



Documentation of *Kabe Ring·a* with Tonic Solfa

Sengsime A Sangma

PhD Research Scholar

Department of Garo, NEHU Tura Campus

Abstract: This paper brings to know the richness of oral tradition in Garo culture. The Garos has a unique cultural identity, where the people are fond of music by birth. There are number of oral traditional folk songs among the Garos like, Ajea, Doroa, Cheraa, Gondadoka, Dani doka, Serejing Ring·a Ha-ra-ra Ring·a, Nanggorere Ring·a, Nokdonggao Ring·ani and Grapmangtata. One of the A·chik oral tradition is Kabe Ring·a or Grapmangtata or funeral wail, which is sung during the funeral ceremonies of the Non Christian Garos or Songsarek. It is believed that the song is acquired from a bird called *Renggok bima* or female hornbill.

Keywords: *Kabe Ring·a, Matchu Boldak Karam, Nawang, Kabe with Tonic solfa.*

Introduction: *Kabe Ring·a* or *Grapmangtata* is a dirge among the Garos. It is the lamentation to a departure soul while going to *memang a·song* or *Balpakram* after dead. The Garos belief that there's a life after dead, where all the spirits took shelter with Dakgipa Ba·bra or creator in *Balpakram* and reincarnate in different forms, shapes, sizes or animals. The *Kabe Ring·a* is sung by the women only. According to the Garo myth, *Eman Me·a* first got this song from a bird called *Renggok bima* or female hornbill. (Mihir N Sangma. *Pagitchamni Ku·bisring'* 45-51) *Eman Me·a*, while on his way back home from the jungle, he heard the bird wailing from the top of a tree. This draw his attention and went near and heard its wailing beneath the tree. He memories it word by word. When he comes home, he uttered this words one by one to his wife and after completing the word he also dies saying to his wife to do the same as *Renggok bima* did for her male bird or partner. So the first woman on earth to sing *Kabe Ring·a* is the wife of *Eman Me·a*. (Her name is not mentioned in the myth)

A man is given much respect in the Garo society. Though a matrilineal society everything was controlled by man and therefore when a son/man/husband /dies, it is a great loss to the Garo community. Mihir Sangma, *Maniani Bidik* (1989) shows how the family members is suffered when a father dies. He wrote-

Ang' re-jak dikilchin him angai!

Ang satti a-wechim gose angai!

Sie katangaijok kawara,

Wate donangmangmangjok apara

Bano dongnappaku-na chingara! Apa wai.

Sao mangrakpa-kuna angara.

Dandan su-chalpagipa dongjajok,

Agan-ku-sikigipa nikjaginok.

Nono angse am-pana man-jaginok,

Angjong ada am-pana nikjaginok.

Jakilla bipong be-tongo sawa chate on-kuna,

Kokachal ki-pan napongo sawa kotapakuna.

Ang' rimil na-ara knapaku-bo,

Tua simakkujama wal seng-jok chakatbo.

Gabil Nokgitcham gita napangbone na-ara.

Bal riking rong-oto ja-wewee roangbo.

Me-mang mesal cha-ramo cha-angbo

Translation-

Had been my shelter hmmm... *angai!*

Had been my bestfriend oh! *Gose angai!*

Had passed away now.....

And you left us forever....

Now where will we take shelter.....*apa wai*

Whom to depend...

Whom to lean on

Who will guide,

Who will search a spouse for sisters

Whom to call brother.

Who will fix my sickle

Who will repair my basket.

My darling listen to me

Wake up, The sun is rise

Visit the old *Gabil* village

Tie a cow in *Matchu boldak karam*

Wash and take bath in *Chi anggal*.....

Take rest in the edge of rock.

Have lunch in *Me-mang mesal cha-ram*.



The above lines (Kabe) is sung for a man and is all about the sufferings of the family members when they lost their father. It will be difficult for them to search a good spouse for sisters without him in future. No one will take responsibilities in the house. It is a words of mourn as well as warning of *Nawang*, or evil spirit that is wondering about and waiting to destroy him on the way to *Chitman*g or *me-mang a-song*. Through *Kabe Ring-a*, he is warn to watch and be careful while on his final journey to *Me-mang a-song*, a dwelling place of the spirits. He is adviced to throw a coins and try to escape from *Nawang*. He is also advice to visit the old village of *Gabil* and to tie a cow in *matchu boldal karam*, the place in Balpakram, where they tied up a cow

which is sacrificed to him to carry his bag and baggage. It is believed that if the cow is not sacrificed in the name of a deceased person, the Goddess do not welcome them. So the Non Christian Garos (Songsarek) sacrifice a cow or bull during funeral service. He is also advised to sit and take rest in the edges of the rock and have his lunch at *Me-mang mesal charam*, a place where the Garos believed to be a resting place of the *spirits* (ghost) and eat their midday meal.

Kabe with Tonic Solfa

|d ,m .re :re /r .r :re |r:- /re .r :d |re .r :d .re /- :-
Su sim i ni si o a

.....
|re .r :d .d ,re /re .r :d |re .re :re .r ,d /re :
Sa du mi mu a na dong ja na

.....|re .r :d .d /d
.re :re .r |d :- /re .re :d .d ,re |re .r :d /- : |d ,re .re :re .r ,d /re :-
Ra bu ga ni bon u a sa am rik ong a na dong ja na mo

.....
|re ,re .d :d ,d .re /re .re .r :d |re .re :d
Ku bi rong ha an tal a na hmm

.....
|re .r :d /d .re |d ,re .re :r ,d .re /re .r :d |d .re :re .re ,r /d :-
Su sim i ko ak a rong ha don a na ja bik a ko

.....
|d ,m .re :re /r :- |re .r :d .re /- :-
In dik e ha

.....
|re .r :d .d /d .re :re .r |d .re :- / : |d .re :re .re /d .re :re .r |d :- / :
Da rik chang rik no no ha ja si tang ko ga dep e

.....
|re .r :d .d /d .re :re .r |d :- / :
Do mi mo cheng al a na

.....
|re .r :d .d /d .re :re .r |d :- /d ,re .re :r |d .re :re .r /d :-
Gal a Mi da a bi sa gan a tang ko ko chep e

.....
|re .r :d .d /d .re :re
Am rik gong chong al a na

.....
|d ,m .re :re ,re .re /re .r |d ,m .re :re ,re .re /re .r |re .r :d .re /- :-
Du mi tok kol dong ja e do mi tok kol dong ja e

.....
 |re .r :d .d /d .re :re .r |re .r :d .d /d .re :re .r
 Sa sa wa tok nik ja e sa sa wa tok nik ja e

.....
 |d ,m .re :re /r :- |re .r :d .re /- :-
 In dik e ha

.....
 |re .r :d .re /re .r :d |re .r :d .d /d .re :re .r |d :- / : |d ,re .re :re ,r .d /re :-
 Chong chong me drang ha mat chu dak e me sok e a gan a na

.....
 |d .re :re .re /re .re :r .d | :- / : |d ,re .re :re /d ,re .re :r .d | :- / : |d ,re .re :re .r /d .re :-
 A grang bi ma drang ha cha chi dam o gok gok e a gan a na

.....
 |re .r :d .d /d ,re .re :re .r |d :- / : |re .r :d .d /re .re :r .d |re :- / :
 Wal dok wal seng al a na mo bi song me sok e ha

.....
 |d ,m .re :re /r :- |re .r :d .re /- :-
 In dik e ha

.....
 |re .r :d .d /re .re :r |re .d :re .re /r :- |d .re :re .re :r |d .re :re .r /d .re :-
 Sa du mi mu na wa hai mu rim bo i ga gal na bi song na

.....
 |re .re :r .d /re .re :r |re .re :re .re /r .d :re |d .re :re ,r .d /re :-
 Hai am rik gong rik ha don ang a na bi song ha

.....
 |re .r :d ,d .re /re .r .d :re |d .re :re .re /re .r :d .re | :- / : |re .re :re .r .d /re :-
 A ma ni gim a na do mi mu rim bo in a na

.....
 |d .re :re .re /re .re :re .r |d :- /re .re :re .re |r .d :re /- : |re .re :re ,r .d /re :-
 Ba ra ni sal i a na hai rim rik da in a na

.....
 |d ,m .re :re /r :- |re .r :d .re /- :-
 In dik e ha

.....
 |re .r :d .d /d .re :re .r |d .re :- / : |re .r :d .d /d .re :re .r |d :- /re .r :d .re | :- / :
 I rik chang sik no no ha do mi mo dil ang jok na mo

.....
 |re .r :d .d /d .re :re .r |d :- / : |re .r :d .d /d .re :re .r |d .re :- / : |re ,r .d :re /- :
 Gal da mi da a bi sa am rik gong cheng al jok na mo

.....
 |d ,m .re :r .re /re :r |re :r /- :- |re .r :d .d /re .re :re .re |re ,r .d :- /- :
 Do mi tok kol gri ha A ma gim a al a na de mo

.....
 |d .re :re .re /re .re :r .d |d .re :re ,re .r ,d /- :- |re .re :re .re /r .d :re

Sal sa wa tok gri ha sal ni a na sal ni a na

|re .re :r .d /d ,re .re :

Am bi sal ni ang a na.

|d ,m .re :re /r :- |re .r :d .re /- :-

In dik e ha

|re ,re .r :d /d .re :re .r |d :- /d .re :re .re |re .r :d /re .r .d :r

Sang rang ku wek a gri ha gim a na de mo

|d .re :re .re ,r /d .re :- |d ,re .re :re ,re .re /re .r :d

Su sim i a sam cheng den dap a gri ha

|d .re :re .re /re .re ,r :d |d .re :re .re ,r /d .re ,r :d |d ,re :re .re ,r /d .re :-

Ken a sal i a na Ra bu ga a Ra bu ga a

|d ,re .re :re ,re .re /re .re :d |d ,re .re :re ,d .re /re .r :d

Gal a Mi da a bi sa do mi mu e me sok e

|d ,re .re :r ,d .re /re .r .d :re

Do mi mu e me sok e

|re ,r .d :d ,d .re /re .r :d |re ,r .d :d .re /re .r :d |re ,r .d :d ,re .re /:

I rik chang sik no no ha mik go e a gan a mik go e a gan a

The above Kabe is sung by Rikmoni A Sangma, Age-67, on the funeral of her elder brother Rojin A Sangma.

She is a resident of village Selsela Jengjanggre, West Garo Hills Meghalaya.



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The above Tonic Solfa of Kabe is prepared by Mr. T. Singkam D. Shira, Asst. Music Director in Don Bosco Music School.

