



## A Study on the Double Descent System, With Special Reference to the Matrilineal System among the Dimasa Tribe of Assam.

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**ABSTRACT:** The Dimasa community is known to be the indigenous tribe residing presently in Dima Hasao, Cachar, Hojai, Nagaon, Karbi Anglong, district of Assam, and the Dimapur area of Nagaland in the northeastern state of India. The Dimasa are one of the most colorful Indo-Mongoloid tribes with a long history, rich cultural heritage, distinct language, and indigenous living style including their food habits, weaving, and handicrafts. The descent system in the Dimasa society portrays an egalitarian practice from the overview but if we dive deeper, we see the trend of the society leaning towards patriarchy as most of the core rituals and positions are held by the males of the society and the Dimasa's also follow a unique system of inheritance and tracing of descent that sets them apart from the other tribes of the area. The Dimasa have a mother clan system that is passed down to the daughters thus, daughters trace their line of descent both on the mother's and the father's sides but not so by the sons or male members of the community as they only trace their descent through the father's side. The male clans are called Sengphong and the female clans are called Julu/Jilik/Jadi. These Sengphongs and Jadies play a great role in their social life.

**KEYWORDS:** Dimasa, Semgphong, Jadi, Kalti, Kinship, Descent, Double descent.

### I. INTRODUCTION:

The Dimasa community is known to be the indigenous tribe residing presently in Dima Hasao, Cachar, Hojai, Nagaon, Karbi Anglong, district of Assam, and the Dimapur area of Nagaland in the northeastern state of India. The Dimasa are one of the most colorful Indo-Mongoloid tribes with a long history, rich cultural heritage, distinct language, and indigenous living style including their food habits, weaving, and handicrafts. Historically it is said that before the advent of ahoms, it was the Dimasa kingdom that ruled the southern part of Assam for more than one thousand years full of fame and achievement. The Dimasa are one of the oldest living tribes of northeast India. It is said that the

Dimasa dynasty reigned for a period of over 800 years that started from their kingdom in Dimapur in the 11th century and ended with the Khaspur kingdom in the 19th century, with the last Dimasa king having no heir. As of now present, the Dimasa are concentrated in many different geographical parts of Assam and Nagaland state of India, it would be very surprising and interesting to note that the Dimasa has four dialects according to the geographical location they are settled down and out of which Hasao is the standard dialect but again the Hasao dialect has also several sub-dialect and varieties and this diverse dialect of Dimasa shows the spread of Dimasa linguistically and culturally homogenized under the shelf of "Dimasa". The Dimasa found in Dimasa Hasao (North Cachar Hills) are called Hasaosa, the Dimasa who are settled down in the Cachar district of Assam are called Hawarsa, and The Dimasa who are found in Nogaon and Hojai districts of Assam are called as Dembrasa, and the Dimasa who are settled down in the district of Karbi Anglong of Assam and Dimapur district of Nagaland are called as Dijuwas. In the context of culture, the Dimasa are one of the rarest tribes having bilineal/ double descent following both their patrilineal and matrilineal lines for tracing their ancestors. The descent system in the Dimasa society portrays an egalitarian practice from the overview but if we dive deeper, we see the trend of the society leaning towards patriarchy as most of the core rituals and positions are held by the males of the society and the Dimasa's also follow a unique system of inheritance and tracing of descent that sets them apart from the other tribes of the area. The Dimasa have a mother clan system that is passed down to the daughters thus, daughters trace their line of descent both on the mother's and the father's sides but not so by the sons or male members of the community as they only trace their descent through the father's side. For generations, societies have traced their ancestors and family lines through a 'descent system', the usual patrilineal society traces its descent through the father's side while a



matrilineal society traces its descent through the mother's side, such kind of a descent system where societies trace their descent through a particular side is known as Unilineal descent system, but they also exist other types of descent where the societies give equal importance to both their line of descent when they trace their predecessor such kind of descent system can be classified as Double descent and Bilateral descent system. Despite being one of India's patriarchal tribal societies, the Dimasa society in Assam features strong matriarchal characters. Males and females are on an equal level. As Schneider (1968:1) points out, if any kinship system contains more than one kin unit, and if any of these contain more than one kind of descent unit, then what has been called "double descent" must be treated as a special case. Thus, the Dimasa community practicing double descent must be further explored and taken as a special case in this very general phenomenon of unilineal descent practice. There have been many studies on the Dimasa society, its significant social structure, and its rituals but no in-depth study has been made so far on the matrilineal system that exists within this community and there is a need to understand this system and focus on the social and economic implications on the society due to its unique descent and inheritance system, something which is of equal importance for a culture that has been carrying on for ages. Further, the perpetuation and combination of the different kinds of kinship units that can be found in association with one another give rise to the utility of designating the descent system to both patrilineal as well as matrilineal must be fully explored. This study can also narrow down the understanding of the problem of whether the complementary kin unit is a property-holding unit or not. Thus, this study aims to have an insight into the role of the complementary descent unit and to gain knowledge on how the Dimasa society copes with the social and economic impacts arising out of the typical descent system it has maintained and followed for ages. The first section of my study highlights some of the literature review related to the topic i.e., on Double Descent, followed by the methodology part which I have used in conducting this study, followed by the background of the Dimasa Community, followed by a discussion and findings which includes the major part of my studies and objectives like to have an insight into the role of the complementary descent unit and also to gain knowledge on how the Dimasa society copes with the social and economic impacts arising out of the typical descent system it has maintained and

followed for ages, followed by major findings from the study and conclusion.

#### **Research Objectives:**

- To understand the system of inheritance and descent through the mother's clan system of the Dimasa community.
- To explore the ways and impact through which the Dimasa community has maintained the clan system with the changing world.
- To understand the significance of the mother clan in the Dimasa society.

#### **Research Question:**

- How are descent and inheritance passed from mother to daughter?
- How have the changing times and constant development in society affected the matrilineal clan system of the Dimasa?
- What are the social and economic implications of the system on the community?

## **II. Methodology:**

This study is exploratory and qualitative. The primary data collection was done using one-on-one semi-structured interviews with 30 people as respondents comprising 5 men & 5 women of the age group 50-60, 5 men & 5 women comprising of age group 25-50, and 5 each of both genders from the youth belonging to the Dimasa community. Collection of data was done through meetups with village-head and identification of personals fitting the criteria of respondents for the study and using Purposive and Stratified sampling techniques. The purposive sampling technique is used for selecting samples. Here the researcher purposefully selects whom he/she wants to interview. The interview was held within two weeks dated 8th February-20th February 2022. Secondary sources of information and data were gathered and collected from books, journals, articles, and other web materials for the study.

Using a purposive and stratified sampling method a total of 30 respondents were selected as the sample size. The 30 respondents were stratified into 5 married men and 5 married women of the age group 50-60, 5 married men and 5 married women of the age group 25-50, and 5 each of both genders from the youth who are all unmarried.

The universe of the study was in the villages named Khailimdisa, Wadrenghisa and Natun Lampu which falls under the circle of the main town area of Maibang. The town Maibang was once the capital of the Dimasa kingdom with ruins of the kingdom still found in the place, the stone house being the most



popular one. Now present it is one of the subdivisions of the Dima Hasao district of Assam with a total population of 20,664 according to the 2011 census report of India and most of the people found in the area under Maibang are from the Dimasa community, Bengali, Nepali, Assamese, Manipuri, and Zeme Naga. 98% of the people residing in the area are followers of Hinduism followed by 1% of Christianity and 1% of Islam.

### III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION: INTRODUCTION TO DESCENT:

Kinship is the word used to describe the culturally accepted ties that exist between family members. Kinship refers to the terms or social statuses that are used to categorize family members, as well as the duties and expected behaviors of the family that are linked with these statuses. Kinship refers to relationships developed by blood ties (consanguineal), such as those made between parents and children, as well as those formed through marital ties (affinal), such as those formed between in-laws. "Chosen kin" are not related by blood or marriage yet feel themselves to be family. Even though they are not blood relatives, adoptive parents are traditionally accepted as parents to the children they raise. According to **Robin Fox** "Kinship is simply the relation between kins that is a person related by real, putative and fictive consanguinity". The kinship system is a network of culturally acknowledged familial links. Kinship is formed in certain cultures by a single paternal line or "side" of the family. In many regions of the world, for example, families are defined by patrilineal descent: the family's paternal line, or dads and their children. Matrilineal descent is a kinship grouping that is defined by the maternal line of links between mothers and their offspring in other civilizations. Because they include descent through only one line or side of the family, these types of kinship are termed unilineal. It is vital to remember that while systems of descent establish culturally recognized "kin," they don't limit people's ties or emotional bonds. Even if they are not of the same patrilineage, mothers in patrilineal communities enjoy tight and loving relationships with their offspring. In the United States, for example, last names usually follow a patrilineal descent pattern: children inherit their fathers' surnames. This does not imply that mothers' and children's ties are weakening. Another technique to establish kinship is by bilateral descent. Families are characterized by ancestry from both the father's and mother's sides of the family when they are of bilateral descent. Children recognize both their mother's and father's

family members as relatives of bilateral descent, which is typical in the United States. These kinship systems generate descent groups that offer members a feeling of identity and social support.

Kinship organizations may also have economic power over people's lives, dictating where they may live, who they can marry, and what happens to their possessions after they die. Apart from family and affinity norms, inheritance can influence residency, interpersonal connections, a form of address, and a variety of other economic and political behaviors. Genealogy, kinship terms, marital preferences, and social reproduction cycles have all been used to analyze the norms themselves. Kinship theories in social anthropology are often classified according to how much emphasis they place on rules of descent vs rules of affinity. In other words, they focus on either the parent-child relationship or the relationships formed by marriage between groups. Between the 1930s and 1960s, descent theory was popular, thanks to the work of African anthropologists like Meyer Fortes and A.R Radcliffe Brown's theoretical work. According to A.R Radcliffe Brown kinship is "a system of dynamic relations between person to person in a community, the behavior of any two-person in any of these relations being regulated in some way, and to a greater or less extent by social usage". Kinship arrangements, according to descent theorists, serve to ensure that lineage groups survive as political units across time. This implies that within lineage groupings, ties must be developed and maintained by real or imagined links traced through one or both parents. As a result, the focus of attention is on parent-child and siding bonds. These studies, which are likewise very empirical and connected to functionalist theory, emphasize descent and succession, implying that kinships exist to allocate rights and obligations in communities for descent theorists.

Marriage and incest laws are consequently crucial in alliance theory, which is more theoretical and concerned with how the norms create linkages between groups through marriage. This indicates that the kinship system exists to produce marriage possibilities or impossibilities for alliance theorists. Much of this perspective is based on Claude Levi Strauss' classification of kinship systems as either elementary or complex. In the first situation, the spouse is chosen according to societal conventions, but in the second case, the marriage partner is chosen based on personal preferences rather than structural restrictions. However, these are abstract concepts rather than descriptions of actual reality: in practice, all societies have incest norms that



determine marriage partners based on basic structures, as well as intricate features that allow for some situational choices. As a result, descent may be described as the mechanisms through which communities trace their ancestors, family lineage, and kinship. They exist in every community, with various societies practicing various forms of descent.

Descent is a cultural rule for tracing ancestry. There are various types of descent but if categorized precisely they can be categorized into three:

a. Unilineal Descent: Unilineal descent is a type of descent rule where the ancestry is traced either through the male line or through the female line. Examples of these can be cited as Caste societies, Gonds, and Nagas.

b. Double Descent or Bilineal Descent: In Bilineal or Double descent the matrilineal and the patrilineal operate simultaneously but for different purposes. For example, in the case of the Yako people of Africa, patrilineal descent is followed in terms of transmission of immovable property or political office. Whereas for transmission for movable property and the office of priest matrilineal descent is followed.

c. Bilateral Descent: In Bilateral descent, the lineage is traced through both the matrilineal and patrilineal lines. **G.P Murdock** in his article "**Double Descent**" (1940) distinguished that in bilateral descent ego traces the relationship with all his/her grandparents from both sides of the lineages which is absent in double descent whereas only the paternal grandfather and maternal grandmother are traced.

#### THE KINSHIP STRUCTURE OF THE DIMASA COMMUNITY:

The Dimasa are always affiliated with two distinct kin groups during their lifetime. Because it is a double descent system, this affiliation does not coexist at an equal level implying that the importance and nature of this association are not the same for a male or female member instead it is determined by the sex.

Retaining and transmission of clan membership is extremely important to all Dimasa individuals and aside from matters of inheritance, social roles in events of birth, marriage, and death are largely determined by it as well. For instance, at the time of death, the Hojai are entrusted with the role of performing various rituals belonging to the patrilan. Again, during the time of marriage, it is the matrilineal who negotiates the **Kalti**, a bond in the form of payment given by the groom's family to the

bride, on behalf of the families. The clans are tied together religiously as well through the institution of **Daikho**. According to the literature available, there are altogether forty patricians and forty-two matrilineal clans that are recognized. This number remains a topic of debate within the community.

There are several narratives regarding the origin and development of the double descent system. A group of scholars argues (**Thaoson, 1974**) that the Dimasas only had seven male clans during their rule in Dimapur, which subsequently increased to twelve in Maibang, and similarly, another argues (**Hagjer, 1974**) that seven matrilineal and patricians existed in Dimapur which increased to twelve in Maibong and eventually to the existing 42 matrilineal and 40 male clans. **Danda (1977)**, on the other hand, states that in Dimapur there were no matrilineal and instead were created in Maibang for socio-political reasons; Barma's explanations follow similar lines. **Bathari (2011)** consolidates all these explanations and adds to this a dimension of purity-pollution. The explanation (of the origins) however, remains incomplete when it comes to the existence of the number of clans in the present society.

When it comes to the prohibitions or clan taboos, the emphasis is more on food habits and goods. For instance, few patricians are not permitted to wear gold, consume pig meat, etc. There are, in addition, far more serious clan taboos where women of two different matrilineal clans are not to reside in the same household. This could be one reason why the preferred form of household remains unclear. However, this is not a norm, and we see how women belonging to different matrilineal clans do reside together. There is also the belief that these women should not exchange personal items such as combs, garments, etc (**Bathari, 2011, p. 209; Danda, 1978, p. 50**).

These clans all have distinct names, mostly named after natural objects and beings. Few represent a particular designation or title. Among the recognized clans there is no indication of ranking today, although few matrilineal suggest a close association with royalty which comes with certain additional status, especially in the Cachar district (**Barpujari, 1997, p. 15; Bordoloi, 1984, p. 41**).

The list of both patricians and matrilineal clans are as follows:

The list of patricians (**Semphongs**):

Ardaosa, Bodoso/Bodo, Bathari, Daolagajao, Daolaguphu, Dibragede, Diphusa, Diruasa, Gorlosa, Hasnusa, Hojai, Hafila, Haflongbar, Hagjer, Hassam/Hasamphura, Hakmaosa, Johorisa, Jigdung, Jarambusa, Kharigapsa, Kemprai, Khersa, Laphthaisa, Langthasa, Lamfusa, Laobandisa, Longmailai, Maibangsa, Mitherphangs



a, Maramsa, Nunisa, Nabensa, Naiding, Phonglo, Porbo sa, Raijung, Sengyung, Sorongsa, Thaosen, Waibra, War isa.

The list of matriclans (**Jadi/Jiliks/Julus**):

Saikhudi (Rajama), Banglaima Gedeba (Jambudi), Phaisaidi Gedeba, Maireng Phasai, Maireng Gedeba, Saidima Gedeba, Hamlai Gimindi, Banglaima Gedeba (Ambika), Mairong Gedeba, Miyungma Gedeba, Mairong Drainshong, Bugungma. Banglaima, Mairong Gedeba (Lakshmi). Miyungma Daoga, Mai Gedeba, Saidima (Daoga), Mairong Daoga, Mairongma Gedeba, Mairong Gedeba (Daomaidi), Mairong Khasiba, Mairongma Gedeba (Demaidi), Mairongma Gedeba (Mairingdi), Saidima, Rangsaidi, Banglaima (mailaidi), Mairong, Miyungma Khasiba, Maireng Khasiba, Mairong, Banglaima Khasiba, Mairong Khasiba, Saidima Khasiba, Maireng Khasiba (Jalu), Mairengma, Maireng Khasiba (Nanadi), Divungmajilik. Saidima Khasiba (Jaladi), Maireng, Maireng Khasiba (Subangdi), Khimbarshi, Bairengsa, The interviewees stated that out of 42 Mother clans or the Jadis of the Dimasa community, 31 of them are sister clans in groupings of 7 Maireng clans, 5 Saidima clans. & Mairong clans, 5 Banglaima clans, 3 Miyungma clans & 3 Mairongma clans.

#### THE MOTHER CLAN SYSTEM OF THE DIMASA:

The mother clan system of the Dimasas is a unique feature of the region in itself: it can hardly be argued that the amusing nature of the practice as it is a pool of rich heritage and practices that have defined the society. The mere fact of the existence of the system in a heavily patriarchal society shows how the Dimasa people are rooted in their culture and portrays their deep love for the heritage that they have accessed through generations, the systems bestowed upon them, and their nature of preserving the system by continuously practicing it till date says it all, the Dimasa society has a separate clan for the females of the society can be seen as a big statement of intent in a male-dominated society. This shows signs of a double descent system where the females trace their ancestors through the mother clan while simultaneously doing so through their father's side as well. **George P. Murdock (1940)** in his article "**Double Descent**" states that Double descent" is "basically a mix of matrilineal and patrilineal lineage pursued simultaneously. The mother clan has separate numbers of clans which are rooted out of many core groups independent of the other father clans. These mother clans are known as **Jadis/Jiliks/Julus** while the father clans are known

as **Semphongs**. The **Jadis** are **42** in number while the **Semphongs** are **40** in number.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MOTHER CLAN SYSTEM:

The many numbers of **Jadis** that have erupted were only during the times of the king or during the monarchy that existed till 1885. The clans were mostly created out of the core clans due to conflict among the people. We noticed almost all the interviewees 83.3% to be precise said that the clans have erupted due to the conflicts and that many have erupted after the initial ones of 1885 but they still don't face the recognition that the others do in comparison. We also found that the mother clan has characteristic features like attending a daughter's marriage from the clan regardless of the family they belong to, stating that the unity of the clan is maintained. The mother clans or the Jadis have relatively no influence on the father clans (**Semphong**). The practice of exogamy outside the tribe is prohibited and as such the members of any Jadi who practiced exogamy are rebuked from the clan and tribe as a whole.

#### ROLE OF THE MOTHER CLAN SYSTEM:

Both the matriarchal and patriarchal lines of descent have important roles in the family. In the case of family decisions and women's role in them, almost all of the interviewees accepted that the mothers of the family are central figures with equal posture as that of the father. 46.7% of the interviewees stated that the mother clan is given equal importance as compared to the father's clan. 53.3% of them though stated that there is little to no sign of the mother clan except for some rituals and norms. The mother clan system plays a very important role in the subjugation of the clan members so as they do not go beyond the boundaries or norms of the community. They often form organizations or groups whenever a situation of crisis erupts to maneuver the situation to a place of stability. The mother clan also seems to hold a very crucial role when it comes to the smooth functioning of the rituals and practices even if they are all male-centered. Institutions of marriage also are heavily influenced by the mother clan and the rituals there also are overseen by the guidance of the clan, during the time of marriage, it is the matriclan who negotiates the *Kalti*, a bond in the form of payment given by the groom's family to the bride, on behalf of the families. Even though the mother clan helps in the smooth functioning of rituals it has little to no role in the actual rituals of the society.



### **INHERITANCE OF THE DAUGHTERS IN THE DIMASA SOCIETY:**

In Bilineal or Double descent, the matrilineal and the patrilineal operate simultaneously but for different purposes. For example, in the case of the Yako people of Africa, patrilineal descent is followed in terms of transmission of immovable property or political office. Whereas for transmission for movable property and the office of priest matrilineal descent is followed. The Dimasa Society also follows the double descent system as such the inheritance of movable objects and generational objects is mostly subjected to the mother clan or the females whereas the inheritance of immovable objects is subjected to the males of the society, immovable objects that daughters would usually inherit but the movable objects they usually do are ornaments, clothes, etc. 46.7% of the women interviewees said that they did not inherit any generational commodities the rest 3.3% said that they did inherit some ornaments which were generational. The system of inheritance is not rigid in the mother clan system as we also interviewed people who had inherited land and immovable property which shows that it is an emotional affair to pass down things to their daughters or inherit things from the parents by daughters even if there isn't any rule or norm to do so. We also found that the inheritance is mostly limited to the son of the family and in case there is no son the son-in-law holds the property rights.

### **RITUALS OF THE MOTHER CLAN SYSTEM:**

Female clans don't have their own clan Gods, the spiritual realm is dominated by the patriarchal side. The Jadis do have their ritual, a ritual where once in a year or two the female members of a Jadi gather together at a designated spiritual place to perform a ritual, the name of which they refuse to say as it's prohibited to take its name. The ritual is seen as a cleansing of accumulated sins over a year which they believe might come back to haunt the Jadi. The ritual is divided into three parts: SARETHEIKHOUBA- held during the day KHUAPHAIBA- also held during the day SARINIMAYOAPBA- held during the night All the rituals are carried out on a single day and are essential to the clan members. 36.7% of the interviewees stated in general that participation in the ritualistic side of society should be more inclusive. 63.3% stated that the current norms should be followed and maintained with a minimum role in the rituals of the society. The youths weren't necessarily associated with the rituals of the mother clan, the rest 66.9% of the married interviewees said

that since the mother clan only has active rituals and customs during marriages and their annual ritual ceremony there were little financial implications to the cause.

### **FUTURE OF THE MOTHER CLAN SYSTEM:**

Almost all of the interviewees believed that the clans or Jadis have existed for so many decades through the process of cultural habits and norms carried out through generations to keep the cultural norms alive. The tribal community has a strict law of conduct which has helped to keep the practices alive. The married women who formed 33.3% of the interviewed said that the yearly gathering of the clan, a mandatory practice has slightly deteriorated with due time. 56.7% of the interviewees hold the view that the mother clan system will face some changes, while the rest 43.3% believe that no significant changes will come in the status of the mother clan shortly to come.

### **MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION.**

#### **MAJOR FINDINGS:**

To sum up the major findings we have cited a few important ones: There are 40 male clans also known as Semphongs/ Sengphongs which is the last name the Dimasa people carry in their name and it is inherited always inherited from the patriclan side. There are 42 significant female clans also known as Jadis. Jadis are always inherited from the matriclan side, unlike the Sengphongs which are inherited from the patriclan. The study noted that even with the existence of both patrilineal and matrilineal descent the society is male-centric and thus the matriclan system has no such significant role involving the core of the Dimasa social structure apart from the descent recognition, and some rituals and norms like subjugation of the clan members so that they don't go beyond the boundaries of the clan and community as a whole. The existence of the mother clan shows evident proof that the community had relevant features of a much more functional mother clan but due to the emerging dominance and the overall assimilation into mainstream religious sects, the practices have somewhat been tempered down to minimal function. Property rights are usually held by men, women, on the other hand, don't necessarily inherit property from their parents although it is also seen that some do inherit property rights but it's purely emotional and no rigid rule of inheritance is followed. The son-in-law holds the rights to the property in all the female households. Female clans don't have their own clan gods, the spiritual realm is dominated by the patriarchal side. The mother clans or the Jadis have relatively no



influence on the father clans (Sengphong). Both the matriarchal and patriarchal lines of descent have important roles to play in the institution of marriage, during the time of marriage, it is the matriclan who negotiates the Kalti, a bond in the form of payment given by the groom's family to the bride, on behalf of the families. The practice of exogamy outside the tribe is prohibited and as such the members of any Jadi who practiced exogamy are outcasted from the clan and tribe as a whole. The practice of exogamy outside the clan is seen as a taboo and it can be said that there are certain factors associated with this notion as it is seen as something that affects the integrity and purity of the community.

#### **SOME OTHER FINDINGS:**

The continuation of both the mother and the father clan in a family ends with the son or daughter if they do not bear children themselves. The bride price is existent. Clothes, utensils, and a separate kitchen are given to the bride after she comes to stay at her husband's home. Mother Clans who are sister clans don't allow endogamy amongst themselves. Marriages among people are also hindered by Gust's similarities. The Dimasa have a mother clan system that is passed down to the daughters thus, daughters trace their line of descent both on the mother's and the father's sides but not so by the sons or male members of the community as they only trace their descent through the father's side. There are several narratives regarding the origin and development of the double descent system. A group of scholars argues (Thaoson, 1974) that the Dimasas only had seven male clans during their rule in Dimapur, which subsequently increased to twelve in Maibang, and similarly, another argues (Hagjer, 1974) that seven matriclans and patricians existed in Dimapur which increased to twelve in Maibong and eventually to the existing 42 matriclans and 40 male clans. Danda (1977), on the other hand, states that in Dimapur there were no matriclans and instead were created in Maibang for socio-political reasons; Barma's explanations follow similar lines. Bathari (2011) consolidates all these explanations and adds to this a dimension of purity-pollution. The explanation (of the origins) however, remains incomplete when it comes to the existence of the number of clans in the present society. There have been some incidences recently such as an exchange of words between the members of the matriclans members, among the matriclans clans members, and some social media fights and debates were also taking place on social media platforms such as X, Facebook, Regional newspaper, etc.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION:**

In conclusion, we can only assure that the only constant is change and the changes in time have brought changes in the system and structure of the society as well, as such changes will be inevitable but to keep the features of a unique society people of the society will have to adapt to be inclusive and mindful of their roots at the same time. The Dimasa society is traditionally patriarchal in nature and this characteristic extends to the family system as well where the father is the head. Tied to family values and rules of marriage or mate selection, is the kinship system that is unique and distinctive. The Dimasa follow a double descent system of lineage. This means that lineage is identified through both matrilineal clans and patrilineal clans. As Schneider (1968:1) points out, if any kinship system contains more than one kin unit, and if any of these contain more than one kind of descent unit, then what has been called "double descent" must be treated as a special case. George P. Murdock (1940) also in his article "Double Descent" states that Double descent" is "basically a mix of matrilineal and patrilineal lineage pursued simultaneously. Thus, all Dimasas will be members of two clans during their lifetime. In Bilineal or Double descent, the matrilineal and the patrilineal operate simultaneously but for different purposes. For example, in the case of the Yako people of Africa, patrilineal descent is followed in terms of transmission of immovable property or political office. Whereas for transmission for movable property and the office of priest matrilineal descent is followed. The Dimasa Society also follows the double descent system as such the inheritance of movable objects and generational objects is mostly subjected to the mother clan or the females whereas the inheritance of immovable objects is subjected to the males (Sengphong) is passed down through the male line. There are 40 patriclans which are called Sengphong and 42 matriclans which are called Jadi/Jilik/Jullu. This transfer of clan identity is fixed and cannot be interchanged between the sexes for all socio-religious-political purposes. The tribal communities have provisions that protect them and their ethnicity but very little is done to explore their societies at an in-depth level as such we as a progressive society should explore and study such societies and maintain their ethnicity. Finally, we can say that the overall practice of the mother clan system and the rituals associated should be continued to keep this unique feature of the double descent system alive and relevant.



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