made out of one inter-node only, for baskets two inter-nodes while for larger baskets even three to four inter-nodes are splitted together according to size of the basket to be prepared.

In case the splints are collected at the time of jungle cutting of their shifting field, these are dried in the sun for 3 to 4 days and preserved in the house. Later in months of July-August-September and October these are soaked and make into final splints for plaiting the basket. In case of fresh ones soaking is not necessary.

The next stage is of cutting the bigger splints into conveniently smaller ones with the help of *dao*. Each big splint is splitted into two or three pieces by the help of the *dao*. Each of these pieces are kept resting in between one arm and the body and then splitted from the bristle. The thickness of the splint is regulated by the manipulation of the hand. Finally from one piece three or four thin splints are produced. These final splints are about 2 mm thick and 1 cm wide.

These splints are to be smoothened before being woven into basket. Smoothening is done with the help of a knife of a *dao*. The splint is held in the left hand and the knife on the right. The cutting edge of the blade of the knife is kept pressed against the splint with the thumb while the fore-finger is kept just beneath the splint below the knife. Now the splint is drawn outward with the help of the left hand while the knife is kept pressed on to the splint and pushed inward with the right thumb. This is repeated several times on both sides and at both ends. Now the splints are ready for weaving.

If at all the articles are to be coloured, the same is done at this stage. The required colour is brought from the nearby market. The colour is dissolved in some water and the splints are dipped in it. Later it is dried in the shade. Sometimes colouring is done on the finished product as well; in which case the colour is painted on the article with the help of an indigenous brush made by the craftsman himself out of a piece of twig, one end of which is crushed to give the appearance of the bristles of a brush.

The next stage is weaving of the articles. About nine or ten splints are arranged on the floor in a series and these for convenience sake may be called the warp by anology with weaving. The wefts are when plaited to the warp differently in different techniques. In the case of check, the warp and weft pass over and under each other single as in woven cloth. In twilled each weft passes over and then under two or more warps producing by varying width and colour contrast an endless variety of effects. Another variety is hexagonal in which case the wefts, instead of being horizontal and vertical are worked in three directions forming in open work hexagonal spaces, in close work six-pointed stars. These are the three common patterns of basket weaving found in this village but another design is also adopted by the Ao Nagas of this village in respect of the winnowing fans. In this case the weft goes over one warp and the goes below the adjoining warp and again above the next one and then below four warps. The same is repeated.

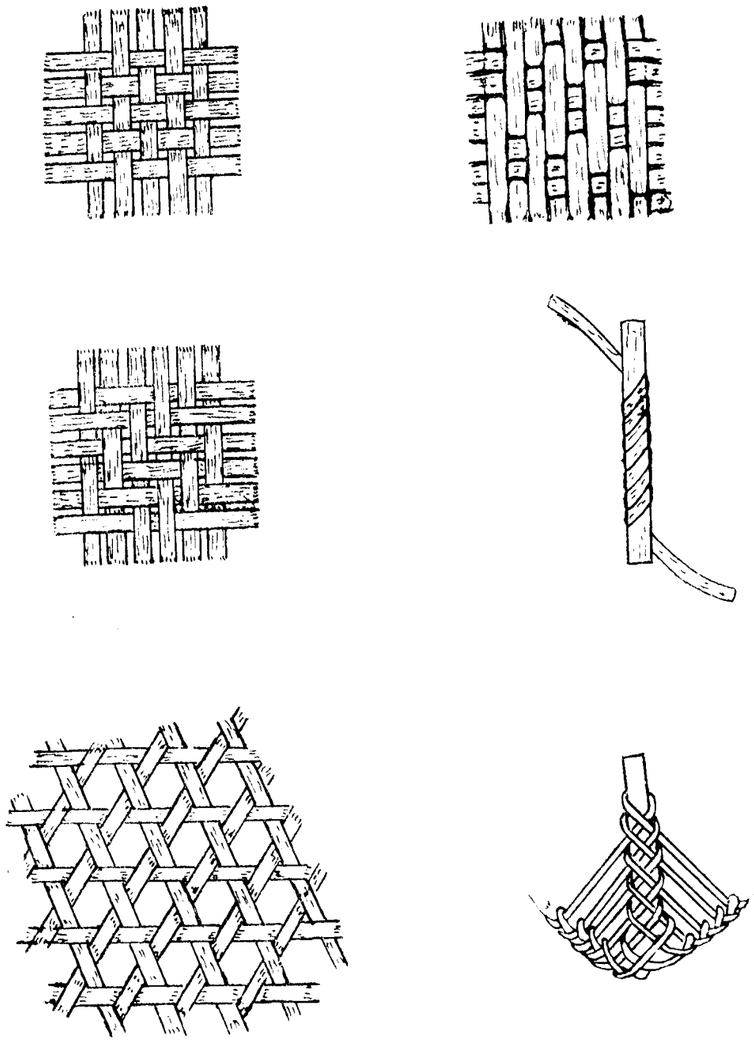
Check design is generally raised in a loosely matted basket called *Khoumong* different sizes; twilled in another closely woven basket melok carrying basket *Akhi* and Sieve.

After having woven the base, the free ends of the weft and the warp are turned perpendicular in order to prepare the walls of the basket. This mainly depends on the required size of the article. After turning the free ends the wefts and the warps are interplaited exactly in the same pattern as in the case of the base. In some cases, as for example *akhi* (carrying baskets) additional splints are also used as explained elsewhere under the designs. Now when the required height is reached the wefts and warps are turned downward. So that a folding effect is produced for about 1/3 of the articles. The ends are then tucked in the bodyand the remaining ends are cut out with a knife.

In some cases some additional parts are required to be added. In case of *akhi* the ends of the warps and wefts are turned and tucked. The rim is then strengthened by tying on to it an additional split cane. Further strengthening of the body is done by tying, *Rhijang* supporting (swing sticks) of bamboo pieces lengthwise on the side of the body at regular intervals. While tying *Yipra* (iron or bone needles) are used for making holes which would help passing the finer splints of cane or bamboo to pass through. The carrying baskets are also jointed with an *anem* string which will help carrying the basket from place to place.

In case the corners of the baskets are to be strengthened, a smaller bamboo forked stick is tied on to the corners with the help of cane splints in the twill fashion.

In case of winnowing fan, the preparation of splints, materials used and technique of plaiting are all different from those of other baskets. Instead of *Aowa* type of bamboo *Anni* type is used for making the splint. In January at the time of jungle clearing for their jhum field, bamboo of one year old is selected and cut down with the *dao* and the nodes are cut out. The inter-nodes which now look like tubes are collected and splitted into two halves with the *dao* and dried in the sun for a few days. These are then brought home and splitted into convenient sizes nearly 1 cm wide. For making final splints these are soaked in water for one night. As the splints do not have the bristle like thing, a *dao* or knife is to apply for the splitting. Each splint is splitted into tow pieces by *dao* and hand the thickness of each being nearly 2 mms.

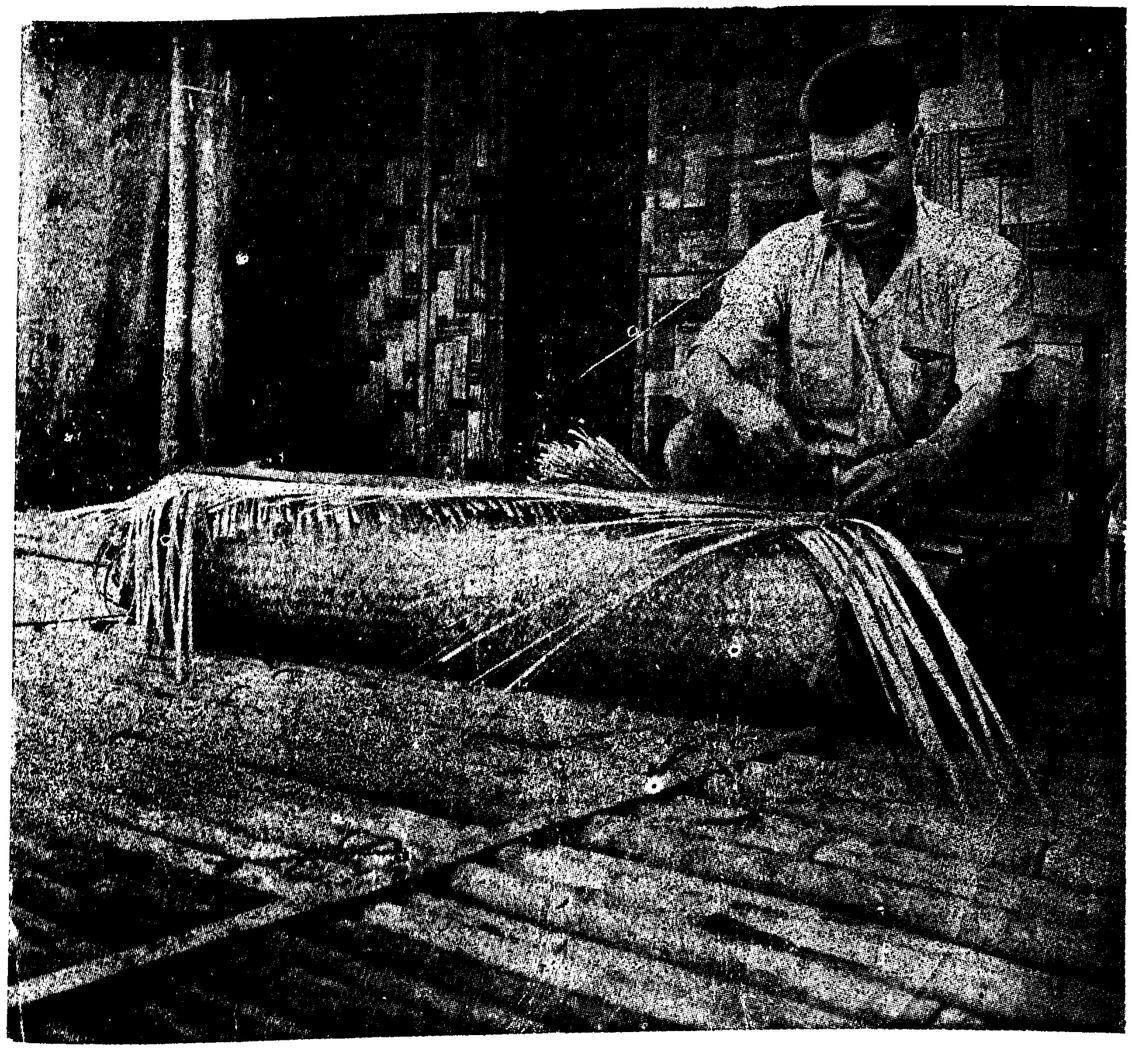


Principal techniques of Basket weaving found in Nagaland.

The Artisan splitting bamboo for making bamboo splint

Maming fine splints

Weaving a basket



Weaving a mat.

Baskets all over Nagaland are usually of checker and twilled patterns or of an open work pattern rather resembling the cane seat of a chair. With these basic patterns and variations thereof, a large quantity of baskets of various shapes and sizes are produced.

Mat is woven in twilled pattern, where the wefts pass over and under the warps at a time producing straight lines or hands across the mat. Generally the mat consists of 10 to 12 joints *tatsungba* at about 35 cms. intervals. When the mat is woven for about 26 cms. it is tied on the roller *phakza* and kept, in position by means of a bamboo stick. As it is woven, the finished portion is rolled on the *phakza*. If the splints are kept ready it takes only 3 days for an expert to finish a mat which is usually 3 to 4 metres long and 1 metre 80 cms. wide.

Its uses are manifold. Paddy is spread over it to dry in the sun before pounding. During the time of harvest the mat is spread in the field house to receive the ears grains. It is used at the time of fishing in dams and streams and for this, out of the fish caught a share equal to that of a man participating in the game is given to the owner of the mat. The price of a mat was Rs. 10/- at the time of the survey.

Carrying baskets are of two kinds : (i) *Akhi* roughly conical in shape is nearly one metre high and 45 cms in diameter at the mouth. It consists of two parts—the basket proper and the carrying arrangement. The basket is woven very closely in twilled pattern with small fine splints bamboo. To make the basket uniformly broad at the upper part two additional splints are added at the same height on either side of the original splint. One to the addition of two splints at the same time the twilled pattern is not disturbed. The lower end of the additional splints are sharply pointed first, so that there would not be any gap in the joint. Unlike in mat, the additional joints in *akhi* are not all in the same place but scattered all over it. Having finished the weaving seven supporting sticks *Khijang* of bamboo are tied at regular intervals in such a way that they are joined at the apex of the basket. The sticks are tied to the basket with the fine cane splints. The mouth is protected by a rim of large splint cane. One side of the basket is made flat and smooth for the comfort of the back of the carrier at the time of carrying it. Grains and other agricultural products and clay for pot-making are carried in it by both men and women.

The carrying arrangement is very simple. A thin layer of bark about 2 metres long is stripped from the bark of a tree called *Nemsa or Akhutong*. This stripped *anem* is tied round the basket in an oblique manner in such a way that is middle portion is placed just above the flat face of the basket. Baskets meant for boys and girls are smaller. The average cost price of a carrying basket is Rs. 12/-.

Akha is another kind of carrying basket which is usually meant for rough use such as carrying fire wood and agricultural products. The shape setting of supporting sticks and carrying arrangement being more or less the same as that of the *Akhi*. It is woven loosely with splitted *cane* in the checker beared pattern. Here, there are two patterns of warps which form with the wefts an open work hexagonal spaces.

The diagonals are rigid and the horizontal ones flexible and thereby a strong frame work achieved. The mouth end becomes broader due to the addition of new warps at regular intervals at the time of weaving. Here, too the ventral surface is made flat to ensure comfort to the back of the carrier at the time of carrying it. Instead of splitted cane bamboo splints are sometimes used. The approximate price is Rs. 6/-.

The flattened cylindrical baskets of twilled pattern into which rice beer is strained are so closely woven as to be practically water tight. The shallow round sieve for separating rice from paddy is made of bamboo splints except for the rim which is of cane.

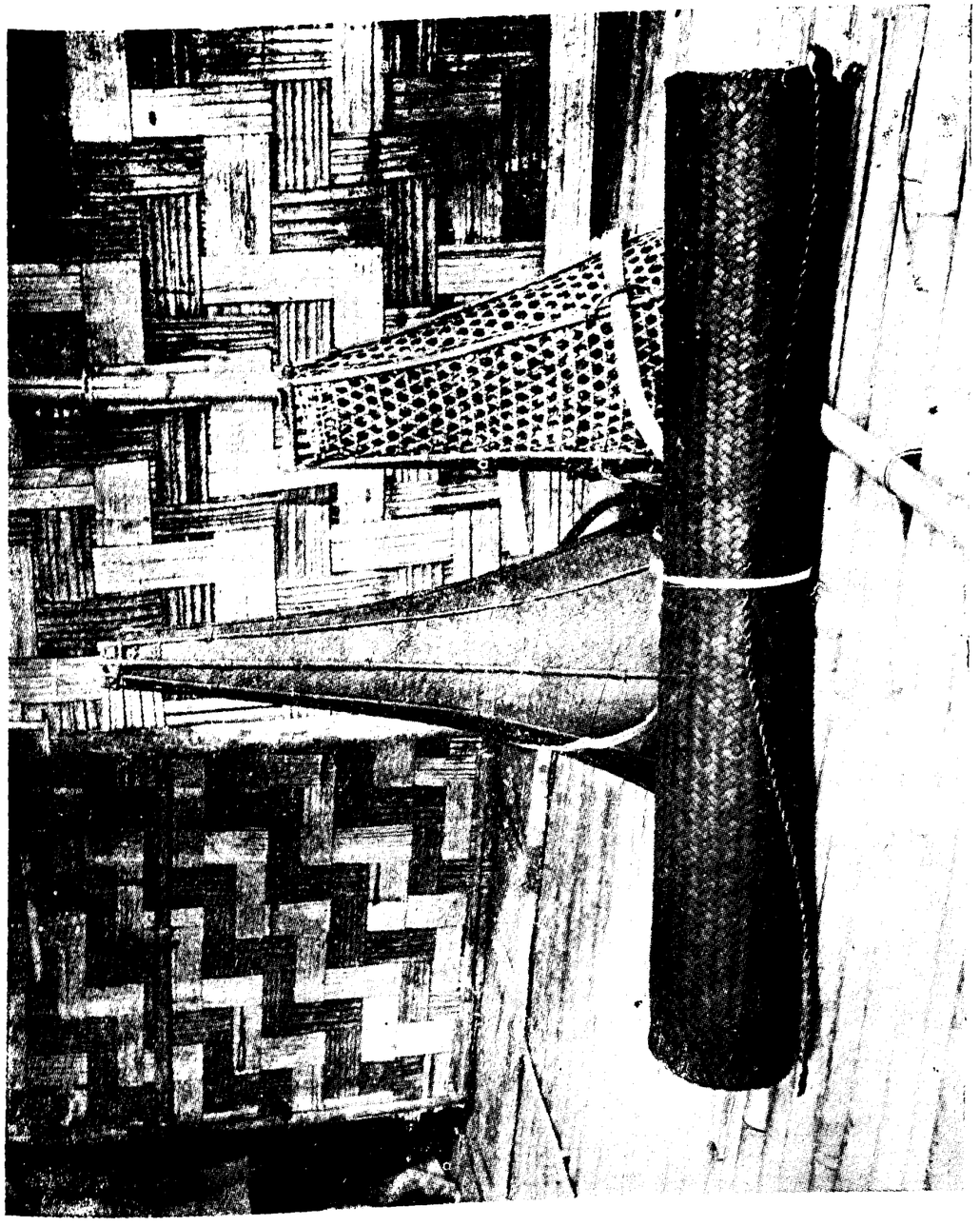
Every household possesses several flat bottomed baskets *Milok* The sharp corners at the bottom obliterate as they rise higher up and become almost round at the mouth. There is no joint of any kind and the technique of weaving is in twilled pattern. When the required height is attained the splints are placed outside downwards so that the folding comes down to of the height of the basket. Due to this folding the margin of the mouth becomes double and strong and serves as a handle to lift it off with loads in it The making of such baskets does not take long. A man can make two baskets in a day The average price of an average sized basket does not exceed Rs. 2/-.

Another kind of small sized decorative basket is very commonly used. Small and very fine bamboo splints are used to weave it. Here, triangular and square designs are produced with the splints. Those designs are often coloured with contrasting dye obtained from the bazar. Those designs are patterned only in the small sized baskets. The folding at the mouth is exactly the same as in other baskets. Some baskets are used to serve betel nut and to hold balls of yarn during the time of weaving garments. It is also to be noted that such a basket is presented by boys to their girl friends.

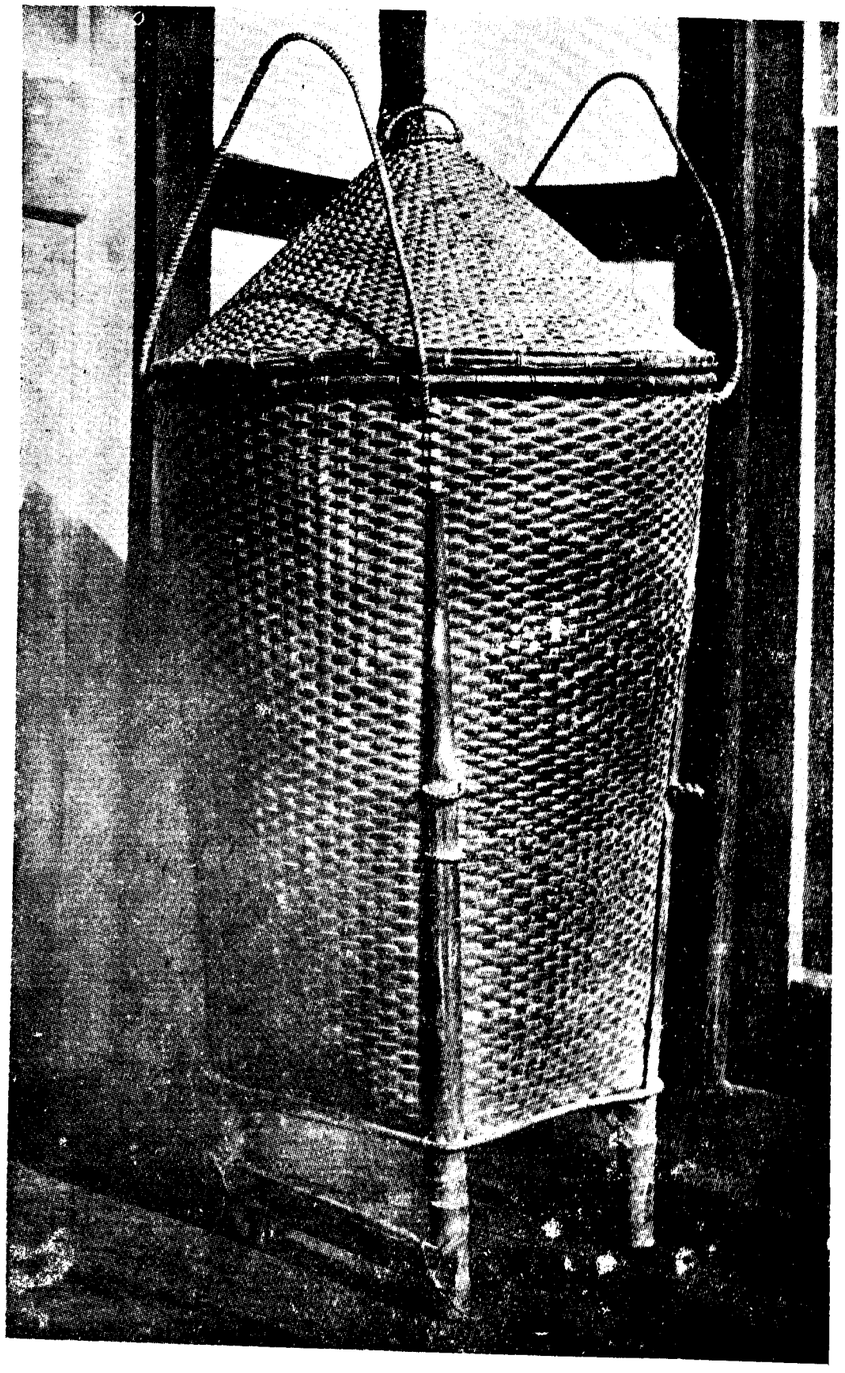
The winnowing fan *apha* is also made of splitted bamboo. Instead of the *Aowa Anna*, the thin kind of bamboo is used for making this fan. The technique of weaving is also different from those of other baskets. Here the warps pass over five wefts at a time and under two wefts alternately. The interior end of the fan is flat and broader and the rims of the other two sides gradually become higher, reaching the maximum height at the back. The length of the interior end is about 81 cms. and the other two sides are 76 cms. and 79 cms. respectively. The height at the back measures 18 cms. All the margins are protected by rims of split cane which are tightly tied together by small cane tongs.

During use, grains are placed on the fan. The two hands of the operator are placed one on each side of the fan with the thumb fingers placed inside the rim while the other fingers just below the fan. The rim rests between the thumb and the other fingers. The operator then winnows the fan up and down so that the wind so blown may separate the chaffs from the grain. In winnowing husked paddy, only grain is left behind while the husks are blown off. It costs nearly Rs. 6/-. Besides the above mentioned baskets, many other kinds of baskets of twilled and checker pattern are made to store dried vegetables, meat, fish and salt.

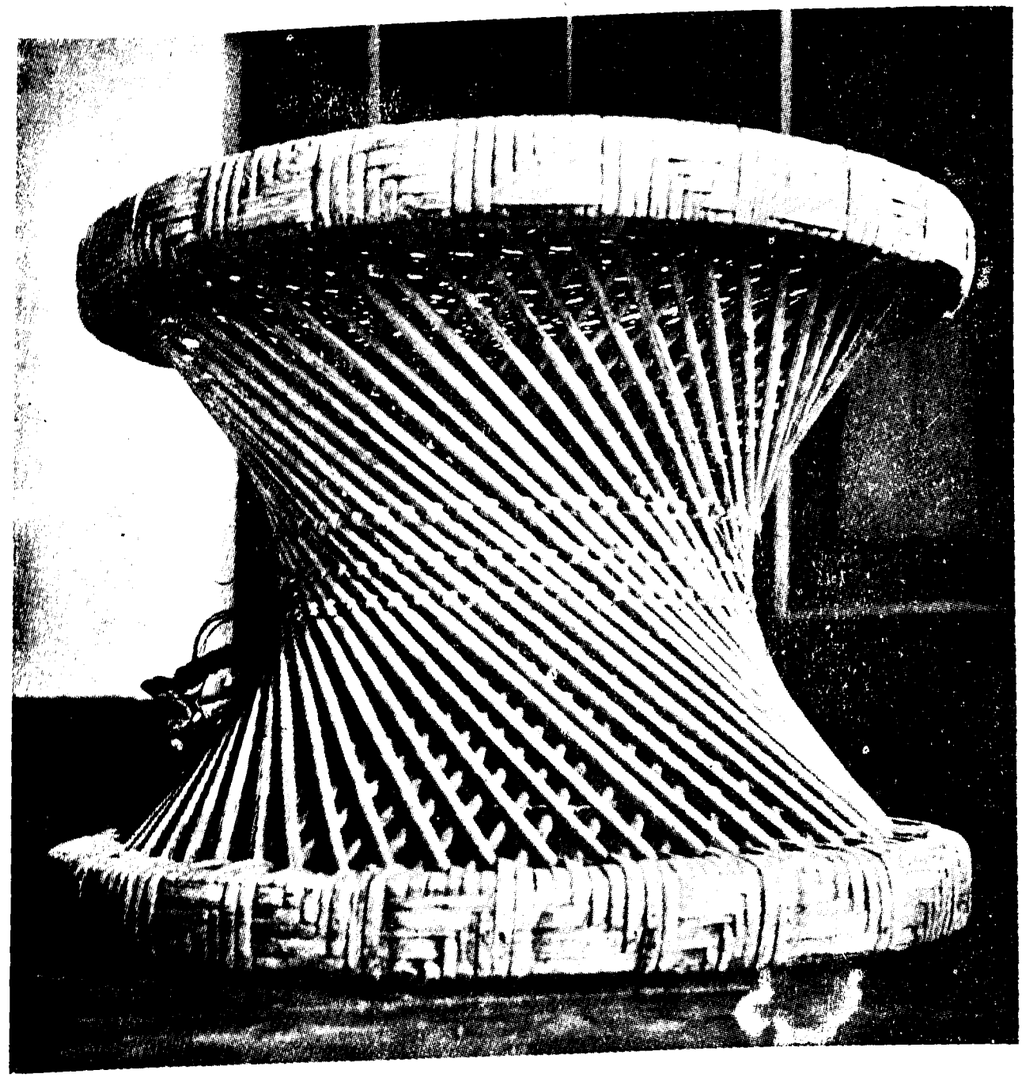
The demand of baskets and mats is always low due to the fact that every man can make his own household baskets. Further more there is no market for disposing of the finished articles. Thus the baskets and mats though indispensibly necessary for every household yet this craft does not generally give any financial income. Some people sell the finished articles occasionally to their co-villagers but this being very rare and negligible is difficult to assess it as a regular feature of economic aspects.



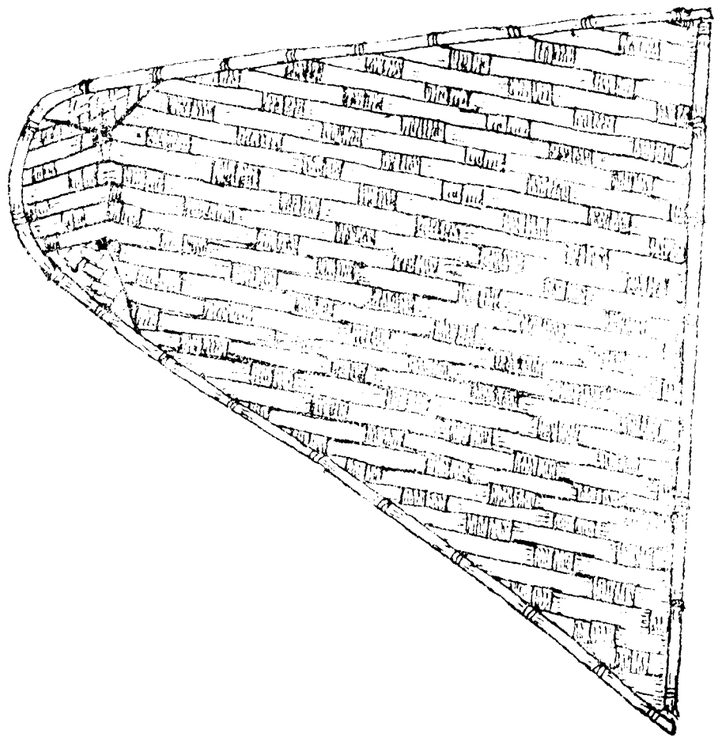
Carrying baskets and mat

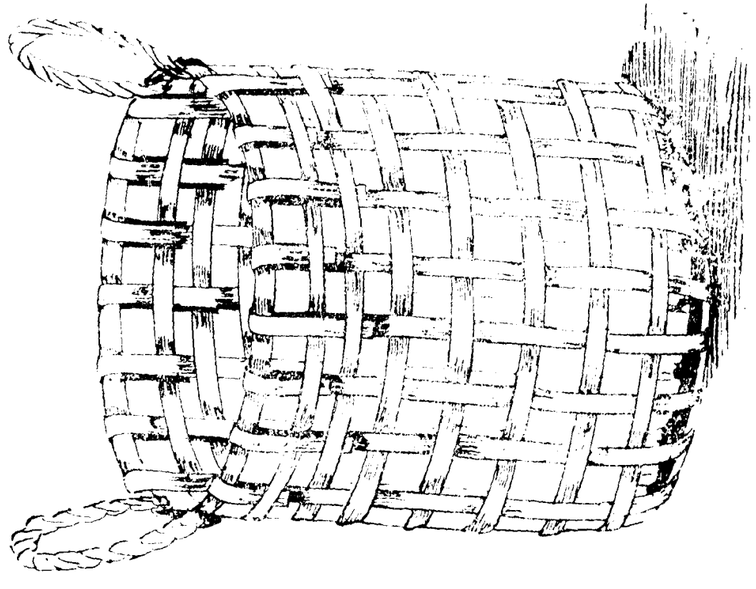


Japa made of splitted bamboo for storing valuables.

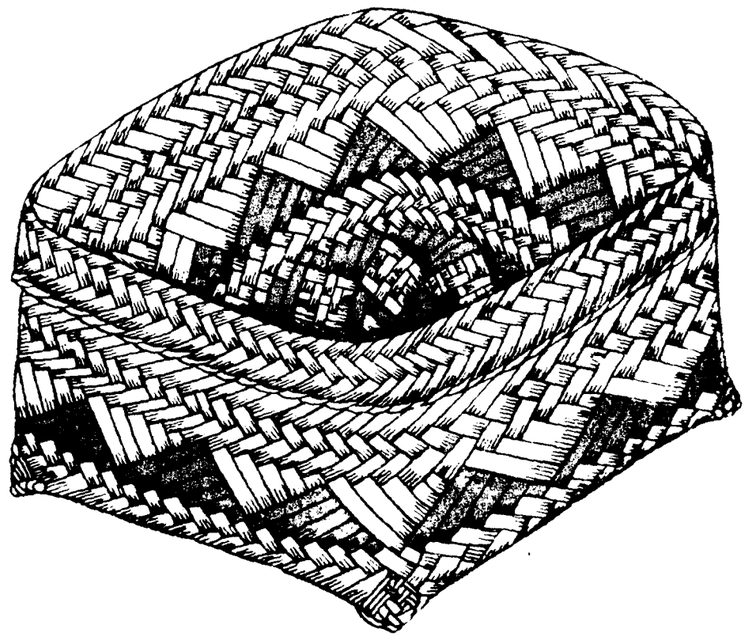


Low seat made of bamboo sticks and cane.

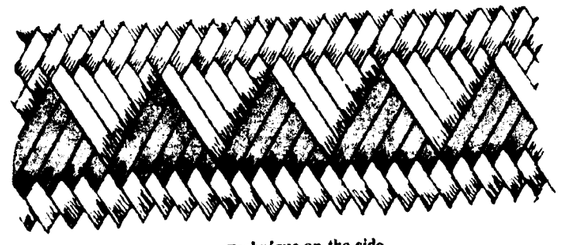




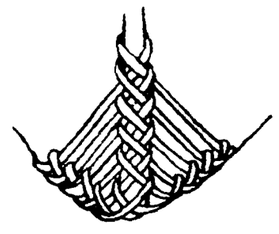
Basket



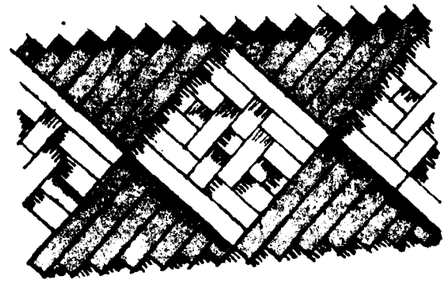
Small basket



Technique on the side



Technique at corners



Technique of weaving in bottom

APPENDIX

TABLE 1

Population and Density of Waromung

Area	Population	Density per Sq. mile	Number of houses
30 Sq. miles	1,604	53.5	282

TABLE 2

Age-group Analysis

Age-group (in years)	Males	Females	Total
6-9	193	208	401
10-14	80	79	159
15-20	78	92	170
21-30	131	140	271
31-40	125	126	251
41-50	91	88	179
51-60	77	75	152
61-70	7	5	12
71-80	4	2	6
80 above	2	1	3
Total	788	816	1,604

TABLE 3

Earners and Non-Earners

Earners			Non-Earners		
Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
406	336	742	382	480	862

TABLE 4

Earners

Age group (in year)	Males			Females		
	Earners	Part Earners	Dependants	Earners	Part Earners	Dependants
1-9	...	...	193	...	...	208
10-20	27	131	...	36	130	3
21-40	205	50	1	172	94	1
41-60	166	1	1	126	37	1
61-80	8	3	...	2	2	3
81 and above	...	...	2	...	...	1
Total	406	185	197	336	263	217

TABLE 5

Occupation of Earners

Occupation	Males		Females	
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
1. Cultivation	228	...	335	...
2. Daily labour	...	5	...	8
3. Servant and maid servants	...	...	...	...
4. Govt. job	177	...	5	...
5. Carpenters	...	3	...	...
6. Tailors	...	2	...	1
7. Business	1	1	...	...
8. Basket making	...	301	...	...
9. Weaving	...	...	...	216
10. Pottery	...	...	...	13
11. Smithy	1	1	...	...
12. Employees in private sector	1	1	3	1
Total	408	314	343	239