CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In the foregoing pages, we presented a study of the Chang, their traditional polity and the factors instrumental to the changes effected in it. Here, we shall highlight the findings of this study.

The Chang were of a mixed origin. Some of them were incorporated into the tribe much later.

The Chang have four major clans, viz., Ungh, Hongang or Chongpho, Kangshou and Lomou. In traditional Chang polity, these clans were interdependent, since each clan performed some specific functions in the village. A clan was not confined to a village, but extended to several villages. Clan was a very strong socio-political bond, and clan loyalty was stronger than village or tribe loyalty.

Tribe, for the Chang, was a social and not a political unit. They were not politically organised as a tribe. But, they had more affiliation to their tribe than to other tribes.

The Chang were regarded as the most mysterious and dreaded of all the warring Naga tribes. They practised head-hunting and inter-village warfare. In fact, Tuensang village conducted intra-village or inter-sangmang (inter-khel) raids and head-hunting. The practice of head-hunting necessitated that every Chang village was guarded. Besides, every village and its adjoining areas were strongly fortified with
labā (fence), phaseībū (ditch), wad (bamboo-spikes), bows, cross-bows and sangbakhans (village gates).

Although head-hunting and war were acclaimed, peace was appreciated. Inimical villages or persons concluded peace through a lambubou (mediator). Inter-village peace-making was done person-wise. Peace was followed by sharing food and ih (rice-beer), exchange of gifts, and lamshokbū (invitation for feasts and festivals).

Due to the practice of head-hunting and inter-village war, the Chang gave great importance to the site of the village. The village should be situated in a good and strategic position, and should have good water-supply and healthy environment. These requisites, however, are no longer required today, because head-hunting is a thing of the past, water-supply is taken care of by the Department of Public Health Engineering, Government of Nagaland, and health-care and medical services have reduced the demerits of an unhealthy environment.

A Chang village had three important requisites, the hakū (morung), tongsen (log-drum) and pughshon (bamboo-platform for gathering or meeting). The hakū occupied the first place and was the first building to be constructed in a new village. It was not used as a bachelors’ dormitory or a place for village meetings, but was used for keeping the tongsen, khulos (heads) and prisoners of war. The purification ceremony, after the war, was conducted in front of it.
The *tongsen* was second in importance, and was the next thing that was made after the *hakü*. The Chang believed that some *tongsen* brought victory, and others, defeat and misfortune. Thus, all precaution was taken to ensure that a luck-bringing *tongsen* was constructed. The *tongsen* was used for conveying messages to the citizens of the village.

The third in importance was the *pughshon*, and was the next thing to be made after the *tongsen*. It was used for conducting meetings, discussions and gossips. The Village Court sat in it. The forthcoming festivals were announced from it. It was erected once a year, during the *Mounlug* (weeding) festival (in May-June), in a suitable place by the side of the village main path.

There was no Chang State. The village was the political, economic and religious unit. Every Chang village was a self-governing village, politically organised and independent. It was economically self-sufficient, except, at times, for salt. It was also a distinct religious unit; most of the religious ceremonies involved the entire village.

A Chang village was divided into *sangmangs* (*khels* or sectors). The number of *sangmangs* depended upon the number of the founding clans and the size of the *sangmangs*, upon the size of the population of the clans. A *sangmang*, except in Tuensang village, was inhabited by a particular clan. The boundaries of the *sangmangs* were properly demarcated. Every *sangmang* had a *hakü* and a *pughshon*. It had a *Khuchem Shoubou* (Clan Chief), who was assisted by the clan *Pangsa*
(Clan Council) in the exercise of his functions. Important sangmang matters, however, were always discussed in public.

Of the Chang villages, Tuensang village had a unique organisation and administrative arrangement. It was divided into four sangmangs. These sangmangs were like miniature villages, and had labas and sangbakhans separating one sangmang from the other. They were politically independent, but stood together, under common leadership, against the enemy.

Every Chang village had a religious head, the Ongshetbou, and a secular head, the Sangbūshou. These two offices were vested on two different persons. The Priest of the Ungh clan was the Ongshetbou. He performed most of, but not all, the priestly functions, since each of the four major clans (Ungh, Hongang or Chongpho, Kangshou and Lomou) had some religious functions to perform. His responsibilities were performance of divination and rites in relation to the choice of the village site, hakū, tongsen, hunting, and purification ceremony after head-hunting; looking after all cases of accidents and deaths; dedicating all that was struck by thunder; and conducting the Naknyulum festival (in remembrance of the darkness of God, conducted in the month of July).

The Sangbūshou was the secular head or Village Chief. Although the Hongang or Chongpho clan was a clan of administrators, it did not mean that the Sangbūshou had to be from this clan. For the Chang, chiefship was the privilege of the person who led the people or initiated the founding of the village, and not of a
particular clan. The village Pangsa (Village Council) and other wakoubüs (assistants) assisted the Sangbüshou in the exercise of his functions.

The Chang had two types of polity, which, for academic convenience, were termed as the Tuensang and Noksen patterns. The Tuensang pattern was similar to the polity of the Sumi. It had hereditary and powerful chiefship. The Sangbüshou exercised absolute power over his people, but did not act autocratically. The Pangsa was his advisory body. The Noksen pattern was akin to the Ao polity. It had rotary chiefship. The Pangsa was the executive body of the village, the collective leadership. The Sangbüshou was its chief spokesman.

In both the Tuensang and Noksen patterns, it was not known when and how the institution of the Sangbüshou emerged. This institution probably grew out of the collective need of the people such as leading the people during the time of migration, war, defence of the village and agricultural activities. But, after the legendary Changsang, generally the person who initiated the establishment of the village became the Sangbüshou.

Succession to the office of the Sangbüshou differed from pattern to pattern. In the Tuensang pattern, it was based on the principle of primogeniture. When the Sangbüshou died, the eldest son, unless mentally or physically incapacitated, succeeded him. Women had no right of succession. If the Sangbüshou had no male heir or was childless, chiefship passed on to the next of kin. In the Noksen pattern, there was governance by the Mutten, an age group, and rotary chiefship among the
co-founders of the village. On the death of the Sangbūshou, chiefship passed on to the oldest surviving co-founder and, then, to the next. As in the Tuensang pattern, women had no right of succession. In case of pre-arranged agreement, the Elder of the clan joining the village at a later stage might also be given the right to chiefship. Besides, if a village sought the protection of a powerful chief, the Sangbūshou might surrender chiefship to the protector, who appointed one of his family members as Sangbūshou.

Unlike the institution of the Sangbūshou, there was indication about the origin of the Pangsa, which evolved when the Chang ancestors assembled together and allocated functions to the various clans. The Pangsa composed of the Khuchem Shoubous of every clan and two or three other representatives from each clan. Its strength depended upon the size of the village and the number of the founding clans. The first Khuchem Shoubou generally was a co-founder of the village.

Succession to the office of the Khuchem Shoubou was the same as that of the Sangbūshou. The Khuchem Shoubou was elected by the clan from its most respected, experienced and enlightened members, on the basis of individual merit. The Sangbūshou officially appointed him as member of the Pangsa.

The Sangbūshou or Khuchem Shoubou had to fulfil certain criteria. He must be the founder or co-founder of the village, or a member of the family of the founder or co-founder or protector. He generally was a hero or warrior. Besides, he should possess seniority, good physique, capability, bravery, wealth, oratory, war skill, patience, kindness, tactfulness, persuasiveness, sociability and knowledge of
customary law among others. Of the above criteria, the Chang considered maturity as a very important pre-requisite.

In the Tuensang pattern, the tenure of the Sangbushou and the members of the Pangsa was not for any fixed period of time. It was life-long, unless the incumbent abdicated or was incapacitated. In the Noksen pattern, it was for a fixed period and co-existent with the term of the Mutten (age group), which was eleven years; the members of the Mutten retired after the lapse of eleven years and a new Mutten took over the governance. In both the patterns, the Sangbushou could be removed by the village, on a decision of the Pangsa or of all the male members of the village, for breach of customary law, unfairness and inefficiency.

There was no remuneration for a Sangbushou or a member of the Pangsa. The Sangbushou, however, had some privileges. He received gifts and tributes from the villages protected by him. He had a reserved cultivatable land. His house was made and repaired, and his fields were cultivated by the citizens of the village. He was entitled to the head of every animal killed in the village, the chest of the animal killed in hunting, the biggest fish during community fishing, and a share of the animal imposed as fine. Similarly, the Khuchem Shoubou was entitled to a share of the animal imposed as fine, unless the animal was killed and eaten.

The Sangbushou was the chief executive of the village. The nature of his powers and functions was the same in both the Tuensang and Noksen patterns. However, their exercise differed. The Sangbushou in the Tuensang pattern was very
powerful. He wielded an almost unlimited authority. He was assisted by the *Pangsa* and several *wakoubūs* in the exercise of his functions. In the Noksen pattern, he was the figure-head and acted in the name of the *Pangsa*; but, he was not a tool at the hands of the *Pangsa*. In both the patterns, however, he was not a dictator.

The *Sangbushou* controlled and administered the village. He looked after its defence, peace, prosperity and welfare. He directed its agricultural activities. He was responsible for the maintenance of the water source, village paths and bridges. He appointed the members of the *Pangsa* and the various committees. He convened and presided over their meetings. He was the Commander-in-Chief of the village army; he led the attack and was the first to die and the last to flee. He conducted foreign relations and directly dealt with a foreigner. He did not exercise legislative powers and functions in the modern sense of the term. Customary law prevailed. His legislative powers and functions related to his judicial powers and functions. He explained and interpreted customary law. He, however, made decisions, gave directions and issued orders.

There was no overlordship among the Chang. However, there were cases in which one village exercised some political influence on or supremacy over other villages. This was because of political alliance made for war. Besides, the parent village usually protected a newly founded village from the enemy. But, such arrangement might or might not be permanent.
The role of the *Pangsa* differed from pattern to pattern. In the Tuensang pattern, it functioned as an advisory body. The *Sangbijou* performed his functions only after consulting it. In the Noksen pattern, it was the executive body, the collective leadership. It exercised real executive, administrative, legislative, and judicial powers and functions. Irrespective of patterns, the system of a particular clan performing specific functions that the other clans did not perform, enhanced the role of the *Pangsa*.

The position of the *Sangbijou* and the *Pangsa* differed from pattern to pattern. In the Tuensang pattern, the *Sangbijou* was the chief executive, judge and leader. He was the indisputable head; the *Pangsa* played a secondary role. Though he was powerful, yet the *Pangsa* was not a mere show-piece or tool at his hands. In the Noksen pattern, the powers of the *Sangbijou* were curtailed by the *Pangsa*; the *Sangbijou* was merely its spokesman. The *Pangsa* was a full-fledged supreme authority. It was the supreme law-making and governing body. In both the patterns, it was the apex court of the self-governing village.

The *Sangbijou* had special status. He was the Chief Guest and the Chairman of all village functions, festivals, sacrifices and worship. Though he did not perform religious functions, yet his presence was necessary for such occasions. He played the most prominent part in all the ceremonies conducted in the village. He was given the most prominent seat at all social and religious gatherings, and festivals. He was loved, respected and obeyed. He was regarded as the ‘father of his people’ or the ‘father of
the village’, and the people looked to him as their ruler and guide. Besides, villages might be named after him.

The traditional Chang political institutions still exist, but their role has undergone a change. This change was brought about by several factors, both political and socio-economic.

The British did not bring the Chang area under their administration. They, however, conducted punitive expeditions into the area, whenever the Chang raided the administered area or committed a serious offence. The aims of these expeditions were to end head-hunting and inter-village warfare, capture the offenders, inflict punishment on them and recover the indemnity imposed. The Chang strongly resisted the expeditions, but were eventually defeated. They were punished and fined. Peace was finally concluded between the Chang and the British in 1910. Although peace was concluded, head-hunting, however, continued the area.

The punitive expeditions curbed the practice of head-hunting and inter-village warfare to a great extent. They made the Chang realise their futility. The Chang abandoned them and stopped raiding the administered areas. They also united the Chang against the British and gave evidence to the leadership of Tuensang village, which the British ended. Besides, they indicated that the Chang area was outside the British administration. As a result, the system of village administration of the Chang remained intact. The Chang villages remained self-governing villages. Above all, the
punitive expeditions questioned the authority of the *Sangbushou*, who was never before subjected to any outside authority.

The Government of India (pre-independent India) was not in favour of extending control, much more administration, to Chang area, because it was too troublesome and expensive. It, therefore, followed the policy of non-interference. But, the idea of non-administration could not continue for long. The local British administrators realised that punitive expeditions were not a lasting solution. They were for extending administration or, at least, control to the area. Eventually, the Chang area was brought under loose control in 1925.

Being under loose control, the Chang area was neither a part of the Province of Assam nor under the Naga Hills District. Taxes were not levied, because payment of taxes implied recognition of British authority. Besides, there was no administration in any sense of the word, i.e., the Government did not interfere in the administration of the Chang villages. The Chang area remained outside the British territory, an independent tribal area. The changes, which the British introduced in the administered areas – such as uniformity of the institutions of the Chief and Village Council, collection of house-tax, and making the Chief an agent of the Government - did not apply to the area. The only innovation was the inception of the institution of the *dobashi*.

The modern system of administration was introduced in the Chang area only after Indian independence, in 1948, when an outpost of Mokokchung Sub-Division
was opened at Tuensang Town. The jurisdiction of the outpost extended to the entire Tuensang Area, where the Chang area was located. Though Tuensang Town was an outpost of Mokokchung Sub-Division, yet Tuensang Area was not under the jurisdiction of the Sub-Divisional Officer of Mokokchung, but under the direct control of the Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills District. In spite of the flaw of this administrative arrangement, introduction of administration in the area was a great landmark in the history of the Chang, because the Headquarters of the newly formed administrative unit was placed in their area.

The incorporation of the Chang Area, an independent tribal area, into the Indian Union was not the product of an agreement made between the Chang and the Government of India (independent India). The only probable influence for such incorporation was the resolution of the Chang Tribal Committee to introduce administration in the area. The actual inclusion of the Chang area in the Indian Union was likely the result of a unilateral decision of the Government of India in order to maintain law and order, and stop head-hunting and inter-village warfare.

The Chang area was not a part of the Naga Hills District, since Tuensang Area and the Naga Hills District were not under the same administrative unit. This was clearly indicated in the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India, 1950, in the Table appended to Section 20, where the Naga Hills District was listed in Part A, while Tuensang Area, named as Naga Tribal Area, was grouped with the North East Frontier Tract (NEFT) in Part B. But, this grouping did not mean that Tuensang Area was a part of the NEFT. It was only with the readjustment of the administrative units
in North-East India in 1954 that Tuensang Area was constituted as a Frontier Division of the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) and was named Tuensang Frontier Division. This status of Tuensang Area continued till 1st December, 1957, when the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area (NHTA) was formed and Tuensang Frontier Division became Tuensang District.

The Chang area, being a part of Tuensang Area, came under the Ministry of External Affairs, since the NEFT was taken over by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, in 1951, and was administered by the Governor of Assam in his discretion. In accordance with this arrangement, no Act of Parliament or State Legislature would apply to the area without the direction of the Governor. Besides, the Governor had the power to promulgate Regulations for peace and good government in the area. Again, administration was conducted through collaboration with the traditional political institutions of the Sangbushou and the Pangsa. This arrangement continued till June, 1972, when the State of Nagaland was transferred to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

With the introduction of administration, the institutions of the Sangbushou and the Pangsa were retained. But the election, appointment, powers, functions, position, and role of these institutions were made uniform in all the Chang villages. The Sangbushou was elected according to the Chang custom, but was officially recognised by the Government. He became the representative, agent and contact person of the Government, but did not collect house-tax, because there was no taxation in the Chang area. Similarly, the institution of the dobashi was retained. Besides being
interpreters, the *Dobashis* functioned as judges and administered justice in accordance with customary law. At times, some *Dobashis* were appointed as administrative officers.

The introduction of the present judicial system posed a challenge to the position of the *Sangbūshou*. The *Dobashi* Court in a village or an administrative Headquarters had both original and appellate jurisdiction with respect to cases of customary law. Besides, the Chang preferred to employ advocates and sought their advice rather than that of the *Sangbūshou* or the *Pangsa*.

The Chang did not participate in the plebiscite of 16th May, 1951. The Naga National Movement had its influence in the Chang area only in 1953, when A.Z. Phizo came and propagated his revolutionary ideas in Tuensang Area. There were reasons why A.Z. Phizo chose the area as the launching pad of Naga insurgency. In the first place, the revolutionaries’ boycott of anything Indian and attempts at negotiation failed. Secondly, Tuensang Area had a shorter contact with administration. Thirdly, the people of the area resented the inclusion of their land in the Indian Union. Lastly, they resented the deployment of the Indian Army to their area for punitive expeditions.

Naga insurgency first emerged in the Chang area, when the Hongkin Government of the People’s Sovereign Republic of Free Nagaland was formed on 18th September, 1954. Thungti Chang took an active part in it and became the Commander-in-Chief of the Naga Home Guards (Naga Army) from 1956 to 1959. In
the wake of Naga insurgency, grouping of villages was practised. Besides, with the formation of the Federal Government of Nagaland, there existed two parallel governments, the Government of India and the Naga Underground Government. This development weakened the position and powers of the Sangbūshou and the Pangsa, because they were under control of the Indian forces and the Naga revolutionaries. They were the first victims in case of any eventuality in the village and were punished on mere suspicion of being pro-India or supporting the Naga revolutionaries.

Naga insurgency brought untold suffering to the Chang and revived head-hunting. Hence, the Chang joined hands with the other Naga tribes in finding a satisfactory solution to the Naga problem. Under the aegis of the Naga Peoples’ Convention (NPC), it was resolved that, until a final solution was arrived at, the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area (NHTA), a Union Territory, would be formed. Accordingly, the NHTA was formed on 1st December, 1957, and Tuensang Frontier Division became Tuensang District. The NHTA was under the special charge of the Governor of Assam, as agent to the President of India. It was placed under the Ministry of External Affairs. This arrangement continued till 1972.

The NHTA was an interim arrangement. The NPC was determined to find a lasting solution to the Naga problem, and invited the underground Nagas to participate in its effort. When the underground Nagas did not cooperate, it had recourse to its own way for a political solution within the Indian Union. The Sixteen-Point Agreement of 1960, signed between the Nagas and the Government of India, was the result. An interim Body was instituted in 1961. There were two Chang
representatives, Akum Imlong Chang and Tochi Hanso Chang, in it. In 1963, the NHTA became a *de facto* State, the State of Nagaland.

Tuensang District continued to remain under the special charge of the Governor of Nagaland even after the formation of the State of Nagaland. However, after the constitution of an elected legislature in Nagaland in 1964, a special Ministry for Tuensang Affairs was instituted. The Ministry was headed by the Minister for Tuensang Affairs, who was appointed from amongst the representatives of Tuensang District in the Nagaland Legislative Assembly. The Minister for Tuensang Affairs was Akum Imlong Chang. In this administrative arrangement, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Tuensang District exercised more powers than the other DCs of Nagaland. This was due to the system of single line administration, which was followed in the district. The DC was responsible not only for the general administration but also for all the Departments in the district. He was initially answerable to the Governor of Nagaland but, later, to the Minister for Tuensang Affairs.

The formation of the NHTA and, especially, the State of Nagaland strengthened the Chang traditional political institutions. The position and powers of the *Sanghishou* and the *Pangsa* were indirectly restored, since they were protected and supported by the Government through Acts and Regulations. The Nagaland Village Council Act, 1978, the Principal Act with respect to local self-government in Nagaland, provided for the constitution, term, powers, and duties of the Village Council. It made this traditional political institution uniform in all the villages in
Nagaland and also made it an auxiliary body to the Administration. It, however, preserved the traditional method of election of the members of the Village Council. An important feature of this Act was that it gave greater importance to the Village Council rather than the Chief. This Act, therefore, brought the Chang Sangbūshou on a par with the other Naga Chiefs and drastically reduced his powers. Besides, it reduced the life-long tenure of the Sangbūshou and the Pangsa to five years. Above all, it brought the Sangbūshou and the Pangsa under the control of the Government of Nagaland.

Article 371A of the Constitution of India provided for the formation of a Regional Council, a body for local self-government, in Tuensang District. The Regional council was vested with immense powers. No Act of the Nagaland Legislative Assembly would apply to Tuensang District unless specifically recommended by it. Again, it elected the representatives of Tuensang District to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly. Besides, it supervised and guided the working of the various bodies of local self-government and tribal courts within the district.

The other institutions intended for local self-government were the Tribal Council, Area Councils and Village Councils. The Tribal Council never functioned as an instrument of local self-government, but the Area Councils and Village Councils did. These institutions of local self-government were conferred with electoral powers. The lower bodies elected the members of the next higher bodies. At the same time, the higher bodies guided and supervised the lower bodies in the execution of their responsibilities.
The position and role of the Sangbūshou underwent a change with the formation of the Area Councils, Tribal Councils and Regional Council of Tuensang District. The more prominent Sangbūshou became representative of his village or area in the next higher local body and even in the Nagaland Legislative Assembly, since the representatives of Tuensang Area in the body were chosen by the Regional Council of Tuensang District.

The institution of the Village Development Board (VDB) posed a challenge to the traditional institutions of the Sangbūshou and the Pangsa, since the VDB functioned independent of these traditional political institutions. There were two parallel authorities in the village, the Pangsa, which looked after the administration of the village, and the VDB, which concerned with developmental activities in the village. Again, the Sangbūshou was overshadowed by the Secretary of the VDB, since the latter had close contact with the district authorities and received cheques issued by them for developmental works. The DC of Tuensang District, being the ex-officio Chairman of all the VDBs in the district, controlled the developmental projects in any Chang village. Besides, the Block Development Officer was the withdrawing officer, on behalf of the VDB, of all the funds for developmental works. Thus, the Sangbūshou and the Pangsa no longer had supreme power and control over the developmental resources and activities of the village.

Electoral politics in the modern sense emerged in the Chang area only in 1974, because the State of Nagaland Act, 1962, provided that, for a period of ten years, the representatives of the area in the Nagaland Legislative Assembly would be chosen by
the Regional Council of Tuensang District. This arrangement expired in 1973 and was neither renewed nor a new arrangement made. The Chang, however, participated in the elections to the various bodies of local self-government in their area.

Electoral politics provided political education to the Chang, who came to know about modern representative democracy, system of election and political participation. The village became the centre of electoral politics. The Sangbûshou and the members of the Pangsa became politically conscious, and turned out to be means and sources of vote-bank, influencing the villagers to caste vote in favour of the candidate of their choice.

Electoral politics led to the emergence of a politically conscious group of Chang, the political elite. This group lived in towns such as Kohima, Dimapur and Tuensang Town, but made important decisions on matters relating to elections and the tribe. It produced new competitors for power, thereby challenging the authority of the Sangbûshou and the Pangsa.

With the introduction of electoral politics, political parties, both national and regional, extended their influence to the Chang area. They established their units in every Chang village, and functioned independent of the Sangbûshou and the Pangsa. Again, candidates and political parties intending to contest elections approached the Sangbûshou and the Pangsa in order to ensure their election or the election of their respective candidate. Those that did not secure the support of the Sangbûshou and the
Pangsa directly approached the citizens of the village. These new trends posed a challenge to the authority of the traditional political institutions.

With the initiation of modern representative democracy, the Chang women, who were traditionally relegated to the domestic arena, were initiated into the political arena. The various political parties formed women wings, which were active in every Chang village and functioned independent of the Sangbushou and the Pangsa. Thus, the Chang women, besides being active voters, became agents of these parties and actively canvassed for the candidate of their respective party, thereby posing a challenge to the authority of the Sangbushou and the Pangsa.

Christianity set foot on the Chang soil despite opposition from the British administrators and the Chang themselves. The persons responsible for it were L. Kijung Ao, an ardent Baptist missionary, and Imlong Chang, a Chang dobashi. The Chang area being outside the British administration, Imlong Chang granted permission to L. Kijung Ao to evangelise the area and declared the area open for the entry of evangelists without permit from the British administrators. After his declaration, the Government of India (pre-independent India) nullified its standing orders and the door was open for evangelisation among the Chang.

Initially, the Chang were suspicious of and hostile to Christianity. They were unwilling to become Christians, because they regarded it as a sign of weakness and cowardice to do so. They considered Christianity not a religion for warriors, and took it as a hindrance to drinking, dancing and heroic adventures. Nevertheless,
Christianity gradually took root in the Chang area. The first baptism took place in 1939.

The Roman Catholic Church entered the Chang area in the second half of the 1960s, much later than the Baptist Church. The Chang, especially the Baptist missionaries, strongly opposed its arrival. However, the opposition of the Chang to the Roman Catholic missionaries was a passing affair.

Christianity had a great impact on the Chang. It transformed their socio-economic and political life. It moulded their way of thinking and changed their way of life. It was instrumental in controlling and putting an end to head-hunting and inter-village warfare. It facilitated intra-tribal and inter-tribal relationship. It paved the way for tribal ecumenism and communal harmony. It enhanced the communitarian spirit of the Chang, created a sense of tribal identity, and promoted social solidarity and unity. It contributed much to the spread of education in the Chang area. However, its influence was not much on the middle-aged and the older people.

Christianity advanced the economic life of the Chang. The various Christian dominations started a number of institutions, both religious and secular, which benefited the Chang. These institutions became a source of employment and sustenance for the Chang. They provided funds for undertaking religious and social activities. Besides, the Christian Churches undertook several welfare activities.
For the Chang, politics and religion co-existed. The Church, though not a political entity, cannot run away from politics and political developments, and cannot remain quiet and ignore the vital issues that trouble the people. The Chang Christians, upholding religious principles, should actively take part in political issues. The Church, however, should not get involved in political issues directly, but could participate as peace-maker and broker. The Church leaders, however, should contribute their mite to finding a solution to the vexed Naga problem.

Christianity made the Chang politically conscious. It made them aware of their rights, duties and privileges. It inspired them to fight corruption and violence through peace, mutual understanding and cooperation. The Church should be in the forefront in this regard.

Although religion is the guarantor of legitimacy to political authority, Christianity challenged the position and role of the Sangbūshou and Khuchem Shoubou. The Chang Christians were reluctant to give them the position and powers that they enjoyed in the former days. Their powers and privileges were threatened by new competitors for power, the Church leaders. The Chang obeyed the Church leaders rather than the Sangbūshou and the Pangsa. They were no longer the sole authority to decide on the affairs of the village. Nevertheless, through Christianity, they gained wisdom.

Christianity had certain demerits as well. It divided the Chang on religious line and exposed them to the easy life of materialism. It considered the Chang beliefs and
practices to be linked with head-hunting and the tribal religion, and forbade their use. Thus, it destroyed many traditional practices and institutions. Today, however, the approach of missionaries and Christians is different. Christianity is not meant to destroy culture, custom and tradition, but to make them more meaningful.

The Government of India (pre-independent India) prohibited the spread of education across the Dikhu river. The Chang, who wanted to get education, went to the Ao area for schooling. Introduction of education in the Chang area was the product of the Chang desire for peace. To bring peace to their area, the Chang constituted the Chang Tribal Committee in 1945. It resolved to open Lower Primary Schools (LP Schools) in every Chang village and pay the salary of the teachers. The first school in a Chang village was started at Yaongyimti in Ao area in 1937. However, the first school in the Chang area, to the east of the Dikhu river, was established at Noksen in 1946.

Although the Chang Tribal Committee took the initiative to start education in the Chang area, the task of imparting education to the Chang was carried out by the Christian missionaries. Along with the establishment of churches in every village, the missionaries opened schools for the children of the village. The aim of education was to convert the Chang, get Church workers and teachers, and bring peace, progress and development to the Chang area.

The enthusiasm for education was nipped in the bud by the emergence of Naga insurgency. The Chang students were threatened to be fined or arrested if they
studied in the Indian schools. Most of them abandoned schooling altogether. A few continued schooling outside the Naga areas by paying fines. From 1955 to 1960, all the schools in Chang area were closed down. Some schools were burnt down. With no schools around, the Baptist Mission opened tuition schools.

Peace was restored in the 1960s. In 1961, Government teachers were again sent to the Chang area. Gradually, education gained momentum. Both the Christian denominations and the Government of Nagaland gave heart and soul to it. Many government and private schools were opened. The Mission schools were among the private schools, and contributed much to education in the Chang area.

Education created social, economic and political awareness among the Chang. It changed their attitude. They abandoned head-hunting and inter-village warfare. They became responsive to and started interacting with the outside world. They cultivated the spirit of adjustment and a healthy and broad outlook, came out of their comfort zone, and started living with other people. Because of education, many Chang were employed as Government officials, public leaders, and teachers, to mention a few.

Education made the Chang politically conscious. It taught them their rights and duties as citizens. They learnt more about democracy, the democratic process, and political participation. It made them men and women of character, committed to life-time learning. It harmonised faith and culture, which was socially relevant to and
useful for the Chang. Many Chang contested elections to the Village Councils, Area Councils and Nagaland Legislative Assembly.

Education produced a new group of Chang, the educated Chang elite. This group had a great influence on the village and in decision-making, and became new competitors for power. The position and authority of the Sangbushou and Khuchem Shoubou were questioned. In the long run, however, education made traditional Chang polity more relevant and beneficial to the Chang community.

Education was not without demerits. It was devoid of certain values and deprived of cultural heritage. It produced candidates for clerical jobs. The educated Chang regarded it as not fit for the ordinary life of the village and something that would make them fit for a very different life. They expected that it would offer them Government jobs. After their education, they no longer wanted to go back to the village, but looked for employment, which they considered suitable to their talents. Besides, they were inclined to forget their culture and adopted blindly the Western culture.

The traditional Chang polity kept the Chang confined to their own villages. The only people they came into contact with were the citizens of the village, the warriors of an enemy village, the members of a friendly village invited for feasts and festivals, and those whom they met while venturing out of the village to obtain salt from other villages or the Assam plains. However, the British punitive expeditions, advent of Christianity, education, job opportunity, introduction of administration and
establishment of market offered opportunities for coming into contact with other peoples and races.

The intention of the punitive expeditions was not to punish the Chang but to make them realise the futility of head-hunting, incursions and raids. Through these expeditions, the Chang came into contact with the British administrators, sepoys and coolies. With the advent of Christianity, many missionaries, evangelists, pastors and teachers of other tribes and people came to the Chang area. Through them, the Chang came to know about other cultures, polities, and ways of life. Thirst for education and job opportunities made them move outside their area. They learnt different cultures and polities, the benefit of peace and security, and the idea of State, especially nation-State, which was unlike their self-governing villages. With the introduction of administration and the reopening of schools in the 1960s, there was influx of non-indigenous people, working in the offices and schools. With their presence, the Chang discovered new socio-political organisations and acquired knowledge. This was a wake-up call for them. Again, with the opening of market, many traders came to the Chang area. These contacts enlightened the Chang politically.

Self-realisation was the most important factor in bringing about political development in the Chang area. It had a great impact on traditional Chang polity. It terminated head-hunting and gave the Chang a novel idea of peace. It changed their pattern of village administration. There was no longer the need for village fortification and constant vigil. The agencies for self-realisation were recruitment in the Labour Corps, education, Christianity, and Chang organisations. These agencies enlightened
the Chang. For example, the Chang, who went to France as members of the Labour Corps, saw the difference in life-style between the people of the West and their own people. They felt that it was their duty to civilise their people in order to keep abreast with the rest of the world. Besides, the Chang saw the difference between the administered areas and their area, and the benefits available to the people of the administered areas. They realised that cessation of head-hunting would bring about a much more peaceful life. This realisation made them change their attitude and practices, and ushered a new era of peace and brotherhood in their area.

The above factors led to the formation of some Chang organisations, each having particular aims, objectives and purposes. The chief agency for peace in the Chang area was the Chang Tribal Committee, which, later, became Chang Tribal Council, today known as Chang Khulei Setshang. The Chang Tribal Council aimed at extending developmental activities beyond the Dikhu river, stopping head-hunting, restoring peace in the Chang area, carrying out welfare activities, and extending administration to the area. Its *modus operandi* was opening LP Schools, starting terrace cultivation, clearing inter-village routes, staying within the village during the time of cultivation, and freedom of religion. It constituted a committee for monitoring peace and development. Other associations, such as the Chang Students’ Federation, supplemented its endeavour. For example, the Chang Students’ Federation aimed at opening schools, approaching the Government for sending teachers to the Chang area, spreading literacy in Chang language, changing the way of life of the Chang, and consolidating the Chang people.
With the introduction of Christianity, education and administration, the traditional Chang occupation, agriculture, gave way to new economic activities such as Government service (both white-collar job and teaching), contract works, business (vendors, shop-keeping and supply works), service in private institutions and organisations, self-employment, and miscellaneous occupations (basketry, carpentry, weaving, pottery, and printing). In most of these activities, the role of the Sangbhishou and the Pangsa was not required. For Government service, contract works, business and self-employment, the Chang often approached the politicians and public leaders for recommendation and support. Again, for business and self-employment, the financially sound conducted economic activities on their own. Those who served in private institutions and organisations acted independently. In almost all of these economic activities, the Chang acted and functioned independent of the Sangbhishou and the Pangsa. Thus, the new economic activities challenged the traditional authority of the Sangbhishou and the Pangsa.

Similarly, the new system of land holding questioned the authority of the Sangbhishou. With the emergence of the present system of land-holding, private individuals started owning private plots of land. The Sangbhishou had very little say on the transfer of land from one individual to another and became only a witness of such transfer. The only hold he had was to see that the land within the jurisdiction of the village was not transferred to an individual of another village, much more to a non-Chang. Besides, the Government of Nagaland started acquiring land for administrative purposes. The Sangbhishou did not have much say in the administration
of such land, which was directly under the control of the DC of Tuensang District. Hence, the present system of land-holding considerably reduced his authority.

Of the above factors, advent of Christianity, introduction of education, contact with other people, self-realisation of the Chang, introduction of administration, and the Nagaland Village Council Act of 1978 played a greater role than other factors in effecting change in traditional Chang polity. Christianity, education, external contact, and self-realisation were instrumental in controlling and putting an end to head-hunting and inter-village warfare. They made the Chang politically conscious, and aware of their rights, duties and privileges. They led to the emergence of a new Chang elite such as Church leaders, educated and enlightened Chang, salaried bureaucracy, businessmen, affluent contractors, and big shopkeepers. The Chang elite became new competitors for power. Owing to education and monetary power, they were the brain behind socio-economic and political activities. The Chang obeyed them rather than the Sangbushou and the Pangsa.

The principal area of change was the institution of the Sangbushou. The British punitive expeditions and the new Chang elite challenged and threatened his authority, power, and position. He was no longer the sole authority to decide on the affairs of the village, which was chiefly dominated by the new Chang elite. With the introduction of administration, his election, appointment, powers, functions, and position were made uniform in all the Chang villages. He became the representative, agent and contact person of the Government. The Nagaland Village Council Act,
1978, drastically reduced his powers and position, and gave greater importance to the Pangsa.

The Chang did not challenge this new trend. They viewed the traditional political institutions from a new perspective. They looked at them as means of decentralisation and basis of representative democracy. They admitted that the existence of different authorities competing for power and control resulted in confusion and confrontation at different levels of administration, a reflection of crisis of governance. However, they also upheld that these traditional political institutions played a unifying role, provided leadership and ensured group solidarity in the Chang society. These institutions were the indigenous instruments of governance, the local force of authority and legitimacy. Despite erosion of their powers and functions, they remained, by and large, intact and relevant, an indication of continuity between the past and the present in Chang polity.