

Some Select Folktales of Aimol

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Aimol

Aimol is one of the recognized tribes of Manipur. It was recognized on 29th October, 1956 vide notification no. 2477, under Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. Aimol as a tribe is endogamous and possesses a common dialect, a common tradition of origin and common beliefs and ideas. The total population of Aimol according to Census-2011 is 4,640 (According to Chairman, Aimol Literature Society, Manipur). The Aimol tribe is found in Chandel, Churachandpur, and Senapati districts of Manipur. In the entire state, there are 15 Aimol villages, of which eleven are in Chandel district (Khullen, Chandonpokpi, Ngairong, Khodamphai, Tampak, Chingnunghut, Khunjai, Kumbirei, Satu, Khudengthabi and Unapal), two in Churachandpur district (Kha-Aimol and Louchunbung) and another two in Senapati district (Tuikhang, Kharam-Thadoi).

Aimol has no written literature except some books, gospel songs, Bible, which is translated from English and A Descriptive Grammar of Aimol written by M. Shamungou Singh, an unpublished Ph.D. thesis of Manipur University, Imphal. There is no native script. Adapted Roman script is used for writing books and other journals, etc. The teaching of Aimol has not been introduced in any private or government schools. For communication with other communities Aimol people use Manipuri or Meiteilon which is the *lingua franca* of Manipur State. Aimol has no work which documents of folk songs and folktales. So this paper tries to present out some of the folktales of Aimol which are oral tales, and are not available in written record. The tales are translated into English.

The Language

Aimol belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family spoken in Manipur. Some speakers of the same language are also said to live in Tripura, who are known as Hrangkhawls. The language has some affinities with the other languages like Hmar, Hrangkaw, Sukte, Malsom, Darlong, Lushai and Thadou-Kuki, Purum, Chothe, Chiru, Kom, Koireng and Kharam. Manipuri or Meiteilon is used for communication with other tribes.

Linguistic Lineage

Sino-Tibetan

Tibeto-Burman

Kuki-Chin-Naga

Kuki-Chin

Northern

Aimol

Some Folktales

1. Rendihui and Renchanghui (Two Sisters, Rendihui and Renchanghui)

Ton lai hana Rendihui le Renchanghui ule nai ani an lui om. Rendihui ning ulian ani hanle Renchanghui lam naipang ani. Nikhat ko marit nagak anlui che. Anmarit rui alui chet pe pet. An ucha haning anlui ngaidon pasal khat ahong inko kan lompa kanchang ti hang ke hanle numei anile jorpui kanchang ti hang ke anta mi ankhat anlui ngai tui. Rul ankhat ning mi akanlem a alui hong. Kan marit rui najom pero anta anlui ti. Rul haning anmarit rui alui jompe. Hala khan ko Rendihui le Rul ha anlui kan nei. Au lompa rul rim hana anai pangnu Renchanghui ha bu lui nek jot mo. Atak ha alui hong suol. Nikhat ko khosung hana kumhei alui om. Kumhei hana Rendihui hai anlui hong. Mipa ha rul a akan lem ma alui hong. Ama hana Renchanghui apa ning tancha alo a rul ha bonghari atan a alui that. Rendihui ning ahonga alompa anthatna thiha ethi wem alui dingkel. Apaning ngawot thi ke alui tipe. Nikhat ko Rendihui amang hana rul ning alui tipe. kei ko napa ning bong sari anatanna ana that jo. Tuikong khamtiang a ana lui tet. Nang aana kan mu pui jot inko kei ka bong khat hongchui in lang tuikham tiang hong ro alui tipe. Alomnu ning abong khat ahong chui a tui o tum tum alui tho. Tui sunga alui tum pet. Anai pangnu lam ko reng sebok hai ning setal anghena reng lomnu hanga in tiang anlui hong tuong. Nupui sari hai ning inna thei an chak a anlui om. Naipang nu ha ko thei lui pek ma u. Anai pangnu ha chungrik ahong om. Nai kanjir na hang amun hui lui pek ma u. Nupui sari ning tuikuong khamma nai anlui nei ti. Nai sari ha nupui sari ning lunga anlui we that pet a tui anlui tanpui ti. Alompa ning nai ko numei em pasal em anta alui dingkel. Nalomnu ha lung rong anei anta lung ha anlui do pe. Reng haning alung athak a alomnu ha eksang alui ngak ti. Tui a antan pui ti nai sari ha ater ning arut a alui jok. Atun ko nan lian jo nanu hongtuong tarui alui tipe. Anu tuong anlui che. Annu ha eksang an ngak ti ha anlui mu. Anlung athak a tui anbial ti pet a anlui hong tuong. Anpa ha wom kei om hongkati ata anai hai nuk alui hong jui. Anai hai ning anlung athak a ama wom anmani

eksang ha anlui ngak ti. Nuk hana Renchanghui ning ramma reng alui chang hanle A u Rendihui ning tui a reng alui chang.

Free Translation

Once upon a time there were two sisters - Rendihui and Renchanghui. Rendihui was the elder sister and Renchanghui was the younger one. One day they go to the field to look after the field. The rope which they used for looking after the paddy field was cut. There was nobody to rejoin the cut rope. They told to themselves that if any man came to help them they would marry him and if any woman came they would take her as their sister. Suddenly a snake in the form of man came and rejoined the rope. The elder sister Rendihui fell in love with the man and married him. Because of the snake smell her younger sister could not eat anything. The father was angry. One day there was a big festival in the village. The elder sister was invited to attend the function. The man came in the form of snake. The father cut the snake into seven pieces and threw the pieces into the river. The elder sister came and saw the blood of the snake. She asked whose blood was this. The father said this was the blood of the leech. In one dream of Rendihui, her husband told her that he was killed by her father "when I came to participate in the function". Her husband told her that "if you want to meet me, bring one of my pieces and come inside the water." Rendihui took one of the pieces and dipped it inside the water.

Her younger sister Renchanghui was taken by the king's army when they came for hunting. They made her to be the king's wife. The entire seven sisters who were king's wives were at home. These women bore no children and they were jealous of the new wife. The Renchanghui became pregnant and she wanted to give birth. The seven sisters ordered her to give birth nearby the river. She gave birth nearby the river. All her seven children were killed by the seven sisters. The king came and asked them whether the children were male or female. They said she gave birth to stone only. The king was angry. He kept his wife to look after the latrine. All the seven children were pick up and brought up by Rendihui. She told them to get their mother Renchanghui. They go and brought their mother. The father also requested them that he would follow them. They carried their father. They also punished their father to be the caretaker of the latrine as their mother did. Now Renchanghui became the king of the land and Rendihui became the king of the water.

2. Ralngam and Rangsai (Ralngam and the Tiger)

Tol lai hana Ralngam anti micham khat le Rangsai anti sakei khat alui om. Rangsai hi chnong le la doi ai atam athei mikhat alui ni. Ralngam ning Rangsai hi a inna ache a alui tok ajar ko ama ko doi tam athei ti ajet lakhan ko. Rangsai hi me jak achak a alui om. Me achak rei det lakhan ko aha a me akan ther et. Thuitel ning anhirra alui om. Nikhat ko Ralngam ning atok na hana jar chung a alui om. Ralngam ning nang im natho have jar chnunga alui tipe. Rangsai ning kaha thuitel in anhir mok nahanga kakan thup ke alui tipe. Ralngam in hong ro kei naha chen pe kati che alui tipe. Ralngam ning aha ha alui chen pe pet. Rangsai aning sa lakhan ko Ralngam hi setak khat me tongka sunga athunpet a aluipek. Na in natung majeng long ma ro alui tipe. Lampui a amasul a me alui buok pet. Weikhat ret kamasul jo ata akir ret. Me weikhat ahap pe ret. Weikhat amasul ret. Weithum ama sul. Halakhan ko Rangsai in hiko kana mo ata chongle la doi ai ha direct ama bea alui pek ani. Ralngam ning om direct alo jot lakhan ko me ha alui masul ani. Nuk hana Ralngam chongle la, doi ai thei pa ahong chng ani.

Free Translation

Once upon a time there lived a common man called Ralngam and a tiger called Rangsai. Rangsai was the one who used to know performing magic and had other supernatural powers. He was also the one who used to eat a lot of meat at that time. Because of this his teeth became decayed and the flies tried to prey on it. One day Ralngam was coming to Rangsai's house in search of him. At that time Rangsai was hiding on the roof of his house. Ralngam asked him why you are hiding there. Rangsai said "many flies and ants tried to attack my teeth. Because of this I try to hide on the roof." Ralngam called him to climb down. Rangsai climbed down and all his teeth were cleaned by Ralngam. Rangsai was very happy. So he tried to give the meat of one mithun (Gayal) to Ralngam. He put all this meat to a bamboo pipe and gave to Ralngam. He told him not to open this pipe until he reached his home. Ralngam could not wait for this and tried to open the pipe and the pipe broke down. All the meat was broken and lost. He again went to Rangsai asking for meat again. Rangsai gave the meat again in the same condition. The meat pipe was broken again on his way to his house. He asked for the third time again. This time Rangsai directly gave power to Ralngam. Finally Ralngam became one of the powerful man of that time.

3. Waichorate (A Poor Widow's Son)

Waichorate anti meithai nai ariang tak khat alui om. Nikhat ko amaning tui alel tak a chok do alui che. Asak a dohang ata mi haining anlui da pe. Ama a chok hana par rim hui khat alui lut. A par rim hui ha an banga alui tar. Arim ahui rei lakhan ko reng ning a sebok

hai atha a alui tok ti. Reng seapai haining waichorate inna kan mu anlui tipe. Waichorate ha anhong chur a reng ning chong alui ding kel. Par rim hui honam nahong chui akung hong tok ro alui tipe. Nahong tok mok inko kathat che hang ke alui tip e. Waichorate par rimhui kung tok alui che. Nganuleima kuo anti hana alui riak. Khoimi haining nang itho nahong anlui ding kel. Par rimhui kungtok kahong ke anlui ti. Khomi haining ha ani inko nang cho atarpa bea chero. Chubei bukjet ti to. Kanthui ro ati macheng kanthui ma ro anlui tipe. Waichorate ning anti tak ha alui tho. Atarpa ning im nadei alui tipe. Waichorate ning par rimhui kungtok kahong ke alui tipe. Ha animok inko reng ning kathat chehang ke ana ti ata alui sang. Ha ani inko nang tuikuong a chenang nupui sari tui anlui bial hang ke. Anmani puodiar ha nuk anchil lui a hong chui ro alui tipe. Puondiar ahong chui hana nuk a en lakhan ko nga ete aol a alui om. Atarpa ning weikhat mi aol turet. Weikhat ret a anret. Weithum changna ko anchil lui ahong chuipek a atarpa bea aluipek . Nupui sari ning atarpa bea anhonga Waichorate ahong em anlui dingkel. Hongmo alui tipe. Annok rei lakhan ko ahong alui tipe a anpuondiar ha alui pek. Matumnu tak o lui pek mo. Matumnu ha Waichorate lomnu alui chang. Sepai haining rengpa bea nang na lomnu nek a Waichorate lomnu asat det anlui tipe. Reng ning alung athak a ama that kata a lomnu kasut hang ke alui tipe. An ui an ui anlui kanseti Waichorate uining alui tor. Ar kanchuk anlui tho. Waichorate arning alui tor. Ama ata ko alomnu nupui karuk ning anhong tha ani. Reng ning alung athak a khur chonang phum rui alui tipe. Khur sung hana aweng anthum a in tungkhet a sakhu ning alui wit. Ama aweng hana alui hongter a inna ahui alui om. Sepai haining athi jo anti karra a inna ahui nianga alui om lakhan ko an ngak. Nangni om mei le lutrui ahui do alui tipe. Reng le a sepai le anlut kar rako meining akanga anthi pet. Hina tina ko mi mangna hang natho karra natak lam namangna ani.

Free Translation

There was a poor widow's son called Waichorate. One day he went out to catch fish in the river. He put the *chok* (an instrument for catching fish, this chok should be put in the middle of the river so that the fish will enter into the choke). In the next morning he went out to check the chok. He found a good smelling flower inside the chok. He brought the flower and hanged on his wall. Because of its good smelling the king ordered his army to enquire about the flower. The king's army informed their king that the flower was brought by the boy. The king ordered the boy to find out the place where the flower grew. Unless he located the place where the flower grew, he would be killed by the king. The boy informed the matter to his mother and went out to find the place where this flower grew. The boy reached a place called Nganuleima. He was asked by the villagers why he came here. He said he was ordered

by the king to find out the place where a good smelling flower grew. The villager advised him to go to an old man and bow down before him. He should bow down until he was asked to get up. He went to the old man and did as he was told to do so. The old man asked him the reason. He narrated the story to the old man. So the old man told the boy to go to the river and bring all the dress of the seven sisters who were taking bath there. He was also told, “you should not look back when you bring the dresses.” The boy collected all the dresses of the seven sisters and came back. Unknowingly he tried to look back. As he looked back he just became a dry grass, because he did not follow the old man’s advice. The old man converted the dry grass into a boy again. The man told him that you should not look back this time. The boy went to the river again and collected all the dresses and gave them to the old man. The seven sisters came to the old man and asked for their dress. The old man said I didn’t see your dresses. The seven sisters repeatedly asked. So the old man gave their dresses to them. The dress of the youngest one was not given. This youngest sister became the wife of the boy. The army gave this information to their king. They boy said to the king that the Waichorate’s wife is much more beautiful than your wife. The king was angry and he planned to kill the boy and take his wife. They were doing dog fighting and cock fighting. If the king’s dog defeated the dog of the boy the boy’s wife should be taken by the king. Luckily the boy’s dog defeated the king’s dog. The king had another plan. He ordered his army to dig a hole and put the boy into the hole and kill him. The armies were doing it. But there was an animal called *sakhu* (a kind of animal who livees under the ground) sent by the six elder sisters of the boy’s wife. The animal made three hollows. These hollows passed through the house of the boy. The king’s army put the boy into this hole. The boy rather came out from another hollow and sat in his house nicely. The armies were surprised seeing this. Their plan was to kill the boy by putting him into this hole. The boy informed the king and his army that “you try to enter this hole along with fire. This hollow is a nice place and very good to see it.” The king and the army entered into this hollow. The boy blocked the hollow. The king and his army were burnt and they died.

4. Suiting and Ngambong

Ton lai hana Ngambong anti arat tak pasal khat alui om. Ama psal hi Suiting anti numei hi atam alui lungsiat. Nikhat ko ram ma chak tok alui che. Achak tokna amun ha Khoichungtepa anti pasal pa khat ning thingkung alui tuk pe pet a ama tuk hang im lui om pe mo. Inna ariam ma alui hong kir. Nikhat ko Suiting anu ning ama thingkung alianpa tak khat natuk pero alui tipe. Ngambong ning alui jot. Buchun achui a thingkung tuk alui che.

Thingkung lianpa ha alui tuk khiak. Ram ha ahang hol a amun ha atam alui hui. Thingkung atuk khiak man jutting inti hang anlui ti. Ju inna hang ati pipe ha aluikui a ajak a intiang alui hong kir. Hi chong hi ajet karra Suiting wakhall huipe mo a alui chap. Ngambong ning Suiting hi alungsiat rei det lakhan ko athawai ha achur a thalru kok sunga alui thun. Ha lakhan ko Suiting ha alui thi. Nikhat ko par achui a Suiting thanna Suiting kel alui che. Mining annui so a ajak a Suiting ha kel lui a par jak alinga alui mak. Apar ling ha aniracham Lailente anti wate khat ning alui kel chak. Nikhat ko ananga wate bea imata ka par ling nakel chak alui tipe. Wate ing Suiting ning kel ro ati jar ra ke alui ti pe. Wate ning Suiting bea nahong jot em alui tip e. kahong jot alui ti. Wate ning Suiting omna athi ramma alui tuong. Ngambong le suting anlui kan mu. Suiting ning kei om na omtor nati wem alui ti pe ajarko kei ka omna ko athi ram ke alui tip e. Ngambong ning ka omtor hang ke alui tipe. Ngambong ning Renglemte a ol a Suiting le athi ramma anlui om suom ani.

Free Translation

Once upon a time there was a brave man named Ngambong. The man tried to fall in love with Suiting. One day Ngambong went in search of food. The place where he used to go for searching food was already visited by a man called Khoichungtepa who also tried to love Suiting. Khoichungtepa cut all the trees and grass. There was nothing left for Ngambong to cut. Ngambong came back home with an empty hand. One day Suiting's mother came to his home to invite him to cut a big tree. Ngambong accepted Suiting's mother's request. He carried the lunch pack and went for cutting the big tree. He cut the big tree. Everybody praised him for cutting such a big tree and the place became very fine and beautiful. After cutting the tree he was about to get a drink of rice beer. When he tried to drink the beer by small bamboo pipe, the bamboo pipe became broken and he could not drink and came back home without drinking anything. Suiting was sad and was crying. She said that her boyfriend could not drink the local wine. Ngambong was very much in love with Suiting that he tried to capture the soul of Suiting by putting inside the *liwa* (a container for arrows). So Suiting became dead. One day he went to her grave with a flower to dig out the dead body and make her alive. He was laughed at by his friends. So he stopped digging out the dead body. Instead he planted the flower on her grave. A bird name *lailente* (a type of bird) came to pluck the flower. This bird was met by Ngambong and he asked "why did you pluck the flower every day." The bird answered "I was told by Suiting to do so." The bird asked again. "Do you want to come to Suiting's place?" Ngambong said yes and he was carried to the Suiting's place by the bird. Suiting and Ngambong met. Suiting asked Ngambong "will you be able to

stay with me because my place is not an ordinary place. It is the place where the dead man lives.” Ngambong said yes. Ngambong became Ringlemte and lived together with her. Ringlemte means the place where death man lives.

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