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Languages and People of the Eastern Himalayan Region (LPEHR)

The Living Song of Kaīvi: Lainong Oral Tradition and Cultural Resilience in Northwestern Myanmar

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ABSTRACT

Oral tradition serves as a vital medium for transmitting wisdom, values, and collective memory across generations. Among the Lainong people of northwestern Myanmar, *Kaīvi* and *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū* represent distinctive oral genres that embody cultural knowledge, ritual practice, and poetic expression. This study investigates these traditions through ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Lahe, Myanmar, where the *Kaīvi* festival continues to be celebrated. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the research integrates semi-structured questionnaires, in-depth interviews, document analysis, and autoethnographic reflection. Findings reveal that Lainong speakers demonstrate a strong commitment to preserving *Kaīvi* and *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū* despite the sociopolitical and urban pressures threatening their survival. The narrative-poetic form of these songs, composed in an archaic register of the Lainong language, encodes communal values and lived experiences through rich metaphorical language. This study contributes to anthropological linguistics by highlighting how oral traditions function as vehicles of identity and resilience within an endangered linguistic community.

KEYWORDS Kaīvi, Kaīvi Yuīnyiū, Lainong oral tradition, cultural resilience, anthropological linguistics, ethnography

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The Living Song of Kaīvi: Lainong Oral Tradition and Cultural Resilience in Northwestern Myanmar

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1 Introduction

Oral tradition constitutes a vital component of cultural heritage and provides a “sense of continuity” (Deacon et al. 2004: 7). It represents a collective value that communities transmit across generations. This study is conceptually grounded in theories concerning endangered languages (Krauss 1992) and endangered oral traditions (Tygolykov 1982). Oral traditions are integral to every culture, encompassing “spoken forms including proverbs, riddles, tales, nursery rhymes, legends, myths, epic songs, and poems” (UNESCO 2011: 4).

This is the first academic study focusing on *Kaīvi* and *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū*, the oral traditions of the Lainong people. *Kaīvi* constitutes the Lainong New Year feast, while *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū* refers to the performative song-dance sequence enacted on the fifth night of the celebration and concluded on the sixth morning, typically around 10 a.m. In Lainong ethnolinguistic terms, *yuī* means “song” and *nyiū* denotes “great,” making *Yuīnyiū* literally “the great song.” This performance functions as a core ritual-linguistic expression within the *Kaīvi* cycle, embodying communal memory, aesthetic form, and cosmological renewal. The Lainong are a Naga tribe residing primarily in Lahe and Khamti districts of northwestern Myanmar, near the Indian border. Neighboring Naga tribes hold comparable annual festivals that resemble the Lainong *Kaīvi*. The Khamniungan tribe, for instance, celebrates *Miu* at the start of the sowing season in May and *Tsokum* during the harvest in October (DIPR 2021: 12–13; DAC 2019: 20–22). The Konyak people observe *Aoleang*, a six-day festival marking the beginning of the new year in early April (DIPR 2021: 14; DAC 2019: 26). Similarly, the Poumai Chakesang tribe celebrates *Thuni* (January 5–10), the Phom people observe *Monyū* (April 1–6) (DAC 2019: 10, 32–34), the Mao tribe celebrates *Chithunih* (Mathew 2014), and the Sangtam tribe holds *Mungmung* each September (Eastern Mirror 2022).

The Lainong community maintains two types of seasonal feasts: those conducted in the farming fields (*lòviu'iam*) and those celebrated at home (*nuakviu'iam*). Both forms involve ritual offerings of domestic animals such as eggs, chickens, pigs, cows, mithun, buffaloes, and dogs accordingly. These oral traditions, however, have largely disappeared due to cultural assimilation and the decline in intergenerational transmission. From the 1980s onward, several villages experienced pressure to convert to Christianity or Buddhism. During this period, Naga armed insurgent groups discouraged traditional ritual practices, while pro-government authorities required the dismantling of cultural heritage such as ritual posts and ancestral animal-skull displays which had long been central to community identity. Today, only five villages, including ¹ (Myoma Ward), symbolically observe *Kaīvi*. Most other villages

¹ Peigū is the original settlement from which present-day Lahe Town developed; it is now known as Myoma Ward. The name **Peigū**, meaning “tree-bark peeling,” refers to a large tree with peeling bark observed at the time of the village’s founding. When Anui Lahe established the settlement, this distinctive tree became the referent by which people identified the place, and the village name Peigū, later associated with Lahe, derived from his name, was adopted

discontinued the practice after the spread of Christianity and Buddhism in the region.

Figure 2 shows *Thālī lāmbū*, the eldest son of the landlord (the author’s cousin), leading a prayer as family members stand nearby in traditional dress. On that occasion, a mithun (*Bos frontalis*) was tied to the sacrificial post and offered as part of the feast. This 2012 event marked the last complete sacrificial service; since then, only symbolic observances have continued. The present study analyzes *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū*, a song associated with *Kaīvi*, the feast traditionally held at home.

Previous studies by the author have reported that the Lainong language is gradually shifting toward Burmese (Sainyiu 2022) and that communities in remote areas demonstrate stronger linguistic and cultural resilience (Sainyiu et al. 2025). Similar findings appear in other literature, such as Keenan (2013), who describes how urbanization threatened Māori oral traditions in post-war New Zealand. The “silent migration” of Māori to urban centers around 1945 (Grace et al. 2001) led to major sociocultural changes, yet Māori revitalized their language and culture through urban affiliations, institutions, and activism. These efforts ultimately transformed urban spaces into cultural sites of adaptation rather than loss.

In Myanmar, minority groups—including the Lainong—have recently gained opportunities to preserve their languages and cultures through the introduction of a “local curriculum” in schools (Anui & Arphattananon 2021).

1.1. Background and Location

The Lainong language, belonging to the Northern Naga, southeastern branch of Patkaian group, of the Tibeto-Burman within the Sino-Tibetan language family (Dam, forthcoming), is spoken primarily in Lahe and Khamti Townships of northwestern Myanmar. It shares close lexical and phonological affinities with Khamniungan and Konyak but maintains distinct morphosyntactic and tonal features that mark it as a separate linguistic system. Lainong exhibits agglutinative morphology, SOV (subject-object-verb) word order, and a rich system of aspect-marked verb inflection. Historically transmitted through oral means, the language has only recently begun to develop a standardized orthography. Despite its vitality in certain rural areas, Lainong is currently endangered, with intergenerational transmission weakening under the influence of Burmese and regional *lingua francas* (Sainyiu 2022).

Lahe and Khamti Townships in Sagaing Region, northwestern Myanmar, constitute the homeland of the Lainong people. Lahe, the principal settlement and capital of the Naga Self-Administered Zone, is characterized by hilly terrain, dense forests, and limited access to modern infrastructure. The township covers approximately 3,941 km² and has a population of 51,078 (2024 census; Department of Population 2025) of which about two-thirds are Lainong. The Lainong language, belonging to the Tibeto-Burman family, has roughly 22,617 native speakers (Sainyiu 2022). The population is composed of approximately 60 percent Christians, 33 percent Buddhists, and 7 percent traditional believers. “Lainong” serves as an inclusive term encompassing several dialectal varieties within the community.

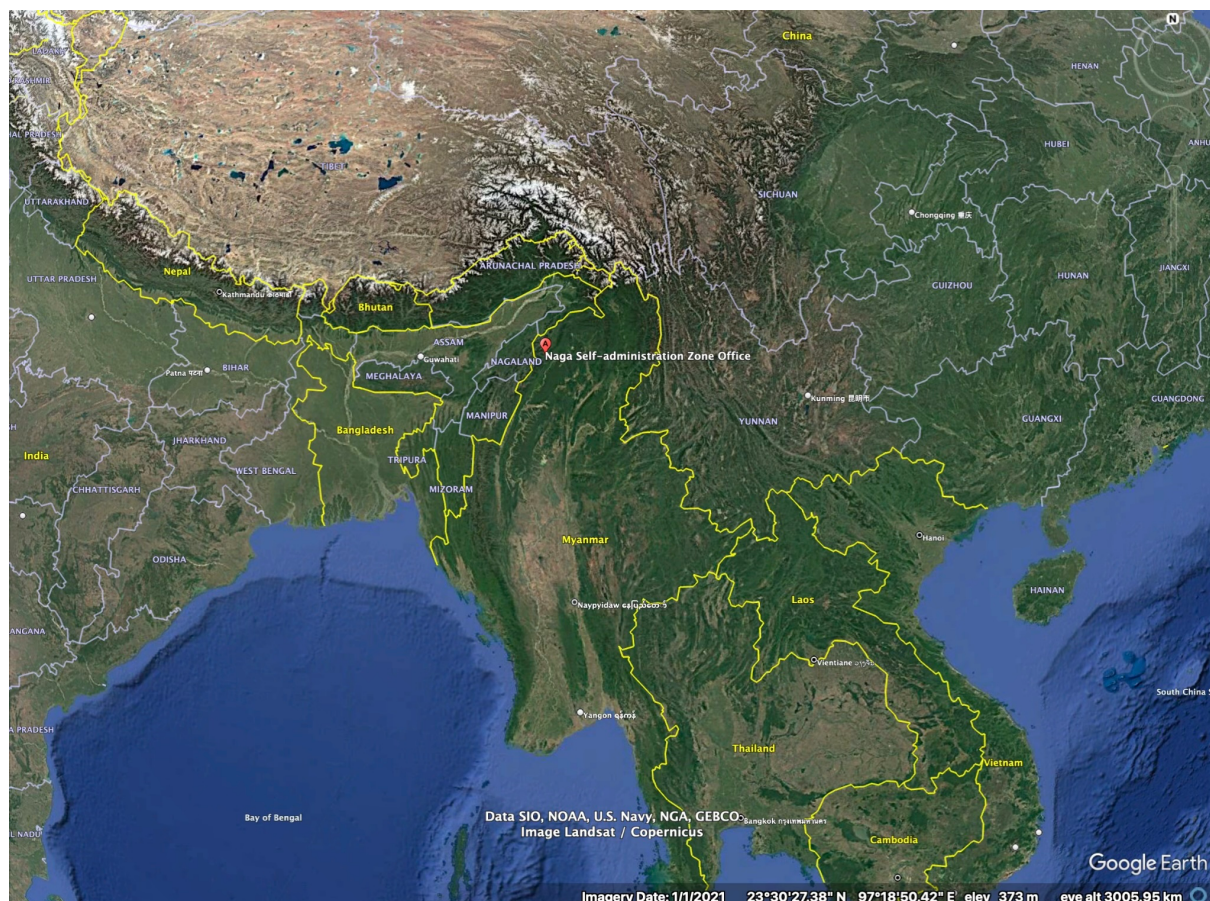


Figure 1 – Research location map, Naga Self-administered Zone.

1.2. Research Question

The central research question guiding this study is:

How do Lainong people in Peigū village maintain their oral traditions and cultural practices? Specifically, the study examines how the Lahe community's sociocultural transformations over the past three decades (1995–2025) have influenced language use and the continuity of oral traditions.

1.3. Methodology

This study seeks to understand past lived experiences and to analyze the feelings and attitudes of the Lainong people toward the *Kaīvi* and *Kaīvi Yuīnyū* ceremonial performances. Because oral traditions embody ancestral emotions and expressions, their study demands sensitivity and contextual understanding. Accordingly, a descriptive qualitative approach was adopted. Data were collected through semi-structured questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and participant observations. The analysis aimed to reconstruct past experiences, compare them with present practices, and explore community perspectives on the *Kaīvi* festival.

1.4. Study Population and Setting

The study population comprised 605 individuals aged 18 and above, all belonging to *Pòngpù Giāmpū* (traditional ritual leadership families in Peigū), the original Lainong village in Lahe Township. Every eligible member of the community was considered for inclusion. To ensure

both breadth and depth, the study employed a multi-method research design, integrating quantitative and qualitative techniques.

1.5. Sampling Methods

For the quantitative component, simple random sampling was used to select participants aged 18–35 from the total population. This ensured each eligible youth had an equal chance of inclusion, minimizing selection bias and yielding a representative subset for survey analysis.

For the qualitative component, purposive sampling identified five elders, all descendants of High-Priest families, who possessed deep knowledge of Lainong ritual and oral traditions. Their insights were essential for interpreting the symbolic and performative dimensions of *Kaīvi*.

1.6. Sample Size Determination

The required sample size for estimating a single proportion was calculated using the formulas recommended by Cochran (1977) and Krejcie & Morgan (1970) and adjusted for finite-population correction.

At a 95% confidence level ($Z = 1.96$), with an expected proportion = 0.5 and a 5% margin of error, the minimum sample size was 235 respondents.

Due to field constraints, a final sample of 100 respondents (aged 18–35) was selected. This corresponds to an approximate $\pm 9\%$ margin of error at 95% confidence, acceptable for exploratory descriptive research (Israel 1992).

The age range follows the ASEAN Member States (AMS) definition of *youth*—the generation responsible for transmitting cultural heritage (ASEAN Secretariat 2017).

1.7. Data-Collection Methods

A combination of complementary methods was used to triangulate data and enhance credibility:

- **Semi-Structured Questionnaires:**
Distributed to 100 respondents aged 18–35 to gather demographic information, beliefs, and cultural practices. Responses enabled systematic quantitative analysis.
- **In-Depth Interviews:**
Conducted with five High-Priest elders using a semi-structured guide. Interviews explored ritual practice, oral composition, and intergenerational change, yielding nuanced cultural perspectives.
- **Participant Observation:**
The researcher, being a descendant of a High-Priest family, conducted ethnographic and autoethnographic observations. Insider access allowed active participation in rituals, careful documentation of ceremonies, and detailed field notes that contextualized the findings.

The integration of these methods ensured data triangulation, reinforcing the validity and depth of interpretation.

1.8. Autoethnography

This research employs both autoethnography and ethnography to examine Lainong cultural phenomena through the author's lived experience. Autoethnography connects the researcher's

personal narrative with broader historical and sociocultural transformations (Wall 2006).

Born in 1984 in Lahe, the author's life has unfolded within a unique cultural landscape, today the capital of the Naga Self-Administered Zone in northwestern Myanmar. This autoethnographic approach weaves individual experiences with the collective memory of the community, tracing transformations from the 1980s to 2025. It illuminates how personal identity interacts with societal change and contributes to the wider discourse on oral tradition, oral history, and indigenous autoethnography.

1.9. Textual Analysis

The fieldwork was conducted in Peigū Village, Lahe Township.

The *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū* song analyzed in this study was recorded in 2009 from Ngōm Pok, the Village High Priest and principal song-teller, during an overnight celebration.

The first Lainong transcription (2011) was distributed to the community as a booklet.

A second edition (2013) added Burmese translations and was again circulated locally.

Each translation was cross-checked with *Ngōm Pok* and verified by other native speakers to ensure accuracy and cultural fidelity.

1.10. Results

Song Text of *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū* The following transcription of *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū* (recorded in 2009) represents the complete ceremonial song performed during the *Kaīvi* feast. The text is written in Lainong Standard Orthography (LSO), as documented by the author.

O ... hele hà hè.	qōngpēn qōngpēn,	Va kēliam nuak.
Hà... hele..hà hè.	mui'cyi' qōngpēn.	o... zoma zeze,
Hē...(klòng! The sound of beating the legs with shields)	o... cyuan pa temo, o... zo pa temo.	o... vazo kuàng nge.
Hā.... (klòng! The sound of beating the legs with shields)	Cyuan ni mo qo, Zoni mo qo.	Vazo kuàng nge, Kuang lalò e.
O ... hele hà hè.	Pòngsò liolà,	Zū ne za za,
Hà... hele..hà hè.	Zasò liolà.	O ne yap là.
o... muimo muimo,	pòngsò liolio,	o... punyiù lāng se,
o... sòqo muimo.	zasò liolio.	o... kiapxang puàn ne.
Sòqo cyi mui,	o... nyi tiam luàng nge,	Zanyiù lāng se,
Sòtha cyi mui.	o... nyi luàng se ne.	Tòngkin lā le.
Sòqo cyi nge,	Cyuan kēxui nuak,	Ngapzōng kuī nge,
Sòtha cyi nge.	Va kēxui nuak.	Kuila lōng nge.
o... vathuāng zo se,	Cyuan kēlè nuak,	Vakui vakui,
o... zothuāng zo nge.	Va kēlè nuak.	Xapnyiù vakui.
Qōngnōng qōngnōng,	Cyuan kēliam nuak,	o... kiāmnyiù kiāmpuang,
Mui'cyi' qōngnōng.		o... kiam puang le muàng.

Nyakzō pū e,	Īmyi' le lè.	o... qōngnōng qōngnōng,
Ta nyak zò se.	Cyuànyi' le la,	o... Lenòng qōngnōng.
va'pho va'pho,	īmyi' le la.	Lenòng qōnggu',
va'pho sàgò.	qiam dìnthiànggu',	Muanglui ta' sà.
o... nōngzang pòng nge,	luàng sap sap sū.	Ngu' tiàm luàng e,
o... gi gi huì yui.	o... sōthiàng ta' liam,	Ngù luàng se ne.
Nōngzang pōngà,	o... huakthiàng ta' liam.	Cyuan liam nuak e,
Gì gi huì là.	Sōthiàng ta' là,	Valiam nuak e.
o... hōpù nuakgu',	Huakthiàng ta' là.	o... cyuan xui nuak e,
o... hōpù te la.	Hà hai lò,	o... va xui nuak e.
Hōpù te te,	e... ō ha hāi lò.	Cyuan pa te là,
Sōpù te te.	Hà hai lò,	Zò pa te là.
Hōpū te la,	e... ō pu nuakqong hà hai lò.	Cyuan pa te te,
Sōpù te la.	Hà hai lò,	Zò pa te te.
o... tommeinyiù sò,	Ē... lònnyiù kiapxang hà hai lò.	o... o ne za za,
o... tommeiliam zè.	Xàm e xàm,	o... zū ne yap là.
Tomngannyiù sò,	Ē... cēngai liām xam.	Nōng liam pui pui,
Tomnganliam zè.	Vànyòm cei sâng,	Za lò tha'ngui.
Tommeinyiù sò,	Sāhiliang lò.	Cēta ngan de,
Nyì so ngam e.	o... qōngnōng qōngnōng,	Zavēn thuāng se.
Tomnganyiù so,	o... Lenòng qōngnōng.	o... ovai tho tho,
Nyì so ngam e.	Lenòng qōnggu',	o... zavai tho tho.
o... cyì zō liām se,	Muanglui ta' sà.	Ovai tho là,
o... cyuansà cyuan e.	Ngu' tiàm luàng e,	Zavai tholà.
Sàvangpù e,	Ngù luàng se ne.	Ceīsang ceīsang,
Liam càng àhui.	Cyuan liam nuak e,	Lenòng ceīsang.
Sàvangpùà',	Valiam nuak e.	Ceīsang ceīsang,
Liam cang huīlà.	Hà hai lò,	sang lò lè.
o... cyìzō cyìzō,	Ē... lònnyiù kiapxang hà hai lò.	o... pi pi nuàng e,
o... cyuansò cyìzō.	Xàm e xàm,	o... nuang la lò hè.
Cyìzō cyìzō,	Ē... cēngai liām xam.	Vuìzòng kuàng e,
Lenòng cyìzō.	Vànyòm cei sâng,	nuang la lò hè.
Cyuànyi' le lè,	Sāhiliang lò.	Sēdā pēn ne,

Pěn là lò e.	lòthō yì yì,	vui iap iap là.
o... nyat là nyat là,	lònyìu pēnxi.	O yio' diàm diàm,
o... pùsò nyat là.	Lòthō yilà,	Hàngphō yio' diàm diàm.
Nyatlō vaxì,	Lònyìu pēnsà.	O lahòxui,
Xāmlò xāmyi'.	o... cyuàn xū qiam qiam,	Luàngphai tiàmpù lahòxui.
Keilà keilà,	o... vaxuī qiam qiam.	O lakeisò,
Mai'sò keilà.	cyuàn xū qiam là,	Hàngphō lakeisò.
Toklà toklà,	vaxuī qiam là.	O qiàm,
Mai'sò toklà.	o kēliànglò kēliànglò,	Qiàm va lè.
o... kuàng kuàng va'sà,	sōngpū māixāng nyiman co.	[Ō...hō...hō...hō...hō hō hō
o... va lio lio là.	O nòng,	(heì...heì...heì...heì heì heì)]3
Kuàng kuàng va'sà,	Nòng qiām sòng.	Hui.....!
lio là lio là.	Cannyiù qeīgu' ,	

Table 1 – Transcription of Kaivi Song — documented by author, 2009.

Pronunciation Note: The song is transcribed in Lainong Standard Orthography (LSO). ě, “schwa” sound [ə] as in “about”; q, as “kh” as in “khanate”; ěu, as in the “ow” of “below”; c, voiceless alveolar affricate [ts], as in “cats”; cy, voiceless alveolo-palatal sibilant affricate [tɕ], as in “John”; x, voiceless palato-alveolar affricate; [ʃ], as in “she”; ng, velar nasal [ŋ]; ny, voiced palatal nasal [ɲ]; ěn, schwa sound with a nasal consonant [ən], as in the “en” of “open”; ', glottal stop [ʔ]; tone marks are placed on the vowel, and on the second vowel in the case of diphthongs, e.g., “ěù” and “iù,” and “uì.” A vowel without a mark indicates high tone, low/falling tone is marked as “à,” mid tone as “ā”.



Figure 2 – Thālī Iāmbū, the eldest son of the landlord (the author’s cousin), praying during the Kaīvi ritual while family members stand nearby in traditional dress. A mithun (Bos frontalis) was tied to the sacrificial post. Photo: Author, 2012.

1.11. Lexical and Semantic Analysis

The *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū* contains complex metaphors and symbolic expressions reflecting Lainong cosmology, ethics, and aesthetics.

Table 2 below presents a lexical-semantic analysis of key terms, comparing Lainong, English, and Burmese equivalents. This trilingual approach ensures semantic precision and ethnolinguistic depth.

Lainong	IPA	English	Burmese
àhui	à hui	To show: asking to show the route, path	လမ်းပြပါ။ လမ်းကြောင်းမှန်ကို ပြသရန် တောင်းဆိုခြင်းဖြစ်သည်။
cannyiù	tsan jiù	ravines, gullies	လျှိုမြောင်း။
ceīsang	tseī saŋ	the movement, style of dancing; choreography	ကကွက်၊ ကဟန်။
cèta	tsè ta	[It] “ <i>cèta</i> ” could be the name of a river where ancestors once established a village.	ဘိုးဘေးများရွာတည်ခဲ့သော နေရာရှိ မြစ်၊ ချောင်း အမည်ဖြစ်နိုင်သည်။
cètangan	tsè ta ŋan	the north of the village	ရွာ၏မြောက်ဘက်။

Lainong	IPA	English	Burmese
cuansèù	tsuan səù	Army: in ancient times, Lainong people formed a strong army to protect their land and people.	စစ်သည်- ရှေးခေတ်က လိုင်းနောင် လူမျိုးများသည် မိမိတို့၏မြေနှင့် ပြည်သူကို ကာကွယ်ရန် ခိုင်ခံ့သောစစ်သည်တော်ကို ဖွဲ့စည်းခဲ့သည်။
cyìzō	teì zō	return	ပြန်မည်။
cyìzōliāmse	teì zō liām se	it is time to go back: Lainong people or Lainong warriors are about to return to their homeland after they have been in the long battlefield.	ပြန်ရန်အချိန်တန်ပြီ- လိုင်းနောင် လူမျိုးများ သို့မဟုတ် လိုင်းနောင် စစ်သည်များသည် စစ်မြေပြင်တွင် အချိန်အကြာကြီး သွားပြီးနောက် ၎င်းတို့၏မွေးရပ်မြေသို့ ပြန်လာပါတော့မည်။
cyuànkēliam	teuàn kə liam	poor	ဆင်းရဲသော။
cyuànkēxui	teuàn kə fui	uncivilized	ယဉ်ကျေးမှုမရှိသော။
cyuanliamnuak	teuan liam nuak	rich nation	ချမ်းသာသောပြည်။
cyuanpa	teuan pa	they are active, united, smart	ညီညွတ်သည်။ တက်ကြွသည်။
cyuanpa	teuan pa	seen	မြင်သည်။
cyuànxui	teuan fui	duty	တာဝန်၊ ပြောစရာ၊ လုပ်စရာ။
cyuànyi'	teuàn ji?	slat of woven thatch	သက်ကယ်ရွက်။
dìnthiàng	dìn th'ian	the place where we pass	ဖြတ်ကျော်သည့် နေရာ။
gigihui	gi gi hui	jostle, over-crowded	သိုက်သိုက်ဝန်းဝန်း။
hàhailò	hà hai lò	peacefully turning back, let it be	အခက်အခဲ မရှိပြန်လာသည်။
hàhe	hà he	come on	လာကြ။
hàngpho	hàn p ^h o	Elevate, flatter	မြှောက်သည်။
hēlē	hē lē	All together	အားလုံးအတူတကွ။
hòpù	hò pù	Tiger	ကျား။
ìmyi'	īm ji?	a kind of tree leaves	အင်မ် ခေါ်သည့် အပင်တစ်မျိုး။
kaivi	kaī vi	The beginning of blessing	နှစ်သစ်ကူး။
keilà	keì là	die (rhetorical treatment); ever changing, literal meaning in “walking” but its actual meaning is to express the death of elderly people. Lainong people believe life is a journey. A person once came into this world and will be gone.	သေဆုံးခြင်း (တွယ်ဝိုက်); “လမ်းလျှောက်ခြင်း” တွင် ပကတိ အဓိပ္ပါယ်သည် အမြဲပြောင်းလဲနေသော်လည်း ၎င်း၏ အမှန်တကယ် အဓိပ္ပါယ်မှာ သက်ကြီးရွယ်အိုများ၏ သေဆုံးမှုကို ဖော်ပြခြင်းပင်ဖြစ်သည်။
kiāmpuang	kiām puang	hang on one another and shaken	တွဲထားသည်။
kiapxang	kiap ʃan	the leaves of the trees.	သစ်ရွက်၊ ပန်ရွက်။
kiapxang	kiap ʃan	forest	တောစိမ်း၊ တောတောင်။
kuang	kuang	hunger	ဆာလောင်သည်။

Lainong	IPA	English	Burmese
kuàng kuàng va 'sà	kuàŋ kuàŋ vaʔ sà	mountain scops owl (<i>Otus spilocephalus</i>), a kind of birds lives in forest near by stream with making sound "Kuang Kuang"	ညသန်းခေါင်တွင် ကောင်ကောင် ဟု အော်တတ်သော ငှက်တစ်မျိုး၊ တောင် ပေါ်ဇီးကွက်။
kuange	kuaŋ ŋe	Group of	အဖွဲ့၊ အုပ်စု။
lahòxui	la hò fui	telling	ပြောပြသည်။
lahòxui	la hò fui	head	ဦးခေါင်း။
lakeisò	la kei sò	gone	သေဆုံးသည်။ သွားသည်။
lāng	lāŋ	The beauty of	အလှ။
làngkai'timpù	làng kai tì m pù	The chiefs of enemies	ရန်သူစစ်သူရဲကောင်း။
lele	le le	cut; hack, chop: using the sword, the army got to cut all barriers during the war.	ခုတ်ဖြတ်၊ ခုတ်ထစ်ခြင်း- ဓားကို အသုံးပြု၍ စစ်ပွဲအတွင်း အတားအဆီးအားလုံးကို စစ်သည် တော်များကဖြတ်တောက်နိုင်ခဲ့သည်။ လှိုင်းနှောင်း။
Lenòng	le nòn	Lainong	လမ်းကြောင်း၊ ရန်သူများနှင့် စစ်တိုက်
liamcāng	liam tsāŋ	the way, path: the battle with enemies was not in the plain ground but there were desert with any large, extremely dry area of land with sparse vegetation, and in the wilderness. Therefore, asking for the wolves and the civet cat to show them the right path to return home.	ခြင်းသည် လွင်ပြင်၌မဟုတ်။ လွင်ပြင် ကျယ်ကြီးနှင့် အလွန် ခြောက်သွေ့ သော လွင်ပြင်တွင် အသီးအရွက်မရှိ သော လွင်ပြင်နှင့် တောကန္တာရများ တွင်ဖြစ်သည်။ ထို့ကြောင့် ဝံပုလွေနှင့် ကြောင်ကတီးတို့လို လမ်းကြောင်း ကျွမ်းကျင်သူအား အိမ်ပြန်လမ်း ကြောင်း မှန်ကို ပြသရန် တောင်းဆို ခြင်းဖြစ်သည်။
liolà	lio là	acting, moving: rebelling	လှုပ်ရှားသည်။ ပုန်ကန်သည်။
liolio	lio lio	are moving	လှုပ်သည်။
lònyiù	lò niù	forest	တော။
luàng	luàng	rising, marching and gathering	ချီတက်သည်။ စုရုံးသည်။
luàngpha'timpù	luàng p ^h ai tì m pù	the stone	ကျောက်တုံး။
luàngsap	luàng sap	mark; making sign	အမှတ်ပြုသည်။
mai'pù	maiʔ pù	Man, male	အမျိုးသား။
mai'sò	maiʔ sò	Human, hero	လူ။ သူရဲကောင်း။
mokho	mo k ^h o	? Question marker to confirm something	သိသလား။
muanglui	muang lui	rejoice	ပျော်ရွှင်သည်။
mui	mui	to get ready	အဆင်သင့်။
mui'cyi'	muiʔ tɛiʔ	other's; stranger's	သူဗေး၏။
muimo	mui mo	Are you ready?	အဆင်သင့်ဖြစ်ပြီလား။

Lainong	IPA	English	Burmese
ngam	ŋam	Revolt or politically unrest situation of enemies or rebellious	ဆူပူသည်။ သောင်းကြမ်းသည်။ တော်လှန်ပုန်ကန်ခြင်း သို့မဟုတ် နိုင်ငံရေးအရ မငြိမ်မသက်ဖြစ်နေသော ရန်သူများ သို့မဟုတ် ပုန်ကန်သော အခြေအနေ။
ngapzōngkui	ŋap zōŋ kui	”yuāngpōng” in Lainong; a plume attached on top of the hat; it is decorated with enemies’ hairs as trophies, and it is attached on the warrior’s hat with a Hornbill feather	လိုင်းနောင်စကားဖြင့် “yuāngpōng” ဟုလည်း ခေါ်သည်။ ဦးထုပ်ထိပ်တွင် ရန်သူ၏ဆံချည်များဖြင့် အလှဆင်ပြီး သရဖူအဖြစ် အောင်လောင်ငှက်မွေးနှင့် အတူ ချိတ်ထားသည့် စစ်သည်တော် ၏ ဦးထုပ်ပေါ်က အလှတန်ဆာဖြစ်သည်။
nge	ŋe	to know	သိသည်။
nongliam	noŋ liam	The nation of saint	သူတော်ကောင်းတို့တိုင်းပြည်၊ ရွာ။
nongzampōng	noŋ zam poŋ	all the nations	အတိုင်းတိုင်းအပြည်ပြည်။
nuang	nuan	moving slightly, dance	ရွှေ့လျားသည်။
nyakzō	ŋak zō	tired	မောပန်းသည်။
nyatlà	ŋat là	Lost or not exist anymore or not even to be able to recall something very important for someone: this word was used because the enemies had fallen and the elderly people who can advise them are already gone so that they are unable to rise up against us.	အိုမင်းလာသည်။ ပျောက်ဆုံးသွားသည်ဖြစ်စေ မရှိနိုင်တော့သည် သို့မဟုတ် တစ်စုံတစ်ယောက်အတွက် အလွန်အရေးကြီးသောအရာကို ပြန်မှတ်မိရန်ပင် မဖြစ်နိုင်တော့သည့်- ရန်သူများ ကျဆုံးသွားကာ အကြံပေးနိုင်သော သက်ကြီးရွယ်အိုများသည် ကျွန်ုပ်တို့ကို ဆန့်ကျင်ဘက် မထနိုင်အောင် ဖြစ်နေသောကြောင့် ဤစကားလုံးကို အသုံးပြုခဲ့သည်။
nyìsò	ŋì sò	you	သင်။ ခင်ဗျား။
o	o	the chicken or bird	ကြက်။ ငှက်။
ovaithō	o vai tʰō	the sun hit to the crown or hat	ဦးထုပ်ပေါ်က ငှက်မွေးကို နေထိုးသည်။
pipi	pi pi	like the butterflies	လိပ်ပြာ။
pòngsō	pòŋ sō	trees	အပင်။
puān	puān	bloom	ပွင့်သည်။
puipui	pui pui	rhetorical saying of dance (dancing in <i>kaivi</i> is like a fence in, holding hand in hand and people from outside cannot enter easily)	ကသည်။ ဝက်ဝံတို့အလင်္ကာ (ကနေကြသည်မှာ ခြံခတ်ထားသည့်အလား လက်ချင်းချိတ်၍ လူသူတိုးမရနိုင်အောင်)။
pùnuakqong	pù nuak kʰoŋ	my father's place; village	ခမည်းတော်၏ပြည်။ ရွာ။ ဒေသ။
pūnyiū	pū ŋiū	the earth	မြေကြီး။
qiam	kʰiam	water	ရေ။
qiam	kʰiam	finish	ပြီးပြီ။

Lainong	IPA	English	Burmese
qōngnōng	k ^h ōŋ nōŋ	ground	ကွင်းပြင်။
qōngpēn	k ^h ōŋ pēn	the area	နယ်မြေ၊ ကွင်းပြင်။
sā	sā	sword	ဓား
sāhilianglò	sā hi lian̄ lò	Need whetstone	ဓားသွေးကျောက်။
sanglōlè	san̄ lō lè	Dancing and moving like salmon fish, and with harmonious performance.	ဆော်မွန်ငါးများကဲ့သို့ ဟန်ချက်ညီစွာ ကခုန်နေသည်။ လှုပ်ရှားမှုဟာ အလွန် ညီညွတ်တေသပ်လှပလွန်းပါသည်။
sāvāng	sā vāŋ	Civet (cat), an agent who used to do a job when hired by someone. The nature of the civet is derived here as the civet is neither a tiger nor a wild cat that can make a significant farm to a person. Moreover, it does not hide its footsteps so that people can find the way when they are lost. Naturally, the civet lives around where the fruit and vegetables are available, not so close to the village and not in a deep jungle as well.	ကြောင်ကတိုး ဆိုသည်မှာ တစ်စုံတစ်ဦးမှ အလုပ်တစ်ခု အတွက် ငှားရမ်း၍ ရသော လမ်းကျွမ်းကျင်သည့် (လူ) အေးရင့်ဖြစ်သည်။ ကြောင်ကတိုးသည် ကျားမဟုတ် တောကြောင်လည်း မဟုတ်။ ထို့အပြင်၊ ၎င်းသည် ၎င်း၏ခြေရာကို ဖုံးကွယ်မထားသောကြောင့် လူများ ပျောက်ဆုံးသွား သည့်အခါ လမ်းကို ရှာဖွေနိုင်မည်ဖြစ်သည်။ ကြောင်ကတိုး များသည် သဘာဝအတိုင်း၊ အသီးအနှံ နှင့် ဟင်းသီးဟင်းရွက်များ ရနိုင်သည့် နေရာတွင် နေထိုင်တတ်ပြီး၊ ရွာနှင့် သိပ်မနီးသည့် တောနက်လည်း မဟုတ်သည့် နေရာများတွင် နေထိုင်တတ်သည်။

Lainong	IPA	English	Burmese
sēdā	sā dā	Erythrina suberosa, locally known as <i>pangaro</i> , refers to a group of medium-sized deciduous trees characterized by spongy yet durable wood. Among the Lainong, this tree holds deep ritual significance: it is traditionally used as the human sacrificial post during victory ceremonies. When warriors returned with the heads of enemies, offerings and prayers of thanksgiving were made to the Lord beside the pangaro tree, upon which the trophies were displayed. The post itself was originally planted by ancestral village high priests on elevated ground and has been preserved through successive generations. Its sacred site remains fixed and is never altered unless the entire village relocates. Until early 2024, this historic post could still be seen in Peigū Village; however, it was destroyed by a cyclone in mid-2024.	ကသစ်ပင်။ ဒေသအလိုက် Pangaro ဟုသိကြသော Erythrina suberosa သည် ပျော့ပျောင်းသော်လည်း တာရှည်ခံသစ်သားဖြင့် သွင်ပြင်လက္ခဏာရှိသော အလတ်စား ရွက်ကြွေသစ်ပင်အုပ်စုကို ရည်ညွှန်းသည်။ လိုင်းနောင်လူမျိုးတို့တွင် ဤသစ်ပင်သည် လေးနက်သော ထုံးတမ်းစဉ်လာ အဓိပ္ပါယ်ကို ဆောင်ထားပါသည်- ၎င်းကို အောင်ပွဲ အခမ်းအနားများအတွင်း လူသားများ ယဇ်ပူဇော်ခြင်းအဖြစ် ရှေးယခင် ကတည်းက အသုံးပြုကြသည်။ စစ်သည်များသည် ရန်သူများ၏ဦးခေါင်းများနှင့်အတူ ပြန်လာသောအခါ၊ ဆုဖလားများပြသသည့် ပန်ဂါရီပင်ဘေးတွင် ထာဝရဘုရားအား ကျေးဇူးတော်ချီးမွမ်းခြင်း ပူဇော်သက္ကာများနှင့် ဆုတောင်းပွဲများ ပြုလုပ်ကြသည်။ တိုင်ကို မူလဘိုးဘွားကျေးရွာ ဘုန်းကြီး (vi) များက မြင့်သောမြေတွင် စိုက်ပျိုးခဲ့ပြီး မျိုးဆက်အဆက်ဆက် ထိန်းသိမ်းလာခဲ့သည်။ ၎င်း၏မြင့်မြတ်သောနေရာသည် ပြုပြင်မွမ်းမံပြီး ရွာတစ်ခုလုံးကို နေရာပြောင်းမပေးပါက မည်သည့်အခါမျှ မပြောင်းလဲပါ။ ၂၀၂၄ အစောပိုင်းအထိ၊ ဤသမိုင်းဝင် ယဇ်တိုင်ကို Peigū ကျေးရွာတွင် တွေ့မြင်နိုင်သေးသည်။ သို့သော် ၂၀၂၄ နှစ်လယ်တွင် ဆိုင်ကလုန်းမုန်တိုင်းကြောင့် ပျက်စီးခဲ့သည်။
sòng	sòŋ	gathering	စုစည်းသည်။
sōpū	sō pū	enemies	ရန်သူတို့။
sòtha	sò t ^h a	widows, ordinary men	မုဆိုးမ၊ မုဆိုးမ၊ မိတစိုး၊ ဖတစိုး။
sòtiàm	sò tiàm	The neighbor nation, the enemies	အိမ်နီးချင်းတိုင်းပြည်။ ရန်သူ။
ta'la	ta? la	cut down, put down	အောင်နိုင်သည်။
ta'sà	ta? sà	Not end	မဆုံး။
tanyak	ta ɲak	don't show out your tiredness, weariness	မောပန်းကြောင်းမပြနှင့်။
tete	te te	yes,	ဟုတ်ကဲ့။

Lainong	IPA	English	Burmese
toklà	tok là	old: become older	အိုမင်းလာသည်။
tommeinyiùsò	tom meì niù sò	sons of southern	တောင်ပိုင်းသား။
tongkin	toŋ kin	the stars	ကြယ်များ။
va'phō	vaʔ p ^h ō	tusk of a wild boar.	တောဝက်စွယ်။
va'xui	vaʔ fui	song	တေးသီချင်း?
vakēxui	va kə fui	undecorated people; unbeautiful, no harmony	တေးသွားမညီသော။ အလှအပမရှိ သော။
vakui	va kui	hornbill feather	အောင်လောင်ငှက်မွှေး။
valiamnuak	va liam nuak	rich people or nation, rhetorical saying of war	ချမ်းသာသူနှင့် ပြည့်စုံသောလူမျိုး၊ တိုင်းပြည်။
vànyòm	vàn jòm	The sword is also blunted, so it needs to be heated with fire in the forge.	ဓားတုံးသည်။ ဓားလည်း တုံးနေတော့ ဖိုမှာ မီးအပူပေးရမယ်။
vāthuāng	vā t ^h uāŋ	tassel, ornament	မြိတ်။ ဝတ်စုံ။
vaxuinuak	va fui nuak	prosperous people, civilize people	ဝတ်လုံ၊ ယဉ်ကျေးမှုရှိသောလူမျိုး၊ တိုင်းပြည်။
vazokuange	va zo kuaŋ ŋe	it feels hungry now	ဆာလောင်သလိုပဲ။
vuiiap	vuì iap	Rhetorical use of the place where they put human enemies' skulls.	ငှက်သိုက် (ဝက်ဂုတ္တိ) ဦးခေါင်းခွံထား ရာနေရာ။
vuizòng	vuì zòŋ	a kind of bird, it has a crest of hair.	ဦးခေါင်းတွင် ဦးထုပ်ကဲ့သို့ ပါသော ငှက်ငယ်တစ်မျိုး။
xiàm	fiàm	shake or move in order to come up.	လှုပ်ခါသည်။
xiāmlō	fiām lō	Like tree's leaves	သစ်ရွက်ကဲ့သို့။
xiāmyi'	fiām jiʔ	The leaves of trees	သစ်ရွက်။
xiapnyiù	fiap niù	Bear's whiskers; hair	ဝက်ဝံပါးသိုင်းမွှေး။
yiap	jiap	asleep	အိပ်စက်သည်။
yio' diàm	jioʔ diàm	The crown; victory	သရဖူ။
yuīnyiū	juī niū	Great song; psalm	သီချင်းကြီး။
za	za	woke up	နိုးသည်။ ထသည်။
zānyiū	zā niū	the sky	ကောင်းကင်။
zasō	za sō	the weather	ရာသီဥတု။
zavaitho	za vai t ^h o	sun rising up	နေထွက်သည်။
zavēn	za vēn	daybreak	မိုးလင်းသည်။
zomazeze	zo ma ze ze	it's time to take rest	နားချိန်တန်ပြီ။
zopa	zo pa	knew; understand	သဘောပေါက်သည်။
zū	zū	mouse or rat	ကြွက်။

Table 2 – Lexical and Semantic Analysis.

Tone Marks: combining grave accent “à” as low/falling tone, combining macron “ā” as mid-tone

This analysis demonstrates how *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū* encodes moral, ecological, and social values through metaphorical language. The poetic structure reinforces communal memory and embodies spiritual meaning within Lainong cultural life.

1.12. Quantitative Results

To measure contemporary attitudes toward *Kaīvi* and *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū*, data were collected using a Guttman Deterministic Scale.

Questionnaires were distributed to 100 respondents on April 16, 2024, and 85 responses were returned by May 31, 2024.

Responses ranged from 0 (“disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”).

#	Attitude Statement	Mean Score
1	I love celebrating Kaīvi as it is custom.	4.47
2	Peīgū Kaīvi is the only heritage of Lainong.	3.51
3	I love the custom of feeding one another in turn.	1.42
4	I like to celebrate Kaīvi but I can’t because of poverty.	2.51
5	I love the custom of sharing meat with relatives during Kaīvi.	3.93
6	I like dancing during Kaīvi.	4.38
7	I like to participate in preserving Lainong culture, history, and language.	4.26
8	I don’t want to practice the all-night dancing custom.	1.24

Trend: Respondents display a strongly positive attitude toward *Kaīvi* and cultural preservation, though all-night dancing is seen as tiring or impractical.

Table 3 – Respondents’ Attitude (Cluster 1).

#	Ability Statement	Mean Score
1	I know how to sing the Kaīvi song.	1.06
2	I don’t know Kaīvi Yuīnyiū.	3.14
3	I don’t know why we celebrate and dance Kaīvi.	2.30
4	I don’t understand both male and female songs.	2.46
5	I can count the Lainong month.	1.76

Trend: Respondents demonstrate limited knowledge and performance ability in Kaīvi-related rituals, indicating generational decline and reduced transmission of oral heritage.

Table 4 – Respondents’ Ability.

#	Perspective Statement	Mean Score
1	We now have a common event (Naga Yoya), no need for Kaīvi.	0.90
2	Lack of traditional dresses.	2.54
3	Kaīvi celebration is obligatory even during poverty.	4.40
4	I am aware of the past and present Kaīvi situation.	3.96

#	Perspective Statement	Mean Score
5	Lainong culture can be lost if we discontinue Kaīvi.	4.13
6	Lainong feasts should appear in the Lainong calendar.	4.40

Trend: Respondents express high cultural awareness and strong sense of responsibility for maintaining Kaīvi despite economic and modernization challenges.

Table 5 – Respondents’ Perspectives.

#	Attitude Statement	Mean Score
1	I like producing the Lainong traditional calendar.	4.12
2	I like to sing and dance <i>Mai 'nyiū Yuīnyiū</i> (female song) as well.	4.05
3	I like to celebrate other feasts such as <i>Zāmngāi</i> (Unleavened Bread) and <i>Sēu 'vi</i> (First Fruit).	4.50

Trend: Sustained enthusiasm for cultural and spiritual participation beyond Kaīvi.

Table 6 – Respondents’ Attitude (Cluster 2).

#	Resource Statement	Mean Score
1	I read Kaīvi songs in written form.	1.65
2	I read the female song in written form.	1.43
3	I have a Lainong calendar at home.	3.94

Trend: Low availability of written materials but relatively high possession of the Lainong calendar, suggesting an important medium for heritage continuity.

Table 7 – Resource Availability.

1.13. Lahe: A Traditional Stronghold (1984–1995)

In 1984, Lahe existed in a state of extreme remoteness, largely untouched by modern infrastructure or Burmese administrative influence. The community lacked formal schools, hospitals, shops, and transportation. Government offices were minimal, and the Burmese military presence was confined to a small unit from the 52nd Battalion based in Khamti.

Despite this isolation, the Naga people of Lahe flourished through a vibrant traditional culture and strong linguistic identity. The Lainong language served as the primary medium of communication and reinforced inter-village relationships, described metaphorically as “bone connections.” This linguistic cohesion nurtured a profound sense of pride and belonging. Economic life revolved around shifting *jhum* cultivation, producing paddy and other crops that supported local trade. Essential goods such as salt and cloth, unavailable locally, required long treks on foot to Khamti, then perceived as a distant seat of “civilization.”

Livestock such as buffaloes, cows, pigs, and *mithun* (*Bos frontalis*) were integral to social identity and prestige, symbolizing wealth and status. Although materially simple, this period represented a self-sustaining cultural system where Lainong language and customs formed the core of communal life.

1.14. The Era of Transformation (1995 Onwards)

The year 1995 marked a decisive turning point with the establishment of the Burmese 272nd Infantry Regiment in Lahe. This military presence triggered profound socio-cultural transformations. As a child in Standard 3, the author observed how the children of military families introduced Burmese language and customs into the local environment, beginning a new era of linguistic contact.

By around 2000, this interaction had already produced severe consequences. Traditional livestock, especially buffaloes and cows, had been largely destroyed. Once central to feasts and rituals, these animals represented not only wealth but also the continuity of community life. Parents were compelled into forced labor and portering duties, which reduced their ability to maintain *jhum* cultivation and endangered food security.

For extended periods of food scarcity, villagers turned to the forest as a primary safety net, gathering wild bananas, *Dioscorea bulbifera* (aerial yam), and a range of wild leafy plants as supplementary food sources.

The gradual establishment of government offices expanded Burmese administrative control, and demographic shifts soon followed. Until 2005, Lahe had roughly 400 native residents, but government resettlement projects and new wards attracted migrants from outside communities. This influx diluted traditional social networks and accelerated cultural change.

1.15. Erosion of Tradition and the Rise of New Realities

As Burmese influence expanded, the Burmese language became dominant within Lahe town, gradually displacing Lainong in everyday interactions. The Kaīvi festival, once a vibrant celebration of community prosperity, lost its centrality. Traditionally characterized by ritual feasts, dancing, and *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū* singing, it evolved into a symbolic observance without the resources or animals required for its full performance.

The introduction of the Naga Yoya (Naga New Year) festival on January 15, promoted by the Burmese government, further marginalized *Kaīvi*. Although Naga Yoya fostered unity among Naga tribes from Lahe, Layshi, Nan Yun, and Khamti, it lacked the deep ancestral significance of the Lainong *Kaīvi*. Villagers regarded it as a politically motivated replacement rather than a genuine continuation of tradition.

1.16. Kaīvi Prayer as Oral History Transmission

Kaīvi functions as a medium for transmitting family history and divine blessing. During the household prayer, the head of the family recounts ancestral narratives and offers thanks to God. This oral performance educates younger generations about both genealogy and ritual practice.

Sample prayer (in Lainong):

Cēpù vuī a'tong, cēpiò vuī a'tong, mi'thùi lōngmei ěu, mi'nyi' lōngmei ěu tē hei'an bei'an dei'bù. O luanpòng, nyi amuang nahuan. Mi'thùi mi'nyi' a ěu vong ěu tē Ga Piòvipù a' soquāng yiuquāngan dei'bù. Aqòm aqiām gu', sēu dei vuī ga' xiò dei vuī ga' cēnàinùbù.

Translation:

From my forefathers, we sacrificed the lambs for the betterment of human life. O blameless buffalo, do not grieve for humankind, whom God created to multiply. We shall live long with our sons and grandsons, in your precious life given to us.

The term *Kaīvi* literally combines *kaī* (“virtue” or “blessing”) and *vi* (“beginning”); thus, it signifies “*the beginning of blessings*.” It is traditionally observed for six days, following six preparatory days:

Day	Ritual	Description
1	<i>Kaīvi Peithiam</i>	Preparing wood for the sacrificial post
2	<i>Kaīvi Zēūcyōm</i>	Nominating the sacrificial lamb
3	<i>Kaīvi Zēūqui</i>	Sacrificing the lamb at the main altar
4	<i>Kaīvi Lòngnēū</i>	Day of meditation
5	<i>Lòhuì</i>	Tax collection; dancing begins that evening
6	<i>Kaīvi Nōa</i> ‘	Day of rest

The feast takes place at the end of the harvest, prior to new *jhum* preparations. In the traditional Lainong calendar, *Kaīvi* coincided with the full moon of *Kaīvinyiù Leí* (early January). However, since 2022, Peigū has observed the festival during the first week of March due to seasonal changes.

1.17. *Kaīvi* Yuīnyiū Dancing as Convocation

The *Kaīvi* dance is not mere entertainment but a convocation, an educational and ceremonial event. Elders, High Priests, and warriors deliver speeches during the dance, holding buffalo-skin shields and swords while leaping over bonfires.

Example verse (in Lainong):

*O... Lainongnyiù, Piòvuī a'tong, pùvuī a'tong, yuīnyiū lō za, buāngnyiū lō buàng.
Sōpū dei ngom, sōpū ku'lò kuat. Ēquipù dei ngom, ěthianpù dei ngom, Lainongnyiù
lò.*

Translation:

*O people of Lainong, we sang and danced. When wars arose against oppressors—
whether from the South or the North—victory always belonged to Lainong.*

Such speeches serve to recount ancestral victories, courage, and unity. The ritual also marks male initiation: every boy receives a piece of meat from the High Priest, symbolizing manhood, akin to Christian communion. The *Yuīnyiū* (“Great Song”) is strictly performed only during *Kaīvi*, never in ordinary circumstances. Even the High Priest refrains from reciting it outside the feast. This continuous all-night dancing tradition is unique to Peigū Village among all Naga communities.

1.18. Uniqueness of the *Kaīvi* Yuīnyiū

The *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū* is an epic poem comprising 83 verses, reflecting Lainong civilization, politics, and social life. Its distinctive features are (1) structural coherence, (2) archaic language, and (3) narrative poetics.

The verses progress logically, from calls to arms (“*he le hà hè*,” *come on*) to depictions of enemies, beauty, and victory (“*qiam qiamvâlè*,” *it is finished*). Younger generations, however, often fail to understand the old language. Linguistic comparison reveals lexical, morphological, and syntactic evolution (see Tables 8-10).

Original	IPA	Modern Lainong	English
sāvāng	sā vāŋ	qiòvong	civet
tongkin	toŋ kin	agin	star
punyiù	pu niù	gēnyìu	earth
va	va	lōng	ornament
va'pho	vaʔ p ^{ho}	tùhū	wild boar tusk
zanyiù	za niù	anyìu	sky
o	o	vui	roster
zu	zu	zēu'	rat

Table 8 – Lexical Change in Lainong.

Original	Current Language	English translation
cyuan pa temo,	Nguian taimo?	Are you aware of things happening?
zo pa temo.	Zoan taimo?	Have you confirmed what's
vathuāng zo se,	thōng cei lōng	happening?
zothuāng zo nge.	giāman,	Already dressed up in armor, united
	maibòng dēga' ei'an.	like a tassel, decorated on the
		Lainong Naga spear.

Table 9 – Syntactic, Lexical, and Morphological Change in Lainong Language.

Original	Literal Meaning	Meaning
nyat là nyat là, pùsò nyat là.	The fire is extinguished.	the ancestors have gone
Nyatlō vaxì, Xāmlò xāmyi'.	life is extinguished.	After, only becomes dust
Keilà keilà, Mai'sò keilà.	The men walked away.	the warriors have gone
Toklà toklà, Mai'sò toklà.	the men stooped over.	the warriors getting old

Table 10 – Sample of Metaphor in Kaīvi Yuīnyiū.

These linguistic findings demonstrate that the *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū* preserves an archaic Lainong register no longer in daily use, serving as an invaluable archive of linguistic and cultural memory.

1.19. Attitudes Toward the Feast

Survey data indicate strong community commitment to preserving *Kaīvi* and *Kaīvi Yuīnyiū*. Approximately 73% of respondents wish to maintain the language, culture, and history; 75% favor continuing *Kaīvi* independently of *Naga Yoya*; and 76% intend to celebrate it regardless of economic hardship.

Elder informants confirmed that the absence of dancing in 2024 was merely a temporary pause due to political instability following the 2021 military coup. Despite challenges such as modernization, socioeconomic decline, and urbanization, Peigū residents express determination to sustain their traditions.

These findings align with global patterns: as Keenan (2013) documented among the Māori, urban migration and sociopolitical disruption threaten oral traditions, yet communities often reassert identity through revival efforts. Similarly, Tygolykov's theory emphasizes that

endangerment arises not only from emigration but also from the influx of outsiders into indigenous spaces.

Since the 1950s, Peigū has been targeted for administrative development, resulting in cultural assimilation. The 1996 arrival of the 272nd Infantry precipitated a sociocultural shock akin to the Māori “silent migration” (Grace et al. 2001). Urbanization curtailed *jhum* cultivation and livestock keeping, leaving communities economically vulnerable and linguistically insecure.

1.20. Conclusion

The author’s journey—from childhood in an isolated yet culturally vibrant Naga community to adulthood within a rapidly changing sociocultural landscape—reveals the profound impact of external forces on indigenous life. The loss of livestock, the forced labor of parents, linguistic shifts, and the erosion of traditional ceremonies such as *Kaīvi* are not merely historical facts but deeply personal experiences of loss, adaptation, and resilience. The transformation from a self-sufficient, culturally confident society into one struggling under imposed changes underscores the complex processes of identity formation in a postcolonial context.

This autoethnography is guided by the commitment to “tell the truth through lived experience,” reflecting on phenomena spanning the 1980s to 2025. It provides a critical lens for understanding how cultural contact, power relations, and resilience shape indigenous communities. By weaving personal narrative with historical and cultural analysis, this study contributes to scholarship on oral traditions, oral history, and autoethnography, emphasizing their significance as tools for articulating marginalized voices and lived realities.

The study documented the lived experiences of the Lainong people, illuminating how they value and sustain oral traditions amid sociopolitical transformation. Findings show that earlier generations experienced a more cohesive and culturally expressive way of life, whereas contemporary circumstances are marked by nostalgia and lamentation. When the *Kaīvi* song was first transmitted to the author in 2009, the celebration was still vibrant and meaningful.

However, *Kaīvi* is far more than a festival or a performance of song and dance—it is a pedagogical institution, a living convocation where elders impart history, ethics, and identity through ritual and narrative. Without such ceremonies, oral history risks fading from collective memory. Although the community retains a strong desire to preserve these traditions, effective revitalization now depends on adopting modern technologies for documentation, archiving, and education.

UNESCO’s recognition of intangible cultural heritage (UNESCO 2003, Article 2) offers an important framework for safeguarding these traditions. Yet, isolated linguistic communities such as the Lainong—endowed with immense cultural knowledge, wisdom, and artistry—remain critically under-supported. Sustained assistance from both national and international agencies is essential to ensure that such communities can continue to live long, dignified, and culturally meaningful lives.

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