

HEAD-HUNTERS CULTURE

(Historic Culture of Nagas)



JOSEPH S. THONG

E
1095
65
D.S.

F234
428

HEAD - HUNTERS

CULTURE

(Historic Culture of Nagas)



Joseph S. Thong
PERASHEN, TSEMINYU
NAGALAND : INDIA
1997



Addl. Director
State Council of Educational Research
and Training, (S C E R T)
NAGALAND ; KOHIMA.

FOREWORD

Culture is the life blood of a nation. It is culture that sustains a people providing a sense of direction and a distinct identity for its members. Having been blessed with a formidable and magnificent culture, which would be the envy of any nation anywhere, the need has arisen for we Nagas to develop an awareness of its importance, of its propagation and draw social strength from it. It is in this context that the efforts by Mr Joseph S. Thong to give a more permanent form to the Naga perspectives and value systems assumes much importance.

I have perused this with interest and am impressed with his deep understanding of our cultural heritage. It is my hope that this book will provide the opportunity for our coming generations to appreciate and develop a pride in our Naga identity and also serve the larger purpose of awakening interest, among others of the Naga people.

Vipralhou Kesiezie.

Dated, Kohima
the 22nd October 1997.

P R E F A C E

The Naga tribes, who were once famous for head-hunting, be it in the states of Nagaland, Manipur, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh in India or in Myanmar (Burma) differ from the rest of the Hindustan communities not only in origin, language and appearance but their food habits, belief system, social customs, traditions, and all other aspects and modes of life.

The practice of head-hunting and Feast of Merit are at the heart and soul of the Naga culture, around which the rest of the life activities are inter-woven. Establishment of Village, the village gate, construction of house and its decorations, dress and ornaments, wood carving, stone monuments, dyeing, tattooing, songs and dances, marriage, morung, implements and tools, cultivation, chieftainship, clan system, beliefs, rituals and festivals etc. revolve around and link up with head-hunting and Feast of Merit which are basically the same in almost all the Naga tribes, except for some minor and local variations from tribe to tribe, village to village and clan to clan ; all these generally distinguish the Naga Tribe from other Hindustan communities and culture which on the other hand are generally governed by the Systems of Caste, Untouchability, Zamindari, Jajmani and Bounded Labour.

Although some British Colonial Administrators, American Christian Missionaries, Travellers, Journalists, Military Personels, Naga National Workers, Church Organisations, Local Administrators, Academicians and other writers have written books on the Nagas, so far no comprehensive book covering the various aspects of the culture of the Naga head-hunters has been produced to meet the needs of those who hunt for them. This book presents a complete picture of the entire Naga tribes and their various cultural aspects in brief, to fulfil their desire for reference and curiosity to know about the life style of the head-hunters.

Even now in the interior rural villages, historic culture of the people can still be obtained through the aged people whose ways of life have not changed for centuries. Besides, the existing wood carvings, genna posts, log drums, stone monuments, morung buildings, cloth

Kent, Rushuyhum Bukh, Lucy Polem Tep, Logvüseng Semp, David Kemp, Kegwahu Seb, Gwanilo Seb, Athun Kath, Yhunyelo Kent, Gwanyele Kath, Mary Chiesotsu, Xino Chiesotsu; Staff of Nagaland University Library, Kohima; Staff of Anthropology Deptt NEHU, Shillong; Staff of Central Library, NEHU, Shillong; Staff of Anthropology Deptt. Science College Kohima; Staff of State Council of Educational Research and Training Nagaland, Kohima; Staff of State Library Kohima; Staff of the Directorate of Art and Culture Nagaland, Kohima; Staff of the Directorate of School Education, Nagaland Kohima; Staff of the Directorate of Census operations Nagaland, Kohima; Staff of Nagaland Legislative Assembly Library, Kohima; Staff of Govt. High School, Tseminyu; Staff of the Govt High School Sendenyu; Staff of Christian School Tseminyu, Sendenyu Village Council; New Sendenyu Village Council; Sendenyu Baptist Church; Tsemipu Old Town Baptist Church, and not forgetting the staff of the Directorate of Information and Public Relation, Nagaland, Kohima. I owe deep gratitude to the authors of the existing books reflected in the bibliography.

I am grateful to Shri Vipralhou Kesiezie, Addl. Director, State Council of Educational Research and Training, Nagaland Kohmia, who has kindly written the Foreword to the book. Behind the success of my work stand my father Shwenilo Thong and my wife Gwasole Thong. I can not forget to record my dept to them. I ackownledge my deep gratitude to Timothy Thong, who went through the manuscript with utmost care and devotion and typed out the major portion of my hand written material, I am also grateful to Gwathonlo Thong, who typed out portion of the manuscript.

I am particularly indebted to Mr Khinyi Woch for publishing the book in time.

Above all, i thank Almighty God for giving me the strength and opportunity to complete the book.

Perashen, Tseminyu
Nagaland

Joseph S. Thong.

CONTENTS

Foreword	—	I
Preface	—	II
Aknowledgement	—	VI
1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION :	—	1
(a) Who are the Nagas ? (b) Why are they called Nagas ?		
(c) Where do they come from ? (d) What are their physical characteristics ? (e) What are their temperament ? (f) What do you mean by "Naga Culture" ?		
2. HEAD-HUNTING CULTURE :	—	10
(a) Head-hunting : I. Meaning II. Origin III. Rules IV. Methods V. Reasons VI. Rituals and ceremonies VII. Reward VIII. Inspiration IX. Measure of control X. Conclusion (b) Deposition of Captured enemy heads.		
3. FEAST OF MERIT :	—	19
(a) Introduction (b) Concept (c) Value (d) Qualification (e) Worship of faith deity (f) Bull killing ceremony (g) Mithun sacrifice ceremony (h) Ceremonial items (i) Function (j) Conclusion.		
4. STONE CULTURE :	—	22
(a) Stone monument (b) Luck stone.		
5. GENNA AND FESTIVALS :	—	24
(a) Genna (b) Festivals : I. Angami-Sekrenyi II. Ao-Moatsu III. Sema:Tulunyi IV. Lotha-Rhuvan V. Konyak-Aoling VI. Chakhe-shang-Khilunye VII, Chang-Naknyulum VIII. Sangtam-Amongmon IX. Zeliangrong-Meleingi X. Rengma-Ngadah XI. Phom-Monyu XII. Khiamngan-Tsokum XIII. Yimchunger-Metemneo XIV. Pochuri-Nazhü XV Tangkhul-Dharshat XVI. Mao-Saleni. XVII. Kuki-Mimkuut.		
6. RELIGION AND MAGIC :	—	35
(a) Religion (b) Animism (c) Aspect of Naga pagan religion (d) The spirit god (e) Spirit of the house (f) Field spirit (g) Junglc man (h) Spirit of water creatures (i) Spirit of sickness (j) Men lifter (k) Spirit of Ghost (l) Evil spirit (m) Priest hood (h) Divination ane omen (o) Magic I. Black magic II. White magic and love potion (p) Sorcery (q) The Witch/magician		

- (k) Shamanism (s) Dream (t) Taboo (u) Human sacrifice
 (V) Concept of soul (w) Second sight (x) Migration of soul to
 animals (y) Sharing food with the departed soul (z) Human
 ghost.
7. LIFE CYCLE RITES : — 50
 (a) Introduction (b) Birth (c) Marriage (d) Funeral ceremony.
8. MATERIAL CULTURE : — 53
 (a) Introduction (b) Food and Drinks (c) Dress and Ornaments
 (d) Agricultural implements (e) Weapons (f) Other household
 goods (g) Musical instruments.
9. TRIBAL ARTS : — 60
 (a) Introduction (b) Wood carving I. Morung pillars
 II. Log drum III. Village gate (c) Tattooing (d) Painting.
10. FOLK-LORE : — 63
 (a) Introduction (b) Myths and legends I. The story of creation
 II. Invention of fire III. The dog in search of its master IV. The three
 brothers-Tiger, spirit and man V. The confusing tongue VI. How
 head-hunting began (c) Singing (d) Dancing.
11. INDEPENDENT SOVEREIGN VILLAGE STATE : — 69
 (a) The village (b) Establishment of new village state (c) Village
 state Government and Chieftains.
12. CUSTOMARY LAW : — 73
 (a) Introduction (b) Murder (c) Intent to kill (d) Killing
 by accident (e) Theft (f) Killing of Cattle (g) Arson
 (h) Fornication (i) Adultery (j) Touching the breast of a women
 (k) Seeking to seduce (l) Divorce (m) Fostering.
13. ADJUDICATION : — 76
 (a) Introduction (b) Adjudication through village courts
 (c) Oath system.
14. FRIENDSHIP AND DIPLOMACY : — 78
15. INSTITUTIONS : — 80
 (a) Clan system I. Meaning II. Nature III. Function IV. Area
 V. Head VI. Responsibility of the head (b) Land ownership system
 I. Introduction II. Village community land III. Clan land or Khel
 land IV. Family land (c) Inheritance.
16. SOCIAL CUSTOM : — 85
 (a) Family (b) Marriage I. Definition II. Forms of marriage
 III. System of marriage IV. Qualification V. Marriage ceremony
 (c) Divorce.

17.	SOCIALIZATION :	— 87
	(a) Morung (b) Spinster's Dormitory	
18.	ROLE AND STATUS :	
	(a) Status of women (b) Division of works	— 92
19.	COMMUNITY LIFE :	— 96
	(a) Introduction (b) Peer group company (c) Wrestling	
	(d) Tug of war (e) Seeds of sword-bean game.	
20.	HUNTING AND FOOD GATHERING :	— 98
	(a) Hunting (b) Fishing (c) Snares (d) Food gathering	
21.	TRADE SYSTEM :	— 102
	(a) Barter system (b) Currency (c) Lending and borrowing	
22.	COTTAGE INDUSTRIES :	— 104
	(a) Manufacture of salt (b) Pot making (c) Blacksmithy	
	(d) Basket making (e) Wood carving (f) Carpentry	
	(g) Dyeing (h) Cloth weaving (i) Preparation of rice-beer I. Mild	
	rice-beer II. Strong rice beer (j) Distillation of country liquor	
	(k) Preparation of yeast I. Ordinary yeast II. Strong yeast	
	(l) Methods of food preservation I. Meat and fish II. Bamboo	
	shoot III. mustard leave IV. Soya bean cake V. Arum leave cake	
	VI. Fermented crab cakes VII. Bile pickle VIII. Fermented pork.	
23.	METHODS OF CULTIVATION :	— 114
	(a) Introduction (b) Jhum cultivation (c) Terrace cultivation	
	(d) Crop celender.	
24.	REARING OF ANIMALS :	— 117
	(a) Necessity (b) Cattle (c) Pigs (d) Dog (e) Fowls	
25.	INDEGENEOUS MEDICINE AND HEALING :	— 119
	(a) Wounds and Injuries (b) Broken skull (c) Extraction of	
	thorns (d) Burns (e) Itches and allergy (f) Scabies (g) Headache	
	(h) Tooth ache (i) Rash (j) Eye injuries and inflammation.	
	(k) Ear-discharge (l) Goitre (m) Rheumatism (n) Poisoning	
	(o) Dog bite (p) Snake bite (q) Mosquito and Leech bite.	
	(prevention)-	
	(r) Abortion (s) Cold and cough (t) Diarrhoea (u) Dysentry	
	(v) Stomach ache and colic (w) Delirium or mental derangement	
	(x) Fever (y) Intermittent fever and malaria.	
26.	LANGUAGE AND DIALECTS :	— 123

27.	CULTURAL DIFFUSION (Western Ideology) :	— 124
	Emergence of Christianity and modern education -	
	(a) Introduction (b) Advent of christianity and education	
	(c) Chronology of missionaries who served in the Naga Hills.	
28.	CULTURAL EVOLUTION (POLITICAL CULTURE) :	— 131
	I. The rise of Naga Nationalism :	
	First Phase : Background of Naga political culture	
	Second Phase : Naga Ahom relationship	
	Third Phase : Establishment of the British Rule	
	Battle of Khonoma-	
	Fourth Phase : Formation of Organisation	
	(a) Formation of Naga club	
	(b) Formation of Tribal Council	
	(c) Representation to the Simon Commission	
	(d) The Zeliangrong uprising.	
	Fifth phase : Mobilization	
	(a) Unification of Naga Tribes	
	(b) Naga Hills District Tribal Council	
	(c) The Naga National Council (NNC)	
	(d) Declaration of Naga Independence	
	(e) The Plebiscite	
	Sixth Phase : Beginning of Revolutionary Movement :	
	(a) Civil Disobedience	
	(b) Nehru and Burmese Premier's visit to Kohima	
	(c) A.Z.Phizo and his People's Independence	
	League (PIL)	
	Seventh phase : Establishment of parallel Government	
	(a) The Federal Government of Nagaland	
	(b) The Yehzabo of Nagaland.	
	II. Feed back response :	
	(a) Naga inhebited area declared as Excluded Area.	
	(b) The Couplang Crown Crown Colony Plan	
	(c) The Hydari Agreement	
	(d) The Sixteen Point Agreement.	
29.	RESULT OF ACCULTURATION :	— 144
	Impact of Christianity and modern education on the Naga Culture	
30.	METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION IN SOCIO-CULTURAL	
	STUDIES :	— 147
	I. Library method II. Historical method III. Documentary method	
	VI. Interview method VII. Participant observation method.	
	GLOSSARY :	— 149
	BIBLIOGRABH.	— 150
	FORTH-COMING ISSUE :	— I

1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION :

(a) *Who are the Nagas?*

Nagas are the Mongoloid tribes inhabiting the hilly regions between the Brahmaputra river in India and the Chindwind river in Myanmar (Burma), in the states of Nagaland, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam in India and eastern Nagaland in Myanmar (Burma), between 93° - 96° East longitude and 24° - 27° North latitude, with a population of around 1.5 millions. The Nagas are head-hunting tribes living in thousands of villages, many of which are buried in the deep jungles of Indo-Burma, speaking more than of fifty languages and dialects, formerly notorious for head-hunting and human sacrifice, which is almost the only thing most people know about them.

Verrier Elwin wrote — ‘Nagas are a fine people, of whom their country is proud; strong and self-reliant, with the free and independent outlook characteristics of highlanders everywhere, good to look at, with an unerring instinct for colour and design, friendly and cheerful with a keen sense of humour, gifted with splendid dances and a love of songs.’

J. H. Hutton states that ‘those tribes which are spoken of as Nagas have something in common with each other which distinguishes them from many other tribes found in Assam and entitle them to be regarded as a racial unit in themselves.’

The major tribes of the Nagas, who were once famous for their head-hunting culture are the Konyaks, Ao, Angami, Sema, Phom, Lotha, Tangkhul, Chang, Sangtam, Chakhesang, Zeliangrong, Rengma, Yimchunger, Khiamungan, Mao, Thangal, Maram, Tikhir, Pochury, Marin, Anan, Moyan, Puimei, Mokware, Chirr, Keyho-Kenyu, Lamkan, Kuki, Damsa, Kom, Chiru, Nokte, Tangsa, Chin, Wancho, Sinpho, Khampti, Haimi, Htangram, Rangpan, Para, Somra, Dikhir, Phevungri, Shangphuri, and Mimi etc.

(b) *Why are they called “Nagas”?*

Originally, all the Naga tribes had their own separate identity and they were known by their own tribes in their respective dialects. There was no term as the word “Naga”. The name NAGA was given to them by the outsiders who came in contact with them.

Various Scholars, Anthropologists, Sociologists and travellers have expressed their views of the term NAGA in different ways.

1. One group of Scholars opine that the term "NAGA" must have been derived from the word "NOK" or "NOKA" which means "folk" or "people" in some tribal language.
2. Some Scholars think the word "Naga" has evolved from the Kachari word "NANGRA" which means "a warrior."
3. Another views suggest that the word "Naga" originated from a Sanskrit word "NAGNA", which means "Naked."
4. Another view is that the word has come from a Hindustani word "NANGA", meaning "Naked."
5. The fifth view says that it has originated from the Bengali word "NANGTA" meaning "Naked."
6. The sixth view has been derived from the Assamese word "NOGA" meaning "Naked."
7. Another view says that it has originated from two Assamese words "NO", the shrotened from of "Notun", which means "New" and "GA" meaning "Body", thereby meaning "new body" or "new man."
8. The eight view holds that it has originated from "NAGA SANYASI", applied to all naked Sanyasis and all naked people in India.
9. Another view says that the word "Naga" has originated from "NOGA" meaning "Snake" or "King of Snakes." This group of Scholars opine that Nagas are the descendants of the Serpent.
10. Some say that "NAG" means "hill" in Sanskrit and the word "Naga" means "Hill man."
11. Another view says that the word Naga has been derived from a Burmese word "NAKA", which means "Ear-ring." Hence, the people who wear ear rings or pierce their ear lobes are known as "NAKAS."
12. Originally, the word "Naga" had been given by the Cachari King Dima of Dimapur, to the Legendary Rengma hero of Chokedonyu village.

In those days, the Cacharis and the Assamese knew the hill people for their head-hunting culture. They fear that the hill people eat human flesh, as they were accustomed to eating all sorts of animals and insects found on land and in water. Occasionally, the hill people would raid their dominion and chop off the heads of their victims and take them away as prize. In those days, a notorious young warrior named Njon Tegibu, lived in Chokedonyu Village and used to collect taxes from traders in kind. He frequently visited Dimapur and in the process, the Queen of Dima fell in love with him as he was very handsome. King Dima, in one of his encounters with Njon Tegibu, asked him what they (the hill people) do with the heads of their victims. He replied "NAÜ", which means rituals. The King again asked the young hero, what the word for killing a man with dao and spear was. Tegibu replied that the word was "GA". So the King called him "NAÜGA", which according to Dima signified the people "who do rituals with their victims head".

Therefore, the head-hunters inhabiting the hilly regions between the Brahmaputra river in India and the Chindwin river in Myanmar (Burma); 'who practice rituals with the head of their victims are called "Nagas", which was originally derived from the word "NAÜGA" as expressed by the Cachari King Dima of Dimapur.

(c) Where do they come from?

Most of the writers on the Nagas are of the opinion that the Nagas must have come from different places of South East Asian countries and islands, at different times, due to the fact that they have cultural similarities with those of South East Asian inhabitants.

In 1874, Captain Butler, at the head of an exploratory expedition party, was told by the Rengma people at Tesophenyu Village that the Naga's ruled the coast for ages'. The Nagas still wear conch-shells as part of their ornamental dress. The conch-shell which is so valuable and prestigious to the Nagas is a marine product, which also associated with the marriage presents of the rich people and also used as a medium of exchange by traders.

Their fondness for cowrie-shells-the product of sea, is also used for beautifying and making designs in their dresses.

The log-drums hewn from huge logs also features the canoes, is so common with islanders.

It is also a fact that the Nagas include almost all living sea creatures in their diet.

On the Igorots of Philipines, Barrows write - 'It is the custom of all these tribes to chop off the heads of their victims in battle or murder and carry them home as trophies, where they form the object of feasting and celebration.'

John Ogilby in 1671, gave an account of head-hunting in Formosa (Taiwan) and wrote - 'Each conqueror that shares for his own part a Head, carries it through his village upon a spear, insulting and singing in praise and glory of his god, proudly....., they are joyfully recieved everywhere, and entertained with the best liquor the town affords.....fourteen days they keep holy. Feasting and Sacrificing to their Gods, who gave them so great and glorious a victory, of these heads, who'er enjoys one, looks upon it as his greatest Treasure, putting it beyond Gold and silver, or the most precious Jewel, and when any accident of fire or the like happen, this they take most care of, how to carry it with them, or leave it in safety.'

Mcgovrn also writes - 'Nagas are very similar to the Dyaks and Kayans of Borneo (Indonesia), Battaks of Sumatra (Malaysia) and certain groups of Formosa (Taiwan) and several other groups (Igorots) in the Philipines.'

W. C. Smith, an authority on the Nagas also points out many similarities between the Nagas and the Dyaks. 'The Dyaks of Borneo (Indonesia) grew rice on the steep hills just as the Angamis do.'

Shakespeare, in the history of Upper Assam, writes on the Nagas thus - 'They recognised a slight resemblance in matters of counting, names for domestic implements, village architecture and head-hunting propensities to those of the Dyaks (of Borneo in Indonesia) ; while their love for marine shells may seem to point to a bygone home near the sea ; though they are a far inland residing community.'

H. Bareh in Kohima District Gazeteer writes - 'New Guinea's tribes were head-hunters like the Nagas, carrying tasselled chains

which symbolise the number of heads taken by the carrier. In addition, all the Melanesian and Polynesian tribes make carved images of wood like the Nagas.'

The fact that the Nagas have many cultural affinities with those living in remote parts of South East Asian countries like the Dyaks and Koyan tribes of Borneo (Indonesia), the Batlak tribes of Sumatra (Malaysia) and the tribes of Formosa (Taiwan) and the tribes of New Guineas, the Melanesian and Polynesian tribes and the tribes of Sarawak of Malaysia ; and the cultural importance of Cowrie-shells, Conch-shells and log drums like the canoes of islanders, the custom of eating all sea creatures and their resemblance in physical structure and colour, are sufficient proof in themselves that the Nagas once lived near the sea coast, which they, without doubt claimed to have 'ruled the coast for ages', though they are far inland residing community.

It is not certain as to how many generations have passed since the first Naga settlers arrived in their present settlement. Antiquarian remains, such the Stone Monuments, some of them very old. Would suggest that they have been established here for about ten centuries.

(d) What are their Physical Characteristics ?

The Nagas bear Mongoloid features. The physical characteristics found among the Nagas are as under :

1. Skin colour — Yellowish tinge, light brown, brownish yellow, rich brown, dark brown.
2. Hair — Black, straight, wavy, in rare cases wooly and curly.
3. Head — Broad mesophalic head.
4. Face — Flat face, round face, broad high cheeked bone.
5. Nose — Fine to broad, flat nose.
6. Eye — Oblique, mongoloid eye where fold is remarkably absent.
7. Stature — Short or below average, medium to above average. Man-5 feet 6 inches to 6 feet.
Woman generally 2 inches shorter than man.

In general, Nagas are strong and sturdy. The Naga tribes have affinities with the tribes of South East Asian countries of Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Philipines, Melenesia, Polenesia and New Guinea. They belong to the Indo-Mongoloid family of races.

(e) *What are their temperament?*

Regarding the temperament and general nature of the Nagas, first let us see what the various Scholars and Writers observed on the Nagas during their encounter with the people over the years.

S. C. Deve writes-‘Although each Naga tribe has distinct characteristics of its own, they have certain features in common. They are truthful, honest, brave and believe in hero-worship. During the last head-hunting days, the prettiest girl in the village would consider herself fortunate if she could marry the man who had taken the most heads during a raid. He automatically becomes the leader and was respected by the entire village. The Nagas admire the British for the latters’ bravery and sense of justice.’

J. H. Hutton said-‘Nagas have fine qualities. They are simple, cheerful, colourful, humorous, courteous and hospitable. Nagas are people with a sense of humour and generosity at home, at work and at gatherings; laughter is the food of the society and hospitality is overwhelming. Nagas are honest and truthful people, stealing is not common..... and they have respect for elders. Nagas are generous but begging is an abomination. They are healthy, active, vigorous and brave people. The Nagas are well built and enthusiastically looking for a true God and also religious.’

J. S. Bright-‘Most of the Nagas exude nature and wear a smile on their lips.’

Verrier Elwin on the Nagas, write-‘They are a fine people, of whom their country is proud; strong and self-reliant, with the free and independent outlook, characteristic of highlanders everywhere; good to look at, with unerring instinct for colour and design, friendly and cheerful with a keen sense of humour, gifted with splendid dance and a love for songs.’

Asoso Yonuo writes-‘They (Nagas) are usually unclean and unmannerly in taking their food, drinks and other things. They are very fond of intoxicating drinks like rice beer. He further states that, the Naga women are fine, stalwart, cheerful, jovial, frank, hospitable, humorous and devout.’

V. K. Nuh - 'All these beautiful ways of life are disappearing rapidly.'

From the above statements, we come to know that in those good past days, the Nagas were simple, truthful, honest, friendly, frank, brave, cheerful, humorous, courteous, hospitable, generous, healthy, active, strong, religious, self-reliant and independent in outlook, They respected their elders and admired bravery and they loved justice, song and dance. However, they were unclean and unmannerly in their food habits and were fond of intoxicating drinks.

But over the years, in the process of change and modernisation, cultural evolution and innovations, cross-cultural contact and cultural diffusion and acculturation process, 'all these beautiful ways of life are disappearing rapidly', as V. K. Nuh has observed. Now many of the old natures, habits, conventions, fashions, values, manners temperament have changed and have assimilated the new form and ways of life, as described in the Chapter - Result of Acculturation.

(f) What do you mean by the Naga Culture ?

Before we explain the meaning of 'Naga Culture', let us understand the definitions of Culture as given by eminent Anthropologists and Sociologists.

1. Herskovits — Culture is the learned portion of human behaviour.
2. Koenig — Culture is the sum total of man's efforts to adjust himself to his environment and to improve his mode of living.
3. Water Paul — Culture is the totality of group ways of thought and action duly accepted and followed by a group of people.
4. E. B. Taylor — Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of Society.

5. Sapir — Culture includes those attitudes, views of life and specific manifestation of civilisation that give a particular people its distinctive place in the world.
6. A. Goldenwiser — Our attitudes, beliefs and ideas, our Judgement and values and institutions—Political and legal, religious and economic ; our code of etiquette, our books and machines, our science, philosophy and philosophers, all these and many other things and beings within themselves and in their multi-form inter-relations.
7. W. Green — Culture is the socially transmitted system of idealised ways in knowledge and practice and belief along with the artifact that knowledge and practice produce and maintain as the change in type. Culture includes all that is given by one generation to another in society such as, knowledge, religious beliefs, law, art, moral code, customs, manners, literature, music and language etc.

(Therefore, by “Naga Culture”, I mean the way of life of the Nagas, the inherited behaviours and thoughts of their fore-fathers, passed on to the new generation, through oral traditions, and day to day practices and conservative life styles-in the form of customs, traditions, norms, values beliefs and conventions ; acquired through the process of time, change, innovation, evolution and growth ; contact, diffusion, integration, imitation and acculturation.

The Naga culture, therefore, must include head-hunting, feast of merit, log drum, skull tree, housing, food and drinks, dress and ornaments, implements, tools weapons, utensils and furnitures, stone monuments, festivals, rituals and ceremonie, animism and magic, superstitious beliefs, witchcraft and migration of soul, painting, wood carvings and tatooing, myth and legendary, songs and dances, village state government, chieftainship, customary laws and adjudication, clan and kinship system, forms of family, marriage and inheritance, morung system, hunting, food gathering, barter system of trade, weaving of

cloth and bamboo works, earthen pot making, manufacture of salt, shifting cultivation and rearing of animals, language and dialects, herbal medicine and indigenous methods of healing, the rise of nationalism, emergence of christianity and education etc, as the indispensable components of Naga Culture.)

In order to understand fully the real culture of the Nagas, we need to trace the life patterns of their fore-fathers. In this connection, it is surprising to know the under-mentioned things had no existence in the traditional Naga society and culture in the by gone days, during the head-hunting period.

- There was :
1. No lock and key.
 2. No Police.
 3. No prison.
 4. No destitution.
 5. No beggars.
 6. No monetary system.
 7. No juvenile delinquency.
 8. No cheating.
 9. No venereal disease.
 10. No drugs.
 11. No cinema halls or video parlours.
 12. No script or writing.
 13. No corruption.
 14. No bribery.
 15. No transportation.
 16. No caste distinction or social stratification.
 17. No bar or liquor stores.
 18. No landless person.
 19. No taxation.
 20. No land lords of Zamindari system.
 21. No sati system.
 22. No Jajmani system.
 23. No bonded labour.
 24. No opium den.
 25. No dancing hall.
 26. No brothels or prostitution.
 27. No political party.
 28. No law for death penalty.
 29. No person is or was untouchable in Naga Society.