

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The present study was undertaken to study the socio-cultural changes which might have taken place in the life of the people of Wokha district as a result of the introduction of British administration and Christian missionaries activities in the district. Prior to the arrival of the British and Christian missionaries in Nagaland, the Lotha tribe lives a simple life. Their way of life, including food habits, dresses, house patterns, beliefs, customs and traditions are strictly observed and maintained as the forefathers lived. But their socio-cultural and economic life are changing. The main intention of this study is, therefore, to find out why such changes operating among the Lotha Nagas.

While investigating the social lives and cultural background of the people from remote past, intensive field work was done to trace the way of lives of the people of the past through the existing practices and available information from the various sources. But in dealing with the present situation one cannot simply ignore the past, because the present society is the result of series of changes that has taken place in the past society as rightly stated by Khashim Ruviah:

Each culture can be understood only as an historical growth determined by the social and geographical environment in which each people is placed and by the way in which it develops the cultural material that comes into possession from the outside or through its own creativeness.¹

1. Ruviah, K., 1993. *Social Change Among the Nagas (Tangkhul)*, New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, p. 2.

Many scholars and renowned anthropologists have conducted research on primitive tribes and culture in various senses and one of which the most influential is, of course, that of E. B. Tylor. In his famous book, *Primitive Culture*, it is written:

Culture or civilization taken in its ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, moral, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of the society (Tylor, E.B., 1971).

This definition of culture is rather vague, but words like 'acquire' and 'complex whole', which were the key words of the definition means that culture is the product of the social learning rather than of biological heredity. It also means that it includes all socially learned behaviours.

In his definition Malinowski also referred culture as "an instrumental reality, an apparatus for satisfaction of the biological and derived need." (Malinowski, B., 1960). In this context, culture operates as a means of response for the satisfaction of biological derived need. He emphasized on the biological aspect of culture and explained the biological characteristics of human behaviour. However, Radcliffe Brown did not agree with him when he used the word "social structure" for culture, a wider perspective of culture, in analyzing social organization. He refers culture as a process by which a person acquires from contact with other person or from such things like books, or works of art, knowledge, skill, idea, belief, sentiment etc., (Radcliffe Brown., 1952).

Now culture is understood as the whole human reactions and responses to existence. In other words, culture is all that a man creates in order to adapt himself to the environment for survival, which includes customs and traditions, beliefs, ideas, social institutions, habitual attitude of mind, artifacts and techniques etc., that can be transmitted from one person to the other through speech and symbolic actions. However, it is a product of social learning rather than biological heredity. All these acquired products serves man to maintain in the struggle for existence.

Culture is dynamic and rapidly changing. Thus any modification or change in the life of the people, material or non-material, whether consequent innovation and acculturation can be termed as culture change. In the process of culture change, however, only some aspects of cultural traits may be changed or it may even take another form of modified cultural pattern, but retains the basic elements of the original cultural traits which may remain unchanged.

Sometimes culture change is closely related to many social change and their distinction is very crucial. But culture change is the conceptual formulation that refers to the many ways in which societies change their patterns of culture. It mainly refers to the change in cultural meaningful symbols produced by human being whereas social change refers mainly to the change in actual human behaviours and relations (Moore, W.E., 1968).

In the study of culture change anthropologists like Tylor, Morgan and Frazer tried to explain the origin of culture and made simplistic

attempt to understand change. They believed that the primitive societies had already experienced dramatic change in the past.

Malinowski also talks about social change by stating that change is created primarily due to external pressure of colonial rule (Malinowski, 1960). His main argument was that primitive tribe must be studied as a unit actually functioning under present day but not as a reflection of their own past history. Malinowski's main theoretical contribution was functional analysis of culture into a series of interacted aspects, and later he adopted to form the basis more dynamic type of study of culture contact by which it would follow the introduction into a primitive society of programmes of change.

The British social anthropologists seem to have more concern with the social consequences of change, in terms of structural adjustment. American anthropologists, on the other hand, were more concern with process and agent of changes. While Britishers were primarily concerned with the problem of culture change due to colonial rule and trade, the Americans were more concerned with the study of change as an outcome of better communication and economic development.

We can also approach the study of change in a society in two ways, first, change as a juxtaposition of circumstances unique for each culture, second, change as a regular phenomenon in each society having some regularity in the pattern of change.

One of the crucial problem areas in contemporary anthropology is that of culture change. Therefore, to understand the sphere of problem of

change in the social activities and human relations, it is necessary to investigate the social lives and actual background of the people in the past through the existing practices and available information. If we know the condition under which a culture operates then we can understand what form of and direction culture change takes place as it has been quoted by Ruivah the words of Gillin:

If we know the conditions under which a culture operates and lives of its internal integration and coordination, we are able to predict within certain limits what form and direction culture changes will take. As we perfect our knowledge and our techniques for specifying the condition of compatibility and consistency, our predictions become possible, so control and manipulation of changes are possible.²

Therefore, in considering social change it is also important to keep in view whether the change is even in all aspects of life or change is rapid in some aspects and slow in other aspect or aspects.

Now, study of culture change has becoming more important or significant in the post Second World War as evidenced by Lester's (1944) study of the effect of war on Fijian society, Brown's (1949) study of missionaries and cultural diffusion and Benedict's (1947) study of Japanese culture and personality, with special reference to the problem of stability and change. Thus, the above theoretical background study of culture change help us to understand the importance of the study of culture change.

2. Ruivah, K., *Op. cit.*, pp. 3-4.

In the 19th century a significant landmark has been continued in the history and of the tribal people of the North-east India, particularly to the Naga society. It witnessed the transition from tradition to modernity. Prior to British arrival to this region the people remained almost segregated. The Nagas lived in their isolated lives in their respective villages, which were more or less like village republics. There was little scope for mixing together with other people of the country. However, it was during the year 1832 the British made their first entry into Naga Hills. But the first mass contact of the Nagas with the people living outside was made only during the Second World War (Sema, Hokishe., 1986).

The entry of the British administration brought along the Christian missionaries, of course, it was mainly coincidence of time rather than coincidence of intentions between the British rulers and the Christian missionaries. The British intervened with the traditional political institutions and later they also introduced change in the subsistence activities of the people. The missionaries who came at the same time as the British colonizers, brought change in the indigenous religious beliefs and practices and many other aspects of life of the people like education, style of personal life etc. Thus the impact of westernization and modernization on the Naga society and culture during this period has a tremendous impact on the socio-economic, religion, education and cultural field and eradication of some evil practices like head-hunting and superstitious beliefs. Further, it leads to the gradual decline in indigenous arts, crafts, traditional system of administration, customary law and justice and indigenous industries. The British policy of introducing to the

Nagas about the apparatus of western civilization led to the crises in their faith, traditions and cultural values.

The second phase of socio-cultural and economic change was noticed during the post-independence period. From 1947 onwards the government of India introduced a series of developmental programmes in the country and as a result of which hardly any aspect of life of the people remained untouched. Thus, there was total transformation in the way of life of the people of Nagas due to the introduction of western cultural elements into the Naga traditional way of life.

The Lothas, like any other tribes of Nagaland, has been traditionally living within their own territory in almost relatively isolated from the rest of the civilized world. They led a simple life according to their own way of life, following their own customs and traditions in all matters of socio-political activities. But now things have drastically changed. Culture and traditions of the Lothas had undergone a tremendous change owing to the coming of the Britishers and the Christian missionaries to this region in the year 1841, and more so after independence.

The whole attitude and the life style of the Lothas have considerably changed in recent times as observed by A. P. Sinha:

A modern Lotha boys and girls can easily impress anyone that the people of this region (Naga Hills of yesteryear, Nagaland of today) are in no way different in their food habits, hair-style, in their total appearance, from the people

of other parts of the country, and who are known to be modern.³

Thus cultural change has come about as a result of experiences initially due to contact with the western civilized world and adaptation of a new religion and various relating aspects to style of life and more so after 1947 with improved economic development, communication, transportation, contact with people from other cultural group. Anthropological enquiry into the pattern and extent of such transformation, therefore, become quite relevant and appropriate. This brings us the need of proper understanding of socio-cultural structure as well as their problems of changes that have taken place within the Lotha community. The main purpose of the present study is, therefore, to examine the changes that have taken place in the socio-cultural and religious aspects of the Lotha people.

Review of Literature

Some of the works of the social anthropologists, sociologists and other thinkers of the social and cultural change among the Indian tribal societies provides some theoretical approaches to the study of culture change.

Furer-Haimendorf (1942) analyzed the gradual changes of the culture of the Chenchu. He enumerates the type of culture borrowing and discussed the nature of change caused in original culture owing to their

3. Sinha, A. C., (ed), 1986. *Changing North-East India*, Ludhiana: Gagan Publishers, pp. 88-89.

contact with the forest contractors, road labourers and local peasant population.

Kessinger (1974) selected a single village in Punjab and conducted a case study and deal with migration, commercialization and agriculture, differentiation of occupation and population growth in rural Punjab from the time of British annexation in 1948 till 1968. He combined the perspectives and method used by the historian to trace the situation of rural Indian economic and social position to study the aspect of change that have been left out previously. His main intention was not to show the changing state of village life in Punjab but to find out the development over extended period of time and to discover the factors responsible for it.

Roy (1989) conducted a study on the Khond tribe of Orissa and said that in the initial stage of existence, the Khonds were basically a hill nomadic race with self-sustained economy. But the British administration policy had affected the socio-cultural and economic life of this important section of the tribal of Orissa that in due course of time, these aborigines resorted to their shifting cultivation which supplemented their means of subsistence and economy.

Chaudhuri (1992) in a series of survey on the tribal transition in India found that the traditional economy of the Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh were such as agriculture, trade, sheep and goat rearing. But now their economy has shifted from its past tradition. The factors like enclosure of the border with Tibet, opening of modern commercial and transport system, introduction of modern education and new

administrative system have made people of this district inclined towards diversification of occupation like agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry.

Jain (1995) conducted a case study on social change among the Bhil tribe of Rajasthan and found that a number of them have already embraced Christianity. They ceased to practice polygamy and also condemned bride-price among Bhil Christians. There are also other factors like diversification of economy, implementation of massive development plans, opening of tribal territory and provision of infrastructure facilities which were responsible for bringing about changes among the Bhil community.

Burling (1963) did an intensive village study on the Garo village. In his work, Burling found that the major factors causing change among the Garos of Meghalaya are not the adaptation of wet paddy cultivation and better contact with the outside world. Adaptation of the permanent cultivation by itself caused no other change except changing some principles of ownership of land as historical evidence shows that the Garos had started wet-paddy cultivation there as early as the early part of the 15th century AD (Borah, 1936). But overwhelming changes started to show their impact on all aspects of Garo's life, in their material culture, social organization and their world view.

In K. S. Singh's (ed.) 1993, *Tribal Ethnography Customary Law and Change*, S. K. Pal made analytical studies on the Rabha community and said that the Rabhas of Assam followed the matrilineal principles in respect of descent, residence and inheritance. In the pre-independence

period Rabhas were relatively isolated from the main stream of Hindu's ways of life and maintained their cultural homogeneity as an integrated harmonious whole, but in the post-independence period the improvement of education and integration of tribal areas resulted into a closer interaction between the Rabhas and other communities like the Hindu caste groups. As a result of a closer contact with the neighbouring Hindus, the Hindu culture elements have penetrated the traditional structure of Rabha's society. Thus, the Rabha society now is in transition from matrilineal to patrilineal social structure.

Snaitang (1993) studied the Khasi-Jaintia societies of Meghalaya and found that three important changes have taken place among the Khasi-Jaintia tribes. One of the most significant changes noticed was the life style of the women. Under the impact of missionaries influence and the modern culture, the women were more free in their movement and even participated actively in political and social affairs. The impact is also found in the material culture where the old traditional houses were redesigned. Age-old taboo on drinking of milk and rejection of previous food such as chicken and eggs were removed. Drinking of country liquor or rice beer were replaced by introducing tea drinking among the Khasi-Jaintia Christians.

Furer-Haimendorf (1976) restudied the Konyak Naga tribe of Nagaland after a gap of thirty four years (1936-1970). In his analytical studies he found that a drastic change has taken place in the socio-cultural and economic life of the Konyak people within the period of thirty four years. Under the changed political conditions, the tradition of

autocratic chieftainship is undergoing transformation, even though some of the chiefs may retain part of their wealth and privileges. Traditional political structure of the village based on the closed association of the "Murong" had already been replaced by modern form of political system. The introduction of Christianity has led to the abandonment of many customs and traditions. Many have totally abandoned their old tribal religion and have embraced Christianity. Even the house-type and household materials have been replaced by new items of furniture and equipments like table, chair, metal-utensils and cups.

Horam (1988) made an analytical studies on the Naga tribes in general and said that one of the most remarkable changes that have taken place among the Naga society was the transitional from old beliefs to new beliefs, animism to Christianity. Beliefs in the old gods and family-cult are slowly passing away but these have been firmly replaced by Christianity. Another aspect of change is due to the yielding of old things to new ones as being introduced by Christianity.

Saleh (1989) made an analytical study on the transition of Nagaland's economy from a primitive to a modern economy. During the pre-independence period there had been no developmental programmes in Nagaland. Education was confined mainly to a few missionaries schools. But it was only after the formation of state, the administrative machinery had to be built up to bring about peace in the area. Thereafter various infrastructures development was made. The main factors of economic transition in Nagaland was mainly due to the introduction of 6th and 7th plans in the country where main emphasis was made for

development of infrastructure by providing medical hospitals, schools, drinking water supply, construction of approach road, improved seeds and agricultural tools and implements etc. Such development brought about changes in the ways of life and attitudes of the people from a traditional tribal society to a modern way of life.

Ruivah (1993) in his ethnographic account on the Tangkhul Nagas, one of the major tribes of Manipur, made a microscopic investigation on the Tangkhul society and found that the social life of the Tangkhul has been undergoing a rapid transformation as a result of the introduction of a new way of life mainly due to the impact of Christianity, contact with outside world, formal education and the imposition of a new political system etc. The most important factors of social change among the Tangkhul was proselytization which began after the occupation of Manipur by the British in the last part of 19th century. With the advent of Christianity social transformation of the Tangkhul society has taken place in numerous ways, viz., by the introduction of many new things, many indigenous social practices and aspects of culture were abolished and many modifications were made in the traditional social customs and practices. He analyzed the traditional culture and social system which were rapidly vanishing under the impact of modernization and Christianity.

In Ganguly's (ed.), 1995, *Urbanization and Development in North-East India (Trends and Policy Implication)*, Saikia conducted a case study of two urban towns such as Kohima and Dimapur in Nagaland. His main intention was to study the process of urbanization in Nagaland. He

found that the growth of urbanization in Nagaland has been very fast and it is even faster than in some other states of North-East India. Kohima being the capital of the state has been growing fast on account of expanding administrative and political activities. Dimapur, on the other hand, has been spreading fast due to the development of business, industrial and civic and educational facilities. In both of these towns, commercial, educational and administrative functions have been expanding very fast. As a result, the old town areas are expanding in all directions, mainly along the National Highway No. 39. Another factor leading to the fast growing of Kohima and Dimapur was due to the migration of the educated people to these towns for employment in government service and business enterprises.

Scope and Objectives of the Study

Mills (1922), in his monograph on *The Lotha Nagas*, made an effort in investigating on socio-cultural life of the Lotha Naga people and put them on record, which was the first book on account of the Lotha people. He made an elaborate studies on the original form of the Lotha's customs and traditions. He also traced the origin and migration of the tribe. Mills' account on the Lotha tribe was written in the form of monography and yet it provides us the situations prevailing before the changes have taken place in the socio-cultural life of the Lotha people.

In the Wokha District Gazetteers, Ghosh (1979) reports that the transition of dress from the old dress like "lengta" and mantles to other attires like pants and shirts is significant transformation in the dress culture among the Lotha Nagas. Owing to the advent of modern

education and Christianity such a radical and tremendous change on dress culture has taken place among the tribe.

So far any exhaustive review of the work done on social and culture change have not been tried here. But the main purpose of review of literature done here is to show the trend and development of researches done in culture change.

A number of study on social and culture change among the Nagas have been done by some researchers. However, it may be pointed out here that no study has been done so far among the Lotha society as culture change is concerned.

Scope and Objectives of the Study

The present study is entitled as a *Study of Culture Change Among the Lotha Nagas: A Case Study of Wokha and Akuk Village in Nagaland*. The main intention of this study is to find out the changes that are operating among the Lotha society.

Prior to the arrival of the British colonizers and the Christian missionaries the Lotha lives a simple life. Their customs and traditions are strictly observed and maintained. But now these things have been changed and a new way of life has been experienced by the people of Wokha district. Of course, culture change is an ongoing process and any society may experience it at any stage. As for the Lothas, rapid change of culture begins from the time when they had come into contact with the British and missionaries in the earlier time and with the various developments in economic opportunities in the post-Independence period

at the later stage. With the coming of Christianity and formal education, the Lotha society went for a greater change. Therefore, the present study purposes to find out why such change operating among the Lotha Nagas.

Keeping in view of the above purpose of the study, the present study proposes the following objectives so as to make the study more meaningful and manageable:

1. To review the traditional Lotha culture,
2. To investigate the culture change of the Lotha Nagas,
3. To find out the main factors responsible for the culture change,
4. To observe the process of change, and finally to analyse and summarize the findings of the thesis.

Methodology

Selection of the Village

After much consultation and a careful spot verification of the two types of Lotha typical villages such as Akuk and Wokha have been selected for intensive field study.

The Akuk village, which is one of the most traditional and historical villages in Lotha area, represents the traditional Lotha village at the time when the British and missionaries made their first contact with the Lotha people during the later part of the nineteenth century. The selection of the other two villages such as Wokha and Phiro represents a village that have been already affected by the present trend of culture change due to their contact with the British and the Christian missionaries, and the development of various economic opportunities

during the post-independence period. The purpose of selecting Wokha and Phiro villages is to have a better comparison of the data collected from these two villages for the present study.

Wokha village is about one and a half km. away from the district headquarters. This is one of the advanced and leading Christian villages in Wokha district comprising 679 households with total number of 3776 population. The attitude and life style of this village have considerably changed as a result of the introduction of modernization brought by the British administration and missionaries and also economic development in the village. Now, most of the people of this village could hardly follow their traditional ways of life.

Phiro is about 35 km away from Wokha town, the district headquarters. This village has 306 households with a total number of 2375 population. Christianity came to this village earlier than as it was introduced at Wokha village. But the growth rate of Christianity in this village was rather slow and at the same time their acceptance of alien culture was comparatively slower. This village still retains some of its traditional cultural traits. Yet majority of the people in this village have also changed their way of life.

For a better comparison of the information these two villages have been selected. Today, though almost all the population of these two villages have become Christian some of their ways of life are still influenced by their previous background in all the two villages. In this study, special emphasis was made to the kind of indigenous institutions of socio-cultural and their response to the changing situations are

carefully examined. The data so collected from these two villages generally reflected the characteristics of the entire Lotha society. The main intention of the present study is, therefore, to present a total picture of the traditional culture of the Lotha society and also to examine the changes that are taking place in various aspects of life of the Lotha people through a minute studies of these two typical Lotha villages.

Tools and Techniques of Data Collection

The data for the present study was collected during the trips made to the field search work between the month of December, 1999 and April, 2001. Prior to the actual investigation begins a thorough survey of the two selected villages was made. Some of the important persons like Village Council Members, Chairmen, elders, pastors, women leaders, students leaders etc., were also contacted in order to get the preliminary necessary information. Before the schedules and interviews were served to the respondents, preliminary contact was made in order to get acquaintance with the people and informed them about the purpose of the study. Then indepth study was made by collecting data for the entire household census. Thus completed the first enquiry about the general information of the two villages.

The present study being an empirical study, the primary data were collected through schedules and interviews supplemented by participant observations. Besides, secondary data were also collected from the various available sources like books, journals and reports or records.

Comparative methods were used to understand the trends of culture change that are being taking place among the Lotha Nagas. Such techniques help to understand the trends of culture change that had started from the time when the Lothas had come into contact with the Britishers and the missionaries in the earlier time and with the development of various economic opportunities at the later stage to the present time. It also further helps for a better comparison of the information collected from the two different villages such as Wokha and Phiro.

Random sampling method was also employed. The sampled respondents were drawn through random sampling method from the two selected villages. Out of 679 households with total number of population of 3776 from Wokha village, a sample of 206 households were selected while 123 sample households were selected from Phiro village which has 306 households with total number of 2375 populations. The sample respondents so drawn from these two villages includes all the different categories of the people in the village and thus represents the whole universe of the present study.

In the nineteenth century a significant landmark has taken place in the history of the Lotha people. It witnessed a change from traditional to modernity. Prior the arrival of the Britishers the Lothas lived relatively in isolative lives in their own respective villages. There was no scope of

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Arnold Toynbee, a British historian, writes that all culture grow and break down and decay. Culture is responsive to challenges and become sterile. In the process of change, those culture that can cope with a changing environment can survive but those cannot they break down. Whether one can accept Toynbee's view on change of human culture or not this observation has a great relevance to the contemporary Naga situation.

The Naga society, so also the Lotha, is undergoing a rapid change in their cultural set up. In response to such situation they are adapting to a new way of life and in certain cases disregarding their old way of life. A new set of values are thus emerging in their society in which the old is disappearing, making a room for a new ones. Such changes taking place in the cultural set up of the Lothas are noticeable in their attitudes of life, family life, social life, customs and traditions, religious beliefs and practices, food patterns and dresses.

In the nineteenth century a significant landmark has taken place in the history of the Lotha people. It witnessed a change from traditional to modernity. Prior the arrival of the Britishers the Lothas lived relatively in isolative lives in their own respective villages. There was no scope of mixing up with other groups of people. During that time the British made their first entry into the Naga Hills in 1832, but to the Lothas the first contact was made only in the year 1841.

The entry of the British administration brought along the Christian missionaries. The British intervened with the indigenous political institutions and later they also introduced changes in the subsistence activities of the people. The Christian missionaries who came at the same time as the British colonizers, brought changes in the indigenous religious beliefs and practices and many aspects of life such as Christianity and education.

The impact of westernization and modernization on the life of the Lotha people has a tremendous affect which, in the long run, led to the gradual decline of traditional system of village administration, religious beliefs and practices, customs and traditions. Such transformation in the way of life of the people was due to the introduction of alien cultural elements into the Lotha's traditional way of life. Thus changes have occurred as a result of a new experience initially due to the contact with the western civilization and adaptation of a new religion and various relating aspects of style of life and more so after 1947 with improved communication, transportation, development opportunities and contact with people from other cultural groups.

The Christian missionaries not only changed the faith of the people but also brought along with them an important factor of modernization and that is education. The missionaries goaded the people to give up their tribal practices and encouraged them to take modern education and other modern practices. Education is not an independent variable. It is interlinked with economic factors. Therefore, if people have only subsistence economy then they cannot make much use of schools and

teachers etc., though it is quite possible that if people are educated then economic development may be accelerated and may readily accept an innovation.

More rapid changes taken place during the post-independence period. From 1947 onwards the Government of India launched a series of developmental programmes in the country and as a result of which hardly any aspect of life of the people that remained untouched. This bring us the need of proper understanding of socio-cultural organization as well as the nature of change that have been taken place within the Lotha society.

So far we have been saying that changes begin to take place ever since they had come into contact with the British and missionaries in the later part of nineteenth century. They had moved towards greater change at the later stage during the post-independence period. The Lothas, though not highly develop, have attained certain degree of modernity and pressing towards greater change in various aspects of life.

In this study the ethnographic materials of the previous work done by the British administrators and the missionaries are considered useful and carefully examined in the discussion of the Lotha traditional culture.

In the light of such discussion an attempt has been made, as far as possible, to present the traditional culture of the Lotha society and the new ones which have been incorporated into it. Further, an attempt has been also made to trace out their persistence of change of culture through the ages in the process of acculturation.

Thus, by studying the traditional way of life of the people we may be able to understand the dominant value of a society and the way in which changes have taken place in those dominant values and the modification or replacement by some other values. Keeping all these in view the Lotha traditional culture and the existing state of affairs are discussed.

In this final chapter an attempt was made to summarize the main factors responsible for the culture change and the existing state of affairs.

Now, with the spread of education, economic development, a new horizons and a new outlook in life, the standard of living of Wokha people have been remarkably improved. People have changed their life style by giving away their old habits and customs in pursuit of new things of modern affluence. Many people have changed their occupations. The Lothas, in general, are cultivators but there are some people who do carpentry, contract works, basketry, blacksmithy etc., besides cultivation. Consequently majority are now depending on a combination of more than one source of income. The pattern is that during agricultural seasons people engaged themselves in agricultural activities, but during agricultural off season many of them engaged themselves in other occupations. Their main interest is to earn some more cash which also clearly indicates that the economy has drastically changed from barter to cash.

In agricultural field a number of developmental projects such as distribution of fertilizer, scientific chemical remedies and demonstration

of using improved seeds have been adopted in the district. Improved tools and implements are being sold to the farmers on 50% subsidized rate and many farmers have been benefited by making use of such opportunities. Improved tools like iron agricultural implements are also being used in the villages now.

Prior to the introduction of agricultural development in the district Wokha economy was predominantly subsistence economy: household produced only for their own consumption. However, people are now tend to grow more of cash crop and the result of such cultivation of cash crops have brought Lotha's economy to market. The price of land have been steady during the last few decades but now with the introduction of agricultural and other developmental programmes in the district the price of land has also began to rise rapidly.

Unfortunately, the people of Wokha district have not yet turned their attention towards the scientific method of animal husbandry, most probably because there are other more lucrative economic fields of attention such as contract works and supply works, besides the agricultural activities. However, though not scientifically done, almost every household have got all kinds domesticated animals for both home consumption and for commercial purposes as well.

With the enlargement of various opportunities in different vocations a remarkable change in daily wages have taken place in the district. The institution of exchange of labour has virtually disappeared. Now any kind of work is paid in cash only. The present average of wages paid for any kind of work in the district ranges from Rs. 80/- to Rs. 100/-

for men and Rs. 70/- to Rs. 80/- for women but for skilled labourers it ranges from Rs. 150/- to Rs. 200/- per day. The increase of daily wages is a clear indication of economic development in various occupations but on the other hand it has also led to the breaking down of age-old traditional practices of paying wages on reciprocal exchange of labour based on kinship obligations.

Generally, the standard of living of the people refer to the economic condition, mode of dwellings, diet and dresses etc., of the people. Owing to the spread of modern education, developmental programmes in various fields and increased of income facilitated the people to improve their standard of living significantly. Their way of life has been affected and their way of traditional dresses have changed into western dresses to a great extent. Now wearing of modern dresses has become more common in the district. Traditional beds and wooden seats have been replaced by modern furniture. Even the age-old earthen pots have been substituted by steel and aluminium utensils. Now people live in tin-roofed houses. Many have owned radio, tape recorder, bicycle etc. This shows that the economic status of the people have gone up and the process of acculturation has been at work among the Lotha people.

Among the Lothas social institution like marriage is considered as one of the most important for the continuity of human society. Generally, the Lothas followed monogamy but there is no restriction for polygamy. As a result some rich men occasionally have more than one wife. Polyandry is not practiced in this area. At present, however, polygamy is strictly prohibited among the Lothas by the Christian ethics and

accordingly no husband is permitted to marry second time unless the first marriage has been dissolved by death or divorce according to legal procedure, approved by the Christian principle.

In the past, age at marriage for boys was between 17 to 22 years and girls between 14 to 18 years, but now it has been raised to 21 to 25 for girls and 26 to 30 years for boys. With the introduction of formal education there is no fixed age group for marriage in Lotha society today. Some got married at the early age and some later.

Traditionally, among the Lotha society, negotiation and decision making for marriage was done either by the parents or relatives. But such procedure is hardly followed by the younger generations as most marriages are taking place without the concern of the parents but it is arranged by the boys and girls themselves. In most cases negotiation and making of decision for marriage is left to the individual concern. This shows that the commonly accepted type of marriage among the present younger generation of the Lotha community is more of love marriage rather than parental arranged marriage.

In the past days, economic status of the family for marriage was a minor point to be taken into account but now it is the most important point to be considered, for most of the parents, particularly the girl's parents, try to seek for a marriage with a boy whose economic status is higher. Therefore, a man who did not possessed such status may be considered as unmatched for the girl. Such situation contributed to the increasing number of eloping cases in present days.

Generally, expenditure at marriage was small and manageable in the past days. It was only the closest relatives who were fed on such occasion – a pig and a fowl was just enough. Distribution of bride's meat, which was about 16 kgs of meat, was done among the closest relatives of the family only. Nowadays, the bride's meat is distributed among all the clansmen and friends in the village. It is observed that theoretically people still maintains the traditional system of distribution of bride's meat but practically they no longer follow it. The rapid increase of expenditure at marriage, due to the introduction of economic development and job opportunities in the district, indicates that the emphasis on economic factors in marriage have been increased while significance of rituals in marriage appears to have gone down.

Prior to the advent of Christianity the traditional system of marriage rituals and formalities were strictly observed. With the coming of Christianity giving of bride price to the girl's family became a decadence among the Lothas. Now bride price and presentation or dowry have no place in Lotha's marriage. Christian marriage systems are different. Today Church officials are invited to administer the engagement and marriage ceremonies. Wedding is held in the church or elsewhere. Christian marriage have no specific time to perform marriage ceremony. One can perform marriage at any season according to the conveniences of both the parties.

Christianity has a great impact on the traditional marriage system. With the coming of Christianity the traditional rituals and formalities at marriage have disappeared. But no matter how much it has affected the

form of marriage, still the inner core of the Lotha customary system of marriage remained unchanged. The present practice of negotiation and marriage arrangement, divination conducted on slaughtered animals and system of giving and distribution of bride meat are some of the elements and modified forms of traditional system of marriage.

In the pre-Christian era the dormitory (Chümpho) system played an important role among the Lotha society. But with the coming of Christianity along with modern system of education the importance of this age-old system has become non-existence. Now it is nowhere to be found in any of the Lotha villages except in some villages where it is built on certain occasion for memory's sake only. Nowadays, Christian organizations like Church, schools, clubs and students' organizations etc., have substituted the traditional dormitory system and have become the centre for the activities of youths and some play as much parallel educational role in the village life. The colonial administrations and missionary's educational system not only revolutionized the culture ethos of the Lothas but also led them to a new dimension of value system of life. Such development of broader and healthier outlook of the people enabled them to accept the new trends of change in their society. The standard of living of the people have also changed notably as a result of the effect of modern educational system. These days, mass education has provided a cultural revival among the younger generation.

The old-age traditional dresses and ornaments have all changed to modern ones. With the influence of the western cultural elements indigenous dresses have been replaced and supplemented by modern dresses like pants, shirts, blouses, coats, shoes etc. The use of such items

of modern dresses have become increasingly popular and fashionable not only in towns but also in villages. Traditional shawls which imply rank and status have also lost its significance. Yet traditional dress is still loved by some section of the people. Traditional ornaments such as earrings, wristlets, armlets, bracelets, necklaces, and dancing dresses have been changed to modern type of ornaments such as brass necklaces, finger rings, ear rings and watches. Hence, there is now hardly anybody using such type of traditional ornaments except those few people who are in the villages. For town dwellers such things have become a mere show-piece in their setting rooms.

House building materials and designs have changed but some old type of houses are still existing in the villages. With the advent of modern civilization and techniques the economic condition of the people has been raised and their housing patterns have also widely changed, specially the villages near the towns. Most of the houses are now roofed with tin or plain sheets and the way of construction of the building is modern. Even in the villages many buildings are now found constructed in modern ways with modern amenities such as sanitary arrangement, electric fittings and other modern appliances.

In place of traditional mortar and pestle there is rice mill in the village. The age-old pounding table or mortar and pestle have ceased to perform its function these days. Liquor vat is no more used by the villagers for they no longer drink liquor or rice beer (*soko*) instead things like cans and barrels are used. Bamboo shelves in which all the kitchen articles are kept, are no longer hung in the kitchen. Some well-to-do

people use modern cupboard in the kitchen. A folded plantain leaves which were used as cups have been replaced by modern porcelain cups and glass tumblers. Things like Naga made earthen pot (*Chonpfü*) and shallow wooden desh (*Tssiingphi* or *Phi-Kyu*) have all been substituted by aluminium and steel utensils. Besides kitchen articles many more modern consumer goods such as radios, tape recorders, televisions, bicycles and furniture are used by the people. Foreign goods such as tailored clothes, sewing machines, lamps and other minor gadgets of western civilization gradually became household necessities for some of the Lothas.

Traditional food items contained rice, vegetable, bamboo shoots and juice, dry fishes and occasionally meat. Now people takes more of additional food and drinks like meat, fish, dal, tea, snacks and breads and tea. The food patterns of those people who are in higher economic group shows that they consume those quality food like fried food, fruits, milk and tea, snacks and bread. Some people consume tea and bread at lunch time instead of rice. As far as the method of cooking and meal timings are concerned, there has not been much changes taken place as majority of the people are still practicing boiled and smoked food for both morning and evening. Such situations taking place among the Lothas are clear indication of changes that have been taken place in their food patterns as a result of the introduction of modernization and economic development in the district.

The condition that was prevailing among the Lothas, at the time of arrival of the Gospel to them, was under neurotic fear created by a belief

in harmful spirits. The religious systems of the Lothas in which they had reached the point of change from their constant fear of evil spirits, made them embrace Christianity as a refuge. Their old beliefs and practices were replaced by a new doctrine of Christian faith. The converts no longer observe the ritual associated with so called 'heathen worship'. With a gradual and progressive acceptance of Christianity, the shift of culture loyalty from animism to Christianity began changing the outlook and living culture of the people. It was a drastic change from animism to Christianity. As a result of such change, the abandoned animistic practices were all replaced with new practices acceptable to the Christian norms of life. The age-old dormitories have also lost its relevance among the Lotha society and been replaced by a new building of a separate Christian youth dormitories where songs of praises, prayer meetings and other spiritual values were encouraged. Now, people are so influenced by to the western culture that English songs and hymns are commonly used even in church services, youth gatherings and social occasions.

But no matter how much effort they have made to abstain from the practice of animistic culture, the Lothas have not been able to shake off their old superstitious beliefs. Yet in a sense, they have a double-tiered system of beliefs. Even the religious festivals are no longer observed as they have been replaced by the Christian festivals such as Easter, Christmas and New Year.

So far we have been saying about the factors like colonial administration, Christianity and also economic developmental projects in

the post independence of India as the main determining agents of culture change among the Lotha people.

These factors ushered in a tremendous change in the life of the people and caused the Lotha society to move towards modernization. Of course, complete secularization which is the ultimate stage of modernization is yet to come. However, an urban version of Lotha culture had already grown. Now many are living in an area where urban conditions such as modern facilities for technology and education are found. Therefore, one can assume and visualize that after having come across such changes for the last few decades the Lothas will be fast advancing towards modernization and freely assimilating themselves in national mainstream of politics, economic enterprises, cultural affluence and standard of living. But, at the same time, some of the material cultural aspects of the Lothas have been rapidly changing and replacing by the new ones for, in the process of acculturation, they are more easy to assimilate to the new ones. But it is also true that some aspects of culture traits may take another form of modified cultural pattern but retains the basic elements of the original culture traits which may remain unchanged. For example, the existing practice of distribution of bride-meat at marriage by the Christians is the modified form of the Lotha tradition system fo marriage. Today, the Lotha society is struggling consciously or unconsciously for its survival by retaining the old as well as incorporating the new values. It can be also assumed that further more changes will take place and if changes are fully accepted, a time may come that some of the Lotha traditional practices and material culture as well, will be forgotten in the process of change. Therefore, the present

generation must tackle the problem carefully and see that one's cultural heritage should ^{not} be forgotten by the changing forces of the modern civilization. This is the urgent task confronting before the Lotha society.