

## INTRODUCTION

Nagaland, which attained Statehood on 1st December 1963, was a part of erstwhile Assam, as a district, known as Naga Hills and Tuensang Area (NHTA) under the administration of a Commissioner, designated as Commissioner of Hills. This hilly tract of land situated in the eastern boundary of India touching Myanmar is the abode of a number of Naga Tribes and Sub-Tribes who settled in different areas of the region since a very long time. The State of Nagaland lies between 25°6' N and 27°4' N latitude north of equator and between the longitudinal lines 93°20' E and 95°15' E having an area of 16,579 Sq. Km.<sup>1</sup> It has a mountainous territory with remarkable topographical variations.

The population of Nagaland according to the 1991 Census is 12,15,573.<sup>2</sup> The State is bounded by Assam in the North and West, by Myanmar and Arunachal Pradesh

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1. Statistical Hand Book of Nagaland 1990, (Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Govt. of Nagaland, Kohima), p. 2.
  2. Census of India 1991, Series 18, (Nagaland), p. 9.

in East and Manipur in the South. The Topography is of steep hill ranges which break into a wide chaos of spurs and ridges. The altitude varies between 194 metre and 3048 metre.<sup>3</sup>

For administrative purposes, Nagaland has now seven administrative Units and Districts; 34 sub-divisions and 51 Blocks having 1,112 villages and 8 towns. Each district in Nagaland is more or less, the home of a particular Naga Tribe. There are 15 major Naga tribes in Nagaland such as Angami, Ao, Chakhesang, Chang, Khiamiungan, Konyak, Kuki, Lotha, Phom, Pochury, Rengma, Sangtam, Sema, Yimchunger and Zeliang.<sup>4</sup>

All these different tribes are settled in some fixed areas or districts as below:

Kohima	- Angami, Kuki, Rengma, Zeliang.
Mokokchung	- Ao
Mon	- Konyak
Phek	- Chakhesang, Pochury.
Tuensang	- Chang, Khiamiungan, Phom, Sangtam, Yimchunger.
Wokha	- Lotha
Zunheboto	- Sema

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3. Statistical Hand Book of Nagaland 1990, Op.cit., p. 2.

4. Basic Facts 1994 Nagaland, (Directorate of Information & Public Relations, Kohima), p. 3.

There are different legends and interpretations regarding the origin, migration and settlement of the Naga tribes in general. All the 15 tribes and sub-tribes too have their own traditional stories of origin, migration and settlement in Nagaland. These tribes did not have any script of their own, but various affairs of their life were passed on for generations through oral traditions. By now, a good number of books have been written on the Nagas which cover certain specific areas of the tribes, but these were written at different times using sources of various types. Most of the scholars who wrote about the Nagas have offered different opinions about the origin, migration, and other aspects of the Nagas. Books were written on their mode of life, like the practices of cultivation and ancient practices like head hunting etc, as prevailed in some other countries in ancient time.

It is interesting to note that the Angamis have got certain affinities with the Igarots of the Philippines with regard to the terrace cultivation, while head-hunting propensities rampant amongst the Nagas might have something in common with the Dyaks of Borneo. Other similarities have been noticed in respect of the village arrangements and styles of buildings, in language and in the love of the tribes for marine ornaments, shells, etc. A striking similarity is thus observed. 5

From the nature of similarity the Nagas have in general with the people of South-East Asia and the adjoining areas, it can be affirmed that the Nagas belong to the Mongolian race. This has been testified by many scholars as well. Asoso Yanuo in his book, The Rising Naga, observed:

The Naga bears the Mongolian physical features and cultural traits. They have a broad, complexion light dark, light and golden brown but black too with a yellowish tinge, hair black, straight, coarse, vigorous, wavy and negrito frizzy in some cases, with scanty hair on face, stature short or below average in the standard, nose fine to broad, face characteristically flat, eyelids often oblique. 6

Asoso Yanuo's observation in this respect is also worth recording:

The Tibeto-Burman speaking people of the Mongolian race that were loosely called as "Nagas" came from Burma and spread gradually like an irresistible tide throughout the present Naga-inhabited mountainous massifs where they entrenched themselves, preserving their customs, beliefs and languages almost intact when they found good land for cultivation and for their animals, while some of the allied tribes of the Nagas like Karens, Kachins, Singphos, Chin, Shan, and others settled in Burma permanently after they had come from Western China. 7

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6. Yanuo Asoso, The Rising Nagas, (Delhi, 1974), p. 7.

7. Ibid., p. 38.

Even the writers Murkot Ramunny stated, "The Naga belongs to the Indo-Mongoloid of India."<sup>8</sup> Julian Jacobs also mentioned in his book, "Physically, the Nagas are predominantly Mongoloid."<sup>9</sup> R. R. Shimray also says, "The Nagas belong to the Mongoloid group, the Mongoloids spread not only to Asia but also to America crossing the Behring Strait in the remote past, the most of which were the Eskimos,"<sup>10</sup> and M. Horam mentioned in his book, "Nagas belong to the Indo-Mongoloid tribes, namely, the Himalayan tribes such as the Nepalese, Bhutanese, Bodo, Ahoms, Kuki-Chins, Naga, Khasi, Garo, Kacharis and so on."<sup>11</sup>

M. Alemchiba mentioned that the "Nagas are an Indo-Mongoloid folk, living in the north-eastern hills of India, divided into over a dozen of major tribes, speaking languages and dialects more than double the number of tribes."<sup>12</sup> Y. L. Roland Shimmi says, "The Nagas

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8. Ramunny Murkot, The World of Naga, (New Delhi, 1988), p. 3.
  9. Jacobs Julian, The Nagas Society, Culture, Colonial Encounter, (Britain, 1990), p. 10.
  10. Shrimray, R.R. Origin and Culture of Naga, (New Delhi, 1985), p. 12.
  11. Horam, M. Naga Polity, (Delhi, 1975), p. 28.
  12. Alemchiba, M. A Brief Historical Account of Nagaland, (Kohima, 1970), p. 1.

who are classed in the sub-Mongoloid group as Tibeto-Burmans, exhibit the same elements."<sup>13</sup> Hokishe Sema also said, "Naga (They) belong to the Tibeto-Burman family."<sup>14</sup>

Therefore, from the views expressed by different writers about the origin of the Nagas, it can be concluded that all the Nagas belong to the same race though they have migrated to the present State at different times through different routes and settled in different areas of the present day Nagaland and Myanmar.

The Angami Nagas are, according to tradition, one of the earliest settlers of Nagaland. They are also one of the major Naga Tribes with past history. The Angami Nagas are predominantly settled in the Southern part of the Nagaland State. They are bounded by Chakhesang in the East, by Manipur in the South, by Zeliang and Assam in the West and by Assam, Rengma and Sema in the North. Most of the Angami villages are generally situated on sloppy hills about "1,444.12 metres",<sup>15</sup> above sea level and the people enjoy healthy climate. It is neither too hot nor too cold.

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13. Shimmi Roland Y.L. Comparative History of the Nagas From Ancient Periods Till 1826, (New Delhi, 1988), p. 56.

14. Sema, Hokishe. Emergence of Nagaland, Socio-Economic and Political Transformation and the Future, (Delhi, 1986), p. 4.

15. Basic Fact 1994, Nagaland, op.cit., p. 3.

There are more than 60 Angami villages, each village consisting of 60-900 houses. Though the Angamis belong to the same tribe but each village has got a slightly different dialect of its own. In spite of great diversities of dialects which existed among the Angamis, they have a common language known as Tennyidie which is understood by every Angami.

The Angamis have again sub-groups, such as Chakhro Angami, Northern Angami, Southern Angami and Western Angami.

Kohima District with an area of 4041 Sq.Km.<sup>16</sup> is the largest district (next to Tuensang) and is the original home of the Angami Nagas. So far as the population is concerned, it is the most populated district in Nagaland, because of its mixed population pattern, being also the home of many other tribes like Kuki, Rengma, Zeliang and many non-Naga residents.

The Nagas are believed to have migrated to this land from some parts of South-East Asia or Central Asia. The Angami traditional myths and folklores also hint towards the same source of origin and migration like other Naga tribes of this region. They are believed to

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16. Ibid., p. 5.

have migrated to this land from some parts of Eastern lands such as the present Myanmar. This statement was made by Mr. Ngumyi and Mr. Khanlo of Khezhakeno village.<sup>17</sup> It is evident that the Angamis lived in Makhel (Mekhrora-Mao),<sup>18</sup> after they migrated from Myanmar which is now in Manipur. The other Naga tribes also entered into Makhel (Mekhrora-Mao) area and they also went to different directions and settled in areas presently inhabited by the "Mao, Angami, Semas, Rengma, Rongmai and Lothas etc."<sup>19</sup> Makhel is a village in Mao area and the Angami called it a Mekhrora. The Angamis are believed to have migrated to Kohima district in different groups at different times which led to the formation of different groups/clans within the Angami tribe, probably due to geographical locations and isolated life.

The Angami Nagas, in the process of migration from their original home were found to have spread all over the Kohima region with concentration of settlement at different areas believed to be due to geographical facilities and number of people in a particular group who moved together. At present there are approximately

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17. Mr. Ngumyi, Aged 79 years of Khezhakeno village, interviewed on 15-5-1994, Mr. Khanlo, Aged 70 years of Khezhakeno village interviewed on 15-5-1994.

18. Hutton, J.H. The Angami Nagas, (Bombay, 1969), p. 7.

19. Yanuo Asoso, op.cit., p. 38.

60 villages in the Angami regions all of which formed almost the same type of social set-up. It has been observed that there are only little deviations in some areas of social-function among different groups probably developed due to isolation from the main groups of migrants. However, a general analysis of the social set-up shows that the whole Angami region can be broadly divided into the following four regions so far as their social formation is concerned. They are - (i) The Northern Angami area, (ii) Southern Angami area, (iii) Western Angami area, and (iv) Chakhro Angami area. It has also been found that there are little differences in certain areas of social traits within the above four regions. Thus some sub-social-groups do have within the four main social groups among the Angamis. As for example, Tuophema village of Northern Angami is different in many respects (pronunciation etc.) than other Angami people of Northern area. Mr. Yaselie of Nerhema village<sup>20</sup> of Northern Angami also stated about different areas having different social practices in respect of marriage, divorce, inheritance laws and even in dialects.

It is not exactly known as to why the Angamis have migrated towards the Kohima district at that time,

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20. Mr. Yaselie, Aged 70 years of Nerhema village, interviewed on 10-7-1994.

Increasing population and search for fertile lands could be the reasons of migration to this area. Therefore the Angamis might have left Makhel (Mekhrora) to find some new lands for agricultural purposes suitable to them. As the Angamis practised terrace cultivation since their early days, they, most likely, selected the Western Angami areas for their settlement due to the suitability for terrace cultivation and for other agricultural purposes. Today, the Western Angami areas have become the most-known terrace fields.

It has been observed during my oral interviews with the elders of the villages that there were many generations gap between their settlement in Myanmar and Makhel (Mekhrora) and the elders failed to give an exact account of this generation gap and the routes of their migration from the East (Myanmar) to Makhel. Though the Angami Nagas appear to have lived at Makhel for many years, it was difficult to elicit information from the elders as to how many years they were there. However, it can be assumed that they lived at Makhel for many years because they still practise some of the old customs and traditions of the Mao Nagas, specially of the Mao taboo\* of Oratooboo. Oratooboo is a Mao word which means

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\* Taboo in Angami language is penie.

sky-ceremony and in Angami it is called Teitho. According to this Oratooboo (Teitho), this festival which is usually held in the month of September/October every year, unless the Mao people start observing the taboo festival of Oratooboo (Teitho), the festival cannot be observed by any of the Angami villages. According to this Oratooboo (Taboo) festival, the Mao people perform rituals in the month of September/October. During this festival, "an unblemished male cow is tethered to a stone called 'Ora-toobootu' to see which direction it turns its head and cry (bellow = mo-o in Mao dialects) to predict which direction natural calamities are due to take place.<sup>21</sup> This continued for five consecutive days. As per traditions, once the Mao Nagas complete the ritual, the Angamis should perform the same ritual. However, the practice is different in different villages.

There are different legends regarding the migration of the Angami Nagas to the present land of the Angamis. One of the legends says that the Angami Nagas came to the present villages from different directions and routes although all of them came from Makhel. According to some other legends and traditions, they have made some covenant under a wild "pear tree" (which is

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21. Published by Shipfummy Academy, Dt. Mao Village, 4-4-1992.

surviving till today) at Makhel before they departed to different directions, R.R. Shimray says,

As to their origin, and dispersal, the various tribes of the Nagas have now accepted that MAKHEL as the original place from where they dispersed themselves. There are many historical facts such as stone monoliths and sacred trees planted at Makhel when they were about to disperse themselves to different directions. One distinct practice of the Nagas is that they should erect stone monuments and also plant sacred trees wherever they settled. 22

J. H. Hutton in his book, The Angami Nagas, said that, "The Angami story of the origin of the Naga tribes centres in the Kezami village of Khezhakeno."<sup>23</sup> Although some of the Angami Nagas came from Khezhakeno, the view of J.H. Hutton cannot be accepted in toto. Most of the Angamis came from different directions to the present land of the Angami Nagas, after they departed from Makhel (Mekhrora=Mao). It is also said that after they left Makhel they lived at different places and later some of them joined with the Angami Naga groups. As an example, Mr. Sebi Dolie of Khonoma village<sup>24</sup> stated that their forefathers lived for some years in Zeliang area and

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22. Shimray, R.R. Op.cit., p. 26.

23. Hutton, J.H. Op.cit., p. 19.

24. Mr. Dolie Sebi, Aged 66 years of Khonoma village, interviewed on 26-5-1994.

later they came to Kigwema and joined with other Angami Nagas. Mr. Neilliehou of Kohima village<sup>25</sup> also stated that their parents came from Zeliang area (Tsiepfu) and joined with other people at Kohima. It is believed that from Makhel the Nagas went to different directions. Thus among the Angami Nagas, there seemed to be two major views about the origin and migration of the Angami Nagas, after they departed from Makhel, according to which, one group went toward the eastern side (Chakhesang), which is known as Khezhakeno and the other group went towards Angami like Kigwema and Viswema. Some of the people of Kigwema and Viswema might have directly come from Makhel (Mekhrora = Mao). However, the view that some of the people who went to Khezhakeno also later joined these two villages, Kigwema and Viswema, cannot be totally ruled out.

Although Kohima has a major Angami population spread over a number of villages, it is believed that the original migrants from Makhel settled at Kigwema and Viswema villages close to the Mao district of Manipur, which were the oldest Angami villages. Most of the elders of these two villages, however, could not specify the

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25. Mr. Neilliehou, Aged 27 years of Kohima village, interviewed on 18-9-1993.

period of their migration to the present villages. According to their traditional ways of calculation, they believed to have settled in the Angami Naga areas in around 1100 years ago from now. These two villages were the first settlements from where sprouted many new villages in different parts of the Angami areas.

As pointed out earlier, the Angamis were one of the earliest settlers among the Nagas in this land but some oral historical evidences too indicate that there were some other people who settled in these areas earlier than the Angami Nagas. Mr. Pusazo Nyikha of Viswema village<sup>26</sup> observed that before they (Viswema) came to Viswema for settlement, some of the people already lived in their area whom they called as Kherunuo. The Kherunuo people were considered more advanced than the present Viswema people, because they used elephants in war. It is said that the early settlers of Viswema and Kherunuo had declared war and defeated the Kherunuo people. After the war, they might have spread in two directions - one towards eastern Burma areas and the other moved towards Assam. It is stated that a well still existed in the village where they lived at that time.

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26. Mr. Nyikha Pusazo, Aged 66 years of Viswema village, interviewed on 22-5-1994.

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The area is about 6 to 7 Km away from the present Viswema village. Oral history also indicates that during the Second World War, when the Japanese soldiers came to Viswema, they (Japanese) also asked about the well, the place and a tree in exact name which were used by the earlier settlers. Although it is speculated that the Kherunuo people were none other than the Japanese, oral traditions cannot establish the origin of the Kherunuo people but it is said that they might belong to the Karens of Burma, as there were some similarities in the pronunciation of Kherunuo and Karen in Angami dialect. The knowledge of some Japanese soldiers who reached Kohima during the Second World War about the well and the tree of Viswema is an indicative of the validity of this legend regarding the origin of the Angamis.

At present, there are more than 60 Angami villages in Kohima district which are predominantly inhabited by the Angamis. All these villages were believed to have been originated from two villages - Kigwema and Viswema. As for example, it is said that Kidima, Jakhama, Kezoma, Khuzama, were established by the people of Viswema.<sup>27</sup>

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27. Mrs. Sale Vihole, Aged 95 years of Khuzama village, interviewed on 9-5-1994.

Khonoma, Pfuchama, Phesama, Keruma, Secu, Dihoma, Tuophema, Seithekie, Chumukedi, Gariphe and Jotsoma, according to Mr. Kovisie Yano of Kigwema,<sup>28</sup> were established by the people of Kigwema. I was informed that in the early days of Angami settlement, discovery of agricultural land was followed by establishment of new villages in different areas. The history of the establishment of the villages like Khezhakeno, Kigwema and Viswema was narrated to be of such cases.

However, the reasons for leaving the original place of Makhel and other early villages like Khezhakeno, Kigwema and Viswema and subsequent movement to different directions could not be established, but increased population and search for vast areas for cultivation of land were stated to be the prime motive behind such migration. Migration from Khezhakeno (Chakhesang) was believed to have taken place due to some disputes among the three sons of Koza.<sup>29</sup> According to their tradition and legend, it is believed that Koza had three sons. In their village, there was a magic flat stone and every day they used to spread paddy to dry on that flat stone and in the

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28. Mr. Yano Kovisie, Aged 59 years of Kigwema village, interviewed on 3-7-1994.

29. Mr. Ngumyi, Aged 79 years of Khezhakeno village, interviewed on 15-5-1994.

evening they used to collect two baskets of rice though they put one basket of rice in the morning. Every day the sons of Koza would spread the paddy on that flat stone beginning from the eldest son and followed by the second and the third son in the successive days. It was continued for some years turn by turn among the three sons. But one day the eldest son of Koza refused to give chance to his youngest brother, though it was his turn. In view of this attitude of his eldest brother, the youngest brother collected some dry brush wood and put under the flat stone and set fire. It is further said that the stone was broken and they heard a sky-high sound. As a result, they could not produce any more magic on the flat stone. Some of them took the broken flat stone and went in different directions and established their own villages,<sup>30</sup> as stated by Mr. Khanlo of Khezhakeno village.

The above traditional story describes the possible migration of the Angami Nagas from Khezhakeno to different directions. But there are other groups of Angami who had not gone to Khezhakeno and came directly to Kigwema and Viswema villages. Most of the elders pointed to these

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30. Mr. Khanlo, Aged 70 years of Khezhakeno village, interviewed on 15-5-1994.

two villages, though some of of them also came through Khezhakeno. The Angami belonging to Chiechama, Kohima (Tsiera), Merma, Rukhroma, Tsiepa, Nerhema, Phekerukrie etc. also believed to have Khezhakeno as their first area of settlement.<sup>31</sup> Different groups of Angami people living at present in different villages are likely to be born out of the original group of migrants from Makhel (Mekhrora = Mao). However, there is also indication that some Angami people might have entered into their homeland from some parts of Zeliang area and settled in some villages of Angami area like Khonoma and Kohima. However, people belonging to Zeliang area also pointed to Makhel as their original home, establishing the source of Angami original home to be some part near Mao area of present Manipur.

#### Origin of the word 'Angami'

The word 'Angami' does not appear to carry any meaning to the people. It is not known exactly how this group of people in this land came to be known as Angami. There are reasons to believe that the Britishers who came into contact with this group in the earliest days

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31. Mr. Shuyha Lhoutuo, Aged 81 years of Merma village, interviewed on 26-6-1994.

of British expedition, might have been using the word for some reasons. It is found that the term 'Tenyimia',<sup>32</sup> has a wide coverage which does not merely cover the Angamis alone, but includes also several other tribes like Chakhesang, Mao, Rengma and Zeliang. It seemed that the name Tenyimia was widely used before the British invasion to the Naga Hills. It can thus be assumed that the name 'Angami' was given by some people other than the Angami tribe themselves. The term was used by the British and prior to that such namee as Angami, was perhaps not used by any.

A second source indicates a possible derivation from the Zeliang word 'GAMAI',<sup>33</sup> which simply means 'Thieves or Robbers'. The Zeliang might have used the word Gamai in their dialect to mean Angami people, as many of the Khonoma villagers used to raid the Zeliang areas till the advent of the British.<sup>34</sup> Thus it is possible that the word 'Angami' is a derivation from the word Gamai which the Zeliang used for the Khonoma villagers.

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32. Mrs. Terhuzha Khrieleno, Aged 60 years of Dimapur town, interviewed on 25-2-1995.
33. Mr. Nitsizolie, Aged 50 years of Poiwa village, interviewed on 25-9-1994.
34. Mr. Dietho-u, Aged 74 years of Khonoma village, interviewed on 19-11-1993.

Again, the Maos living in Manipur used to call the Angamis as 'NGAMAI',<sup>35</sup> meaning 'Perfect' which led some people to believe that the word 'Angami' has been derived from the word 'NGAMAI'.

Sema traditional story on the Angamis says that the Semas call the Aos, 'Cholimi' which means 'those who ~~pro~~ceeded', and the Angamis, 'Tsugumi', meaning 'those who came after'. This Sema nomenclature corroborates the order of migration.<sup>36</sup>

Mrs. Khrieleno Iralu's view on the Angami is also noteworthy. 'The Angamis are known to themselves as Tenyimia and is derived from Tuonyumia which means the 'Swift Walker'. According to the oral-tradition, the epithet of Tuonyumia was given to the Angamis because he was always walking ahead of his two brothers who were probably the Semas and the Lothas.<sup>37</sup> It is seen that both Hokishe and Khrieleno's views on the Angamis are contradictory. However, the term Tenyimia does not mean only the Angamis, but also other neighbouring tribes such as Chakhesang, Mao, Rengma and Zeliang.

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35. Mr. Sanyi Lishe, Ura Dze, (August 1972), Edited by Shurhozelie.

36. Sema, Hokishe. Op.cit., p. 5.

37. Iralu Khrieleno. "A Study of the Social and Cultural Life of the Angami Nagas with Special Reference to the Church's Mission Among Them", (A.B.D. Thesis submitted to the Serampore University, Bangalore, 1965), p. IV, (Unpublished).

Captain R. Boillan Pemberton stated in his report, "I must here explain that among the people themselves the term 'Angami' is utterly unknown except those few who speak Assamese or Manipuri, and their own most widely used term is 'Tengimah'."<sup>38</sup> Tengimah to be interpreted as Tenyimia.

The Angamis, among themselves were best known in their early days as TENYIMIA meaning persons living in TOBUMAI village of present Mao district in Manipur. It is said that a person named "Tenyi" living in TOBUMAI<sup>39</sup> village migrated to the Kohima district. He had four sons and each of them went to different directions and ultimately formed the Ngami (Angami), Chakhesang, Rengma, Zeliang tribes and settled in their respective areas. As a result, these four different groups permanently settled in different parts of the State.

From the above, it can be concluded that the name 'Angami' was given by some people other than the tribe themselves.

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38. Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India, (Published by the Government of Assam in the Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies, Gauhati, Assam, 1966), p. 84.

39. Mr. Nichuriazoo, Aged 50 years of Khonoma village, interviewed on 27-11-1994.

Oral history of the Angami Nagas thus contributed significantly in tracing the history of the origin and settlement of the Angamis in this region. Thus, it is evident that the Angami Nagas, like other Naga tribes, migrated to this part of North-East of India from some parts of the East through different routes and at different times. However, there is a consensus of opinion that the Angami Nagas had migrated and entered into their present home land through the present Mao areas of Manipur.

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## CONCLUSION

The history of North East India comprising the present Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura were little known till the advent of the British administrators and the Christian missionaries. Besides the records of the then administration there was hardly any specific studies made on the history of the region. Thus those British records are still considered as sources of history for many of the tribes and sub-tribes of the region.

Nagaland which emerged as a State in 1963 had undergone through a series of administrative systems under the British right from the early nineteenth century. Under the British, different administrative arrangements had been made whose records have been lying scattered in different Libraries and Archives in India and outside. As such, no proper studies of those archival materials have been made by any scholar, neither was there any systematic studies on the history of the Angami Nagas based on the oral traditions still preserved in the mouths

of the knowledgeable Angami Nagas. The present work is the attempt to fill up the lacunae by reconstructing the history and culture of the Angami Nagas and the social change among them on the basis of the information gleaned from the most knowledgeable sections of the people themselves and as the investigator himself being an Angami has the unique advantage of writing it as a participant observer.

Of the seven districts in Nagaland, Kohima is the home of the Angami Nagas spreading over in more than 60 villages in the district. As the oral history goes, the Angamis migrated to this region from the east of the present Nagaland. Although the exact reason of migration of the Angami Nagas was not mentioned in historical records but oral history of the Angami Nagas indicate that the Angami Nagas have left (in Mao area of Manipur) due to increase in population and in search of new fertile lands for their people for agricultural purposes, either by terrace or jhum cultivation.

The field studies also revealed that the Angami Nagas did not come to the present land at one time and through the same routes but has come at different periods and through different directions. The survey further shows that the Angami Nagas lived at Makhel (Mekhrora),

a place in the present day Mao area of Manipur before they arrived at these areas.

It was believed by some people that the Angami Nagas were the first settlers in this region but this study indicates that there were other tribes who settled first and who were thrown out by the Viswema people after which, they established themselves firmly. It has been stated earlier that there was a group of people which the Angami informants called the Karen who were driven out from Viswema area, who then became the inhabitants of Myanmar. Taking Viswema and Kigwema regions as the centres, it was found that the Angamis gradually spread to other directions and thus there was a gradual expansion of the Angami territory in this part of the country. It was also pointed that possibilities of agricultural fields was the only consideration for expansion of their territory beyond the original village.

Nomenclature of the tribe 'Angami' raises a number of issues. Robert Reid<sup>1</sup> also made a reference to this issue. Different writers and people explained the word Angami according to their own understanding and ideas.

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1. Reid Robert, History of the Frontier Areas Bordering on Assam (1883-1941), (Delhi, 1983), pp. 99-100.

However, it is found that the word Angami was not an original Angami word but it was used by some people who came into contact with these people in the early days.

The Angami Nagas did maintain their own social institutions. Such social institutions were instrumental in educating the Angamis in different aspects of their society. It offered the children knowledge about their cultural, social, customary practices and democratic ways of life. These institutions functioned in such a way that the members of the Angami society do get all the information regarding their social practices and usages in the face of modernity and western impact. The social institutions like Thehu or Kichuki, etc., which are commonly known as Morungs played very significant role in shaping the life of the early Angami Nagas. As for the young boys, it trained them to become responsible persons in the society for their future life. It also teaches the young boys on the political, social, religious, economic, customs, traditions and military life of the past which helped to build the future of the young boys. This institute did organise activities like art, handicrafts, music, folksongs etc.

The girls' dormitory or Kichuki was although not available in all the Angami Naga villages, the villages

where it existed, played an important role. In fact, the girls were trained how to sing, the art of weaving, the discipline, good manners in this institution of Kichuki. A sense of cooperation and mutual respect is also developed in such a situation. With the coming of modern education and Christianity in the Angami Naga areas, the girls and boys dormitory or Kichuki began to decline.

The Angami Nagas practised cultivation in terrace and jhum fields from their days of migration to the present days. The field research also showed that this type of agricultural practices was spread by the Angamis to some other parts of the State. It can therefore be said that the Angamis as they migrated from place to place in search of viable terrace fields, they too lived scattered in different parts of Angami areas from where they tried to expand their agricultural fields to other parts of Nagaland teaching them to practise the method of terrace cultivation.

The Angami Nagas did not depend only on agriculture and industry for their survival but they also engaged themselves in trade and commerce in their areas and with people of the adjoining areas. It is found that the Angamis maintained a close contact and good relation

with other people. These people were considered as honest, kind, truthful and extended all cooperation with other people specially for trade and commercial activities. The coming of the British and the achievement of Statehood brought about many improvements in different aspects of their economic activities.

The political institutions of the Angamis were considered very important for the people themselves. The study of these political institutions reveal how the villagers practised democratic type of Government and administration. These institutions permitted everyone to express their opinions and views, though they may not be their representatives. Such facilities were given to each individual by their customs and practices. It is also found how the elders in the Angami Naga villages were respected and honoured and how the younger ones tried to take their advice and consulted on problems that arose in the villages regarding land disputes, murders, theft, etc.

The selection of leaders for such an institution was not based on hereditary but personality, wisdom, wealth, physical strength, etc., of the individual. Such leaders did control the village council or institution of Thehu or Baze (meeting place of male folk) by giving

advice or taking final decision on any village problems.

It has been found that with the coming of the British to the Angami region and the appointment of Gaonburas, there came about changes in the position of the Peyumia or Krutamia (Leaders) in some villages but however the gaonburas and Krutamia worked together in different villages in settling and solving problems that arose in the villages based on their customs and traditional practices. The concept of village council was not there but with the introduction of Government of Nagaland Act, 1970, each village started village council and the Angami Naga villages also had such village councils, but in many villages in the Angami Naga region instead of having a village council preferred the old institutions of Thehu or Baze, where the leaders (Krutamia) or Peyumia settled problems that arose in the village. Thus it has been found that in many villages, both the village council introduced by the Government of Nagaland and the traditional institution existed side by side.

The story of the political institutions also showed how the people continued to maintain the relation between clans or thino till today. Such relations are maintained among the villages and they always tried to help each other in any difficult situation that might

arise in any clan or thino, though they live in different villages.

The field studies on the religious institutions of the Angami Nagas reveal how the people believed in the existence of gods or kepenuopfu and how they worshipped different gods and offered prayers to different gods at different times and seasons, either individual or family, sub-clan, clan and village.

With regard to the observation of taboos, it has been found that the Angami Nagas practised different taboos or nanyu annually by the individuals, family, clan and village throughout the seasons or according to the choice of the individuals, or the family. As the Angami Nagas observed many taboos or nanyu, different kinds of offerings were made to their god or kepenuopfu from season to season according to their customary and traditional practices.

The religious institutions of the Angami Nagas tell us about the position of the Priests or Zievo (Kemevo) in the villages and the role that the Priest or Zievo plays in the religious ceremonies, which were performed by the individuals, family, clan or the village as a whole from time to time according to the need and

situation that arises in the village. However, with the coming of Christianity the position of Priest or Zievo declined considerably, though they were given high honour in the villages even till today.

Different aspects of the life and culture of the Angami Nagas that were evident from the oral traditions underwent a great change due to the impact of modernisation and intermixing with different cultures. British influence and the spread of Christianity to the Angami areas have brought about changes in the life of the Angami Nagas. The role of the traditional institutions of learning or training institutions like Thehu or Baze are not considered important by the people now, instead the present institutions of modern education and training and church that have changed the life style of the young generation which they consider more important to fulfil their aspirations in the present day world situation. Thus in the contemporary Angami society there is a shift in the entire concept of life and practices. The old values of life are gradually being lost and new practices directed by the influence of modernization found place in the contemporary Angami society.

Maintenance of clan or Thino in different villages in the Angami Naga areas used to be renewed from time

to time but today such relations are slowly declining in many Angami villages. The Angami Nagas at one time used to give high respect and honour to their traditional dresses by wearing them during different festivals but now it is noticed that such things are neglected by the young generation due to the spread of Christianity and modernization.

Thus the foregoing discussions filled up certain areas of Angami history which are not covered by the written history based on archival materials. Communication gap between the early Angamis and the early workers on the area, stood in the way of a clear description of the historical facts, besides the geographical isolation of the villages.

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