CHAPTER VI

MODERNIZATION AND ITS IMPACT
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In the previous chapters our analysis has focused on those developments which transferred the political control of the Angami possessions from tribal to colonial hands. To safeguard their colonial interests in India, the British found it necessary to control the territories of the North Eastern Frontier. The occupation of these areas not only provided them with the natural resources of tea, oil, minerals and forest products, but also adequately equipped their efforts in the expansionist design. On this North Eastern Frontier, the Naga Hills occupied a prominent position. However, as we have already dealt with this aspect in the previous chapter, we shall look into those processes which transformed the Angami tribal society into a modernised one.¹ A careful study of all the mechanisms, changes and

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¹ The studies devoted to the nature of various tribal societies of the world have recorded the clear demarcation of various phases of transition and the process involved therein. But in the case of the Angami Nagas, the transition appears to be a prolonged one. This cannot be merely attributed to their isolation from the rest of the world but also to the inherent strength of the tribe which sustained this prolonged transition. For studying this transitional phase, the Sage Series on African modernisation and development has developed a perspective which will certainly prove rewarding for studying all tribal societies. See Modes of Production in Africa, Vol. 5, edited by D Crummey and CC Stewart, London, 1981.
forces which were involved in this process of transition shall figure in this chapter. Since the study is devoted to the two villages of Kohima and Khonoma, the main centres of the Angami Nagas, the pivotal focus shall be on the development taking place in them. However, the influences which this process of development worked over the entire Naga society cannot be ignored altogether.

Generally our sources illustrate that the transition from the traditional to contemporary society was accompanied by various forces of confrontation and conflict. When we deploy the principle of historical materialism, one finds that this transition from pre-modern to modern was always historically inevitable. But this historical inevitability forms the critical link in these two phases (pre-modern and modern) which was further strengthened by the British

2. The Angami tribal society was tempted by the manifestations of colonial culture on the one hand, but was keen to preserve their autonomy, tribal organization and indigenous culture on the other. This has been the case with many tribal societies in the world. Bogumil Jewsiewicki, "Lineage Mode of Production, Social Inequalities in Equatorial Central Africa", in D Crummey and C C Stewart, Op.cit., pp. 70-93. Steven Feierman, The Shamba Kingdom, Wisconsin, 1974.
occupation of the area.³ It had become necessary for the British to have a complete political control over every part of the Indian sub-continent to protect their colonial dominion and when they discovered India's indispensability for their colonial ends, they gradually tried to erode its territorial and political structure, in which, of course, India's own weakness made no less a significant contribution.⁴ However, the increasing efforts in the expansionist design brought them into conflict with other nations in the world apart from the smaller communities which initially were not prepared to part with their system. In this connection, Naga Hills was no exception to the rule. The annexation of the Naga Hills meant the control of the entire North Eastern Frontier and the protection of their interests in Burma and China.⁵

³ Prior to the British appearance, the Angamis had already established contact with the plainsmen in terms of the exchange of goods. But with the British occupation their mobility increased tremendously because the construction of new roads and other means of communication was the first thing the British took over to strengthen their foothold. Robert Reid, Op.cit.

C Chandra, Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court, Aligarh, 1959.
Although the process of deterioration had set in much earlier, after the collapse of the Mughal Empire, the infighting among various regional kingdoms and the subsequent exploitation of the Indian masses weakened the personality, laying the ground for transfer of political power to the British.

⁵ Nari Rustomji, Imperilled Frontiers, Delhi, 1983.
It was not only by force that the British succeeded in subduing the Angami Nagas, but their powers of persuasion, their sense of duty, religion and other welfare activities made their task easier. The Angamis until then had not been exposed to the temptations of material culture which the Indian mainland had experienced for centuries under various changing dynasties and maharajas. The societies in India had started stratifying intensely on caste and religious lines from ages past. The communal ownership of means of production had long since disappeared in India.

6. Other than political agents, the contribution of the American Baptist missionaries with medical facilities and other welfare activities also worked as a potential mechanism in bringing the Angamis under British authority because the Angamis at that stage did not make the distinction between British and American interests but saw them both as one race - the 'White Man'. The trust that the missionaries instilled in them was therefore transferred to the British as well. At this juncture, there were also two contradictory forces at work. On one hand, the British trying to develop some kind of a centralized system for subjecting all the Nagas and on the other hand, the Nagas trying to preserve their tribal autonomy.

7. The Angami tribal society had a peculiar nature. It did not enjoy the status conferred on most such frontier tribes by intra-border trade which could help the growth of transition even without its own agrarian or other economy.

D D Kosambi, The Culture and Civilization in Ancient India, Delhi, 1977, pp. 96-108.
The other socio-religious mechanism of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism had established new trends in an organized form of worship with its complicated set of rituals, in some cases decognizing man as man. The rulers would indulge in religious conversion of their subjects to create a mass base for their persistence of kingly institutions. But the tribal areas were unfamiliar with all these material manifestations. They still retained in their tribes or clans the chiefs as heads of their communities and managed their affairs on communal lines. The tribal organization had its own socio-cultural past, hence this nature of Angami society proved a great advantage to the British in building up their base in Angami area. Among the various operative forces which penetrated the North Eastern region with the British entrance, ecclesiology has played a very important role in the entire process of the modernization of the Angamis. To quote Terhuja,

9. Religion was used as an ideological mechanism from early ages. To obtain the mass base the kings fostered conversion from Hinduism to Buddhism, Islam or Sikhism. All these measures changed the conditions of the people. Thomas Arnold, Preaching of Islam, London, 1896.

10. Since the Angami society remained untouched and uninfluenced by Brahmanical and Buddhist rituals, varna orientation or by the Islamic tenents, the society was fertile for work of the Christian missionaries.

11. Ibid. F S Downs, Christianity in North East India, Delhi, 1983.
"If one responsible dynamic factor were to be singled out for an overall change in the life of the Nagas, it would undoubtedly be the introduction of Christianity among them." 12

Here we can compare without any doubt the Naga conversion to what Arnold Toynbee said about the English conversion from the religion of the so-called Heroic Age to Christianity:

"The conversion which was really the beginning of all things in English history, was the direct antithesis of that; it was an act which merged half a dozen isolated communities of the barbarians in the common weal of a nascent western society." 13

Likewise, the various groups of Naga tribes were integrated into a common religion without distressing their distinct identity.

The British military expedition in this area and missionary activities commenced almost simultaneously. 1832, the first military expedition to Naga Hills was undertaken and the first band of missionaries made their appearance in the area in 1836. 14 In the beginning the attitude of the

Angamis towards the missionaries was very hostile. Those who consciously or unconsciously got converted to Christianity were persecuted or excommunicated by their Angami brethren from their clan or village. 15

Before we proceed further to a detailed description of missionary activity in this area, there emerge some important questions:

1) What interests did the American Baptists have at a time when the colonial expansion was carried out by the British who were mostly Anglican, Methodist or Presbyterian?

2) How were the two able to co-exist in their missions - the British with their colonial cause and the Baptists with their missionary zeal?

However, these questions can only be resolved by observing the materials available to us. Our sources reveal that there were instances of the British officials coming into conflict with the advancing missionaries. "There are

15. This persecution of the Christian converts by their Angami co-tribesmen continued even until the 1950's. The scholar has interviewed many early converts who suffered after embracing their new faith, as well as with staunch traditional animists who took part in the persecution. M Horam, "The Advent of Christianity and its impacts on the Naga Society", Unpublished paper.
never the close personal relationship between missionaries and British officers in Naga Hills. But it was the American Baptists who made a lasting impact on the Angami mind because even after the departure of the British and the coming of other denominations to the Naga Hills, the Angamis seem to have remained uninfluenced and are predominantly Baptist Christians even today. Initially, however, the process of conversion was very slow. The first missionary to the Angamis, Rev. C D King, entered Angami territory in 1879 and started his mission in Kohima in 1881. But it was only after five years of dedicated effort that the fruit of his labour was finally realized in the first Angami convert, Lhousietsu, of Kohima village, in 1885. It was possibly the presence of certain British civil servants who did not get along with the missionaries that slowed the process of conversion to some extent. In addition,

it appears that the Angamis by nature are more conservative and resistant to change than the other Naga tribes which further slowed down this process.\textsuperscript{21} But then the march of time waits for none and the activities of the missionaries were not merely confined to conversion. Christianity was for that matter a most organized and reasonable religion and it carried in its wake other social activities and benefits as well. In such remote areas the combination of medical care and education coupled with teachings of morality and fellow-feelings could not be ignored. It was a time when other countries of the world particularly in Europe were making great advances in science, technology and particularly in education which taught people to reason and overcome traditional prejudices.\textsuperscript{22} It was due to the process of this christianization that the traditional and vague animistic beliefs gradually started eroding in society. When the concept of one God and Christ being the only Son of God was taught to the tribals who believe in a number of spirits and have


\textsuperscript{22} This was the age of the Industrial Revolution in Europe where fresh waves of thought and religious reformation accompanied the intense scientific and intellectual activity generated during this period.

an accompanying set of elaborate rituals, they responded to the simplicity and logicity of the new religion. A reverence for such a vague host of spirits was a waste of time for a man who had to struggle painfully in the effort of living, and it also conditioned his outlook due to superstitious limitations. We can well say that the conversion provided institutionalized religion where man was side by side taught the rudiments of morality and also ensured his emotional security in the community. The so-called glory that the Angamis derived by hunting the heads of their fellow men was replaced by a cause for the service of humanity. The usual sacrifice of animals and other resources such as grains and other necessities of life were a waste and could neither fetch peace for the departed soul nor bring home a sense of reason. Apart from this there are numberless intricacies and extravaganzas which form part of the animistic faith in the earlier period.

23. Christianity ushered in a transformation from animistic traditions based on superstitious practices to a more orderly society where the guiding principle was no longer that of natural human urges but based rather on the laws of God and love for one's fellow man.


25. For instance, a funeral involved a great number of intricate rituals and sacrifices which were time consuming as well as expensive and often proved to be an unnecessary burden to the family.
The amount of restrictions for the children and female members of the society including restrictions of certain foods caused nothing but a sense of inferiority. These taboos not only restricted the participation of women but also hampered seriously the growth of social progress and culture. Besides fostering a sense of subordination among equal human beings, it also compartmentalized the clans and villages and merely perpetuated the intra-clan and intra-tribal rivalries. Such frequent in-fighting would constantly divert the attention of the clans from building up an agrarian economy and served to accentuate the neglect of the exploitation of the forest and other economic resources which would otherwise have been an immense help in the overall community development.

In course of time, missionaries with their firm determination operated carefully taking note of all such problems.

26. This discrimination extended also to exclusion from specified meetings and gatherings.

27. The amount of labour which was utilized for months in intra-clan warfare was a serious loss to the whole community particularly when there was no other form of labour made use of. This would consequently lead people to live by plunder and make warfare endemic to Angami polity.
Initially they opened up the facilities for educating the Angamis and stressed medical care but the Anglo-Naga struggle which lasted for half a century did not permit the Baptists to register any appreciable progress until the twentieth century. However, during this period, the foundation was laid among many other Naga tribes, and other tribes in Assam. These efforts directly influenced the people of the North East region. It was during this period that the other denominations and schools of Christian thought made great progress in this region. All these developmental activities of the missionaries associated with the religious cause left a deep impression on tribal society. It seems that though the missionary activities were now and then discouraged by the British colonial servants, their influence continued to grow beyond measure. We find that during the last days of the British rule and only a decade after they left that the number of Angami Christians rose tremendously.

28. From 1832 to 1880 expeditions were sent to the Naga Hills to subdue the Nagas. Though the missionaries were at work during the same period, the constant resistance of the Nagas did not help the missions to establish themselves firmly. However, the missions did not give in and continued even during the period of crisis. See the Chapter on Colonization of this thesis.

29. The other tribes such as the Garos, Khasis and Mires were also converted during this period. Frederick S Downs, Op.cit.
In 1885, there was only one Angami who was baptized. By 1936 there were 1,534 baptized members. Church membership rose from 2,882 in 1955 to 11,000 members in 1981. This increase cannot be characterized as sudden in nature but was the result of long and painful efforts carried out by the Baptist Mission in Nagaland in general and Angami area in particular. The Angamis certainly noticed the changes for the better which the Baptists had brought by taking care of the tribe. The general education of the people at the hands of the missionaries opened up the eyes of the Angamis to a new world. The initial indifference towards Christianity would not have been present due to a desire for preservation of identity alone but also because of a suspicion of British colonial policy. When the Angamis realized that the Baptists had no motive other than to render service to humanity in the name of God, they voluntarily...

32. Keviyiekielle Linyu, Op.cit., Chart No. 2. However, the rest of Nagaland experienced a much faster growth rate in church membership ... "The Church grew fast with more than 10,000 adult baptisms a year, mostly of young tribal people, until Nagaland held the highest ratio of regular worshipping Christians to population of any state in the world." John Pollock, Billy Graham, Evangelist to the world, New York, 1979, p.4.

33. The first Angami convert received tutelage under the missionaries paving the way for the benefits of education to the whole tribe.
offered themselves as converts to the new faith. One can well imagine how the Angamis must have been drawn towards this plain religion of the Baptists which not only liquidated all the outdated taboos in Angami society but also trained them in the new path of progress. Horam wrote,

"The constant feuds and head-hunting of these people were cut short by the new doctrine based on love and brotherhood. Apart from this, the Naga literature before the coming of Christianity was purely oral, now they have been written ..."34

The education of the tribe which forms one of the major themes of the process of conversion laid down the basis for all future developments. It was as a result of education that the Angamis began to differentiate their past and future and chose to advance their careers in various branches of learning. The technical education opened up many opportunities for the Angamis. One may note here that some of the first Angami educated persons who obtained college degrees chose to be pastors and church workers not necessarily because all of them were overwhelmed by evangelism alone, but because they could foresee also that the only way to awaken their fellow men was to devote full attention to their education and development through

the facilities provided by the missionaries. Here it will not be wrong to say that C D King was the father of this process of modernization. He was the first missionary to the Angamis and started a school which was followed up by his successors, although with great difficulties in the beginning.

"With the departure of C D King at the beginning of 1887, the small primary school he started in 1882 became extinct. It was revived by Rivenburg in 1889. It continued upto 1895 with some forty-six students on the roll."

Thus the seed of modern education was sowed by C D King and Rivenburg but the real pioneers in Angami education were the Supplees.

"The Supplees who were first designated for Impur station, were transferred to Kohima in December 1922 to take charge of school work especially in view of Rivenburg's retirement. By that time, the need for a full fledged high school in the Naga Hills for the Naga boys and girls was strongly felt among hill missionaries like Pettigrew, Grosier, Longwell, Tanquist and Baily. So, the Supplees began answering their need to the best of their ability. Four years after the arrival, a grant of Rs. 2000 was secured for the school from the missionary union. In 1925, class seven was opened and again class eight followed in 1926."


37. Ibid., p. 122.
Apart from this High School the missionaries encouraged higher education. Khosa and Sevilie were sent to Dibrugarh to study medicine in 1913 and 1914 respectively. Likewise, Hucha Savino became the first Angami Veterinary Doctor in 1917. The advancement of medical education also certainly increased the life span and decreased the mortality rate. In such remote areas the Angamis were naturally prone to many kinds of natural diseases which could not be cured in those days. The dependence on herbs and other indigenous types of remedies was not always reliable in early times. The growth of educational institutions increased the mobility of the Angamis and brought them into constant touch not only with Indians but also with some Europeans during the first world war. This exposure created an impact on their minds especially in relation to their awareness of their own emerging identity. To quote Asoso Yonuo, they saw.

38. Based on field work. The scholar has personally interviewed Dr. Savile Iralu to get this information.


40. There were a good number of Angamis who went to Europe during this war. Khosa was one of them.
"how the great civilized nations fought for their ends and interests while Nagas were condemned as barbarious for their headhunting wars."41

Their European experience fostered a new sense of unity and oneness -

"Far from home the Naga soldiers from different villages and communities came together for comfort, and thus developed a camradery which transcended age-old prejudices and separatism... It may be said that on the battlefields of France and in the trenches the iron spearhead of a new Naga nationalism was forged."42

After acquiring a good education, a number of Angamis entered the Civil Service in the British India Government. Mr A Kevichusa became the first Naga graduate in 1924 and went on to become a Deputy Commissioner.43 Entering these various professions not only provided an impetus to shift to the new religious outlook and impressed the need of education for all but gave them employment opportunities to supplement their resources from agriculture. This exposure to the outside world broadened their outlook and they carried new ideas of developing their cultivation, various arts and crafts and exploitation of the forest resources.

43. The scholar has conducted personal interviews with Mr Kevichusa for this information.
Obviously the economic development within the Angami society expanded the social division of labour and strengthened further the entire tribal organization of settled agricultural villages. Side by side, the efforts to enhance the opportunities of carrying out trade with distant areas and the importing of various articles of daily use also improved. The increase of mobility of Angami society together with the efforts of the British administration led to the construction of roads and tried to link up various areas in Naga Hills. All these measures monetized the economy and now the commodities could not only be exchanged for other commodities but gradually for money. Developing road systems made it easy to carry goods over long distances. This improvement in communication and the growing economy led to an increase in population.

All these developments were gradually consciously or unconsciously introducing changes which modernized the entire Naga society. Not only were the institutionalized

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44. It was only after the British occupation that the scope of trade and commerce expanded and extended even beyond the Indian borders. Kusietso was the first merchant who visited some South East Asian countries for trade purposes in the beginning of the twentieth century. This information was given to the scholar by his sister, Tuno (95), still living in Kohima.

45. The population of Kohima District was 57,672 in 1901, it rose 108,924 in 1961. The Angami population in 1961 was 33,687.
form of religion, the efforts of education, the economic developments, but the social organizations also gradually emerged into a new form and pattern. The way of life that the Angami were exposed to at the hands of the missionaries - the nature of dress, the changes in the institution of marriage, the social coordination, and other new festivities - completed the transitional phase. By the time the British colonial masters were departing, the Baptists had tremendously contributed to this process of modernization in the shape of all the aforesaid developments. Khrieleno Terhuja puts it,

"The church has oriented the Nagas to a wider fellowship of humanity and the treasure of modernity. The church must be rooted in its concerned cultural setting to provide intelligent interpretation of the Christian faith and a proper relationship with new trends in Society." 46

This process of modernization can partly be attributed to the British particularly during the period from 1880-1947. Since the British had realized from the very beginning that the Angamis could not be controlled by force, but persuaded by a friendly attitude, they took interest in developments affecting the Angamis.

The construction of roads and the introduction of educated Nagas into the new administration proved a great help to the Angamis. They took a lot of interest in improving the economy of the area because the persistence of poverty and backwardness meant a loss of revenue for the British as well. Though the British administrators were gradually detribalizing the Angamis, so far as the administrative system was concerned, it did not affect seriously the traditional tribal ways of administration and supervision at the village level. The village elders continued to be powerful in taking major decisions on important matters even down to the present day. In fact, the British officials often complained against the missionaries and emphasized that the latter were destroying the culture of the Angamis by restricting the participation in festival dances and by prohibiting the drinking of zu, the rice wine.\(^{47}\) But it is irrational to believe that the Angami life and culture would have remained static without the influence of the missionaries. The missionaries did make a lot of mistakes at the initial stage,\(^{48}\) but they also restricted certain practices in Angami culture which had become outdated and merely contributed to social waste. For example, the missionaries were very much against the


\(^{48}\) The mistakes they made were due to a lack of distinction between religion and culture - there was a wholesale condemnation on their part of anything indigenous.
practice of headhunting and animal sacrifice and other superstitious practices. 49

From the above discussion, it becomes clear that it was the activities of the missionaries and the British stay in the area which laid the foundation of this process of modernisation. By the time both the parties left Naga Hills, the Angamis had reached a stage of self-reliance and the economy had grown slightly above subsistence level. It can be termed as self-sufficient in the sense that the Angami society was not much dependent on import of food and most items of its consumption were produced locally. However, the departure of the European community opened a most important era in the history of the whole Naga society.

Since the colonial exploitation had reached a level where it was becoming increasingly difficult for the Indians to tolerate, the aspirations of people - the idea to drive out the British from India - gathered momentum from the beginning of the twentieth century. 50 Amidst these developments,

   Jim Masselos, Indian Nationalism, Delhi, 1985, pp. 199-224.
the Nagas became aware of their identity and their historical roots and had decided to settle their own political future. They formed the Naga Club in 1928.\(^{51}\) Though the Club was initially a social and cultural forum, the development taking place in other parts of India vis-a-vis British rule forced the Club to look into the political problems of the Nagas arising out of the British departure from India.\(^{52}\)

It is very clear that the Naga Hills had been brought under their control by the British out of sheer political and strategic need and it was necessary for the safety of the British colonial empire from the North Eastern side. Obviously, there did not prevail much of exploitation of the Nagas under the British if we look at the problem from an economic point of view.

The material level of the Nagas was very low when the British entered. There was not much produce to reduce the hardship of life. They had no proper means of communication and transport. It was with the coming of the British that some roads were constructed for the British. That


\(^{52}\) It needs to be stressed that before the arrival of the British the Nagas were politically autonomous. They did not share any of the governmental systems of India or Burma. It was purely a non-state society with peculiar polity where society functioned in a pure democratic form.

some Nagas got employment opportunities though on a very small level is also obvious. Hence the harsh existence of life had been reduced by the British to some extent. Besides, the British did not detribalize the internal tribal social organization, nor did they interfere with the internal affairs of the people. These measures had created a good image of the British in the Angami mind which persists to the present day. As a result, the Nagas made it clear that once the British left India, they would like to be left undisturbed politically as they were before.\(^5\)

When talks for independence were going on in India, the British set up a Commission in 1927 under Sir John Simon to study the working of the administration in India.\(^5\) This Commission, popularly known as the Simon Commission, visited India in 1929 together with Clement Attlee and E Cadogan as members.\(^5\) The Naga Club submitted a Memorandum to the Simon Commission when they visited Kohima in which they clearly stated that they should be left alone to determine their own future the day the British left the Naga Hills. The memorandum states,

\[\text{53. At the time when the British were leaving India, the seeds of political consciousness had already sown in the Naga mind. A spirit of nationalism was growing among them.}\]
We, the undersigned Nagas of the Club at Kohima, who are the only persons at present who can voice our people, have heard with great regret that our hills were included within the Reform Scheme of India without our knowledge, but as the administration of our Hills continued to be in the hands of the British Officers we did not consider it necessary to raise any protest in the past. Now, we learn that you have come to India as Representatives of the British Government to enquire into the working of the system of government and the growth of education and we beg to submit below, our view with the prayer that our Hills may be withdrawn from the Reform Scheme and placed outside the reforms but directly under the British Government. We never asked for any reforms and we do not wish for any reforms.

Before the British Government conquered our country in 1897-1880 we were living in a state of intermittent warfare with the Assamese of the Assam valley to the North and West of our country and Manipuris to the South. They never conquered us, nor were we ever subjected to their rule. On the other hand, we were always a terror to these people. Our country within the administered area consists of more than eight tribes, quite different from one another with languages which cannot be understood by each other, and there are more tribes outside the administered area which are not known at present. We have no unity among us and it is only the British Government that is holding us together now.

Our education at present is poor. The occupation of our country by the British Government being so recent as 1880 we have no chance or opportunity to improve in education and though we can boast of two or three graduates of an Indian university in our country, we have not got one yet who is able to represent all our different tribes or master our languages much less one to represent us in any council.
of a Province. Moreover, our population is very small in comparison with the population of the plain districts in the province, and any representation that may be allotted to us in the council will have no weight whatsoever.

Our language is quite different from those of the plains and we have no social affinities with Hindus or Mussalmans. We are looked down upon by the one for our beef and the other for our pork and by both for our want of education which is not due to any fault of ours.

Our country is poor and it does not pay for its administration. Therefore, if it is continued to be placed under the Reform Scheme, we are afraid that new and heavy taxes will have to be imposed on us and when we cannot pay them all our lands will have to be sold and in the long run as we shall have no share in the land of our birth, and life will not be worth living then. Though our land at present is within the British territory, Government has always recognised our private rights in it, but if we are forced to enter the Council all these rights may be extinguished by the unsympathetic Council, the majority of which number is sure to belong to the districts. We also much fear the introduction of foreign laws and customs to supercede our own customary laws which we now enjoy.

For the above reasons, we pray that the British Government will continue to safeguard our rights against all encroachments from other people who are more advanced than us by withdrawing our country from the Reform Scheme and placing it directly under its own protection. If the British Government, however, wants to throw us away, we pray that we should not be thrust to the mercy of the people who could never subjugate us, but to leave us alone to determine for ourselves as in ancient times. We claim to represent all those tribes to which we belong: Angamis, Kacha Nagas, Kukis, Semas, Lothas and Rengmas. 56

In 1945, the Naga Hills District Tribal Council was formed by C R Pawsey, the Deputy Commissioner of Naga Hills, with the aim of uniting the various Naga tribes. Its existence, however, was short-lived. A conference of the representatives of various tribes was held in 1946 where its name was changed to that of the Naga National Council (NNC) which ultimately emerged as the only political organization in the Naga Hills, and later, under the leadership of Mr A Z Phiso, an Angami of Khonoma, assumed a militant nature. The NNC embarked upon negotiations with the government regarding the future of the Nagas. Sir Akbar Hydari, the then Governor of Assam undertook negotiations with the Nagas on behalf of the Indian Government. As a result of the meetings, a Nine Point Agreement was entered upon. However, the clause dealing with the 'Period of Agreement' became a bone of contention as each party had its own interpretation.

58. Ibid.
59. The clause reads as follows:
"The Governor of Assam as the Agent of the Government of India will have a special responsibility for a period of ten years to ensure the due observance of this agreement; at the end of this period, the Naga National Council will be asked whether they require the above agreement to be extended for further period or a new agreement regarding the future of the Naga people arrived at." M Horam, Op.cit., p.142.
In the meantime, the spirit of nationalism through the inspiration of the Naga National Council was spreading like wildfire throughout the Naga Hills. These developments posed a serious problem for the Indian leaders. Here it is essential to observe, before demonstrating the nature of modernisation, a dialogue which took place between the Naga leaders and Mahatma Gandhi. In July, 1947, A Z Phizo with a Naga delegation met Mahatma Gandhi and revealed the political situation in Naga Hills. They stressed that the Nagas were going to be autonomous after the British departure. On this, Gandhi said to the Naga leaders,

"We do not want the British. And they are going. If you say that you are not Indians and your country does not belong to India then the matter must end there. Nobody will force you to join the Indian Union."\(^60\)

And when the Nagas told him that they were going to declare independence on 15th August, he said to them,

"Why wait August 15? Why not declare it today?"\(^61\)

The Nagas also told Mahatma Gandhi that India was going to attack the Nagas when she became independent. Gandhi's reaction was,

60. A Z Phizo's letter to Mr Rajiv Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, dated May 10th, 1986.
Mr A Z Phizo told the details of his meeting with Gandhi to the scholar in his home in London in January, 1985.

61. Ibid.
"Don't you trust me? She has no right to do so. If force were to be used then I will sacrifice my life for you and I will ask them to kill me first before a Naga is shot."62

From this dialogue, it becomes clear that nothing was settled in black and white. The Gandhian philosophical attitude which must have been more dominated by the crisis that the country had been facing in other parts of India, did not solve the Naga problem to any degree. However, the Nagas took Gandhi's words in good faith and returned to Nagaland. On their return they declared their Independence on August 14th, 1947, with great celebration and a telegram was sent to the United Nations.63

Why such developments took place is an important question which we shall try to examine at this stage. Here we should not forget that the Nagas are a Mongoloid race who had nothing in common with the Dravidian or the Aryan culture. After settling in the Naga Hills they lived for a long time with their independent socio-political set-up. Ever since the Nagas settled in the Naga Hills their history has been greatly influenced by outsiders, but the Nagas were never subjugated by foreign powers and they developed a great value of freedom and democracy. Andrew Gray, the British scholar wrote,

62. Ibid.
"Naga history has been framed by relationships with foreign power ... but the Nagas were never conquered and deprived of their independence which was dispersed through village self government."64

On one hand, the Angamis remained isolated and had very little contact with the outside world and on the other hand, in spite of their isolation they remained in touch with some of the developments taking place in Assam and Manipur. They had seen the fate of the tribes like the Boros, Ahoms, and Maiteis, and realized how the process of Brahmanization had imposed the rigid caste structure on them and liquidated their identity which the Nagas were not prepared to risk. As Frederick Downs wrote,

"... that Christianity and the process of modernization closely associated with it became a means whereby many of the hill tribals sought to preserve their identity in the face of the perceived threat of assimilation into the Hindu society of the plains."65

Another factor that traumatically affected the transition of Naga society into modernization was the Second World War when the Japanese and the British fought the bloodiest battle in Kohima in the heart of Angami country. According to Asoso Yonuo,

"It was the Second World War which had propelled psychological cataclysm far beyond its confines than anything that had taken place during the British rule for about seventy years. Thus the war also enshrined powerful political commotion, dissension and ferment among the educated middle class Nagas, particularly those of the areas affected by the war."66

According to Admiral Lord Mountbatten,

"The Battle of Kohima will probably go down as one of the greatest battles in history."67

The views of Field Marshal Wavell on the same battle reads,

"When the history of the war comes to be written, the fight here will be put down as one of the turning points of the war ... when the Japanese were routed and their downfall really began."68

As a result of this war, the Nagas suffered extremely. But on the other hand, some Nagas bagged the advantages which had a serious impact on their society. The sudden war time construction activity, posting military supplies and other necessities pumped a lot of money into Naga hills. This brought into being a rich class of contractors thus creating a neo-rich class in Naga society.

68. Ibid.
It is as a result of their independent historical past that the Nagas did not join the Indian Independence Movement. Instead the NNC declared their own independence a day before India did. The NNC began to organize the Naga tribal groups into an organized state. But a few years after India's independence, Indian armed forces moved into Nagaland in a bid to integrate the Nagas into the Indian Union by force — the most unfortunate policy that has ever been followed in Indian history. Since the Army has its own way of doing things, particularly in an area which is totally new to them, mass scale destruction took place. Villages were burnt and people forced into camps where the women and the children received the worst of the treatment. Many died in starvation. In the jungle people were forced to exist on roots, insects, and other forest products. The suffering and disruption was more than the Nagas had faced in the Second World War when the Japanese invaded India through Naga Hills.69

During this crisis a group representing a large proportion of the population who wanted independence went underground. Taking advantage of the situation, some of the petty government

69. Information regarding this period of hostilities between the Nagas and the Indian Army is based on personal field work. See also Nagaland File, edited by Luithui and Nadita Haskar, Delhi, 1984.
officials along with some Naga opportunists formed the Naga People's Convention (NPC) and opened a dialogue with the Indian Government. The outcome of the meeting between Nehru and the NPC resulted in the creation of Nagaland state without consulting the Naga people.  

After the creation of the state, a new phase of development on Nagaland commenced on two levels - the government level and the private or individual level. Huge amounts of funds were pumped into the state for the purpose of development. A lot of these resources got concentrated into Kohima, which is the capital of the state and which had been a central place from its very inception. However, this sudden flow of easy money had grave repercussions on the Angami society. The officials who were responsible for handling these sums of money became corrupted as they succumbed to the temptation of quick wealth. This corruption became, in a sense, a way of life as there was no accountability.

70. M Alemchiba, _Op.cit._, p. 186. When the NPC delegation returned to Nagaland after signing the Sixteen Point Agreement with the Indian Government conferring statehood to Nagaland within the Indian Union, there was a widespread protest against the Agreement which culminated in the assassination of the President of the NPC.

71. These funds were not only used for development, but also served the subtle tactical purpose of subverting feelings of nationalism by eroding the moral fibre of the society.
for these funds. New industrial establishments were formed and the extension of bureaucracy following statehood created new employment facilities. The plans for education, social welfare and medical facilities improved. Side by side, the influx of Marwaris and non-local business communities with their stalls and godowns in Dimapur also spread to other areas, reaping the advantage of this fresh frontier of economic enterprise. The growth of transport, communication and other construction activities were carried out. All this resulted in giving of permits for various enterprises and industries. The setting up of colleges, schools, social welfare institutions and even a university campus greatly changed the social structure. Rail communication and air services made it easy for the Angamis of Khonoma and Kohima to venture more freely into travel to other states and countries.

All these changes had accentuated the formation of a nouveau riche class. The net result of the process of modernization particularly after statehood was the emergence of an uneven social structure. Because all these developments did not effect much change at the grass root level, it was only the small part of urban population which benefitted from these developments and emerged as a new middle class. The progress of trade and commerce and the nature of political activities were mainly responsible for the emergence of the
bourgeoisie and this provided them the initial capital to invest further the multiplication of their resources through business, transport or construction works.

The impact of these developments on the two villages of Kohima and Khonoma were historically unavoidable because of their location. Kohima, being the capital of Nagaland, received more than its due for developmental activities. The new capital enabled the people from various urban and rural areas to settle down here. This influx naturally resulted in an unprecedented rise in population and subsequently affected the land and market prices which shot up sky-high within a few years' time. This not only did away with the earlier method of land distribution but also brought into existence the peculiar methods of land-grabbing. For the merchants, Kohima was a paradise where contracts and concessions were easily awarded by politicians who could

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give licences and permissions for trade and commerce, and which also had a ready market for more expensive products. Since the process had increased tremendously, some of the new rich went in for constructing houses for rent and hotels which provided temporary refuge for travellers both from rural as well as urban areas.

All these influences worked in different directions to change the Angami tribal social formation. The emergence of social division of labour due to the increasing amount of trade and industry disturbed the rhythm of the Angami tribal production relations in Kohima and Khonoma. This led to the intense social stratification based on material strength which was completely absent prior to this. The exploitation of the members of Angami tribe by their own men commenced speedily. Though the entire tribal society of the Angamis has not been assimilated fully by this phenomenon into a complete transformed class society, the process has

73. From the very beginning the integration of Indian polity was eroded because of the election funds. The politicians were financed by the businessmen and when they assumed power they were forced to the demands of the businessmen and lost political autonomy, becoming tools in the hand of businessmen. Same tactics have operated in Nagaland in the post statehood phase.
has been set in motion by the growing trend of capitalism which has linked the entire society with the world capitalism in terms of trade and other influences.

The cultural level has been seriously affected. The superficial westernization in matters of dress, food habits, music and other activities became popular. These developments have seriously challenged the traditional way of life. For instance, taking the matter of a wedding among Angami, in earlier times, an Angami wedding was a simple affair. Festivities could be completed with the killing of one pig and a few chickens to feed the few guests. The whole ceremony was carried through with a minimum of fuss, especially regarding material arrangements. But the scene is much changed now. There is a great preoccupation with physical arrangements which tend towards the extravagant, sometimes involving even lakhs of rupees with the killing of a great number of mithuns, cows and pigs.

A drastic change that has taken place is in terms of administrative organization. Prior to these developments, the Angami tribal social organization in Kohima and Khonoma was under the Village Council and chiefs, who would look into the matter of conflicts and other problems in the clan
or village. But the new imposed government has led to the erosion of the authority of the traditional Village Councils. Thus going to a modernized court for immediate solution to their problems regarding property or land disputes, clan feuds and other problems connected with day to day life saps the resources of the people. All these show that the process of modernization has been that of an uneven nature and a large section of Angami society has not been in a position to benefit from such developments. The hierarchical nature of society on economic lines is getting established very rigidly in an area which had hitherto escaped caste orientation but the fact cannot be denied that the entire Angami society is improving with all the attendant evils of modernization.

As we have seen in the foregoing discussion in this chapter, the Angami society has gone through different phases of transition - from pre-modern to modern. These changes have been a historical necessity. But it is an undeniable fact that the twentieth century has seen a "period of rapid change such as humanity has probably never before experienced", as Hutton has so perceptively observed.\textsuperscript{74} This traumatic

period has left a deep emotional strain on the minds of the Angami Nagas. As the Naga philosopher, T Sakhrie, makes us aware,

"The Nagas made a leap, as it were, from a distant past into the glare of the present century ... found their world greatly changed. They looked about with uncertainty and pinched themselves to be assured that all that was really true ... people became suddenly restive with the existing state of affairs. There was social unrest, economic unrest, political unrest. Everywhere there were cries for better, bigger and nobler things. The era brought a new impetus to all fields of human endeavour."75