CHAPTER 3

Colonialism and Land

3.1 Introduction

The Land question provided a terrain like no other in the colonial period, in which issues of rights entailments and obligations were realized and thoroughly contested. It is important since the control of land and other resources provided a vital arena for the local people challenges to the colonial state, which re-inforced the anti-colonial movement, because of the centrality of the land question and its role in defining local people reaction to and engagement with colonial rule (Ibhawoh, 2007, p. 88).

The expansion of the European imperialists became conspicuous in different parts of the old world outside Europe during the 19th century. A need was felt to protect the native institutions against the disruptive effect of European contacts (Sarkar, 2006, p. 7). This led to the administering of a new concept of ‘indirect rule’ in the colonial administration (ibid). Similarly, in the pre-British era, the internal administration of the tribal people in India was governed by the application of their uncodified and unwritten customary laws. This was functional within and under the hegemony of a dominant government.

The Colonial experience of the Hill Tribes of Manipur is in many ways similar to those of colonial Africa. Discussions about land in the colonial and the immediate post-colonial period were conducted largely in relation to the ideas and systems introduced by the colonial state. Land was often at the centre of early conflicts between the British authorities and the local rulers. “The Land and Native Rights Ordinance introduced in Northern Nigeria in 1911 was based on the assumption that land ownership was communal, with the chiefs holding it in trust for the collective benefit of the people (Ibhawoh, 2007, p. 101).” The standard argument on land, which is similar to the case of the Thadou-Kukis, ran
thus: First, all the native lands were held by the principal chiefs and heads of the community, in trust for the entire community; second, all these lands is under the control of the colonial Governor, who through British conquest had taken the place of the "paramount chief," to administer according to native law and custom for the common benefit of the people (ibid, P. 89).

A common feature in all colonial states all over the world is that, it usually fails to take into consideration the regional uniqueness of the pre-colonial land tenure systems and the scope of rights that local kings, chiefs and the people enjoyed under it. There is a need to study the local peoples' conception of space and the forms of territorialisation wrought on these systems by the period of colonial subjugation. This is crucial to understand the present issues of land and identity in Manipur. In view of that, the chapter1 will focus on the varied experiences of colonialism in the Hills of Manipur with particular reference to the Thadou-Kuki society. It will study both the administrators and missionaries as colonial agencies and try to trace the varied instruments of colonialism that changed the traditional land structure and impede the principality that governs the Thadou-Kuki2 society. The focus will also be on the colonial imprint and policies of the

1 The Chapter will make use of colonial ethnographies like—

1. Official writings like government reports, military or topographical reports, gazetteers, administrative reports, archival materials, ethnographic and academic monographs written by colonial administrators.
2. Personal and unofficial writings like autobiography, diary, private letters, memoirs, accounts from close associates of the missionaries or the first convert, travelogues etc., missionary literatures: field reports, Christian literature, autobiographies and discussion papers of missionary conference.
3. Scholarly interpretation and analysis of colonial ethnographies in the form of research works and published books as secondary materials.

2 The term "Thadou-kuki" is likely to create some confusion because all the Thadous are Kukis but not vice-versa. Kuki is a broad term like Naga. The research will use the compromised term "Thadou-Kuki" and in this work the use of the term "Kuki" in different places will mainly emphasise the "Thadou-Kukis." In this regard, it is necessary to point out here the serious problem of identity of the term Kuki and Thadou. In fact, there are two views prevailing now. One is the pro-Kuki view and the other is the pro-Thadou view. While the pro-Thadou group went on insisting on the term Kuki as a foreign term and a baseless colonial construct for administrative convenience, the pro-Kuki group insisted on a pan-tribal stand under the
British towards the hill tribes; the interplay between indigenous leadership and colonial power, sociological implications of the various land-based conflicts and the contribution of colonial encounter in re-ordering of space and society.

3.2 Colonialism

By 'colonialism', we mean cultural domination with enforced social change. In the colonial past, we find grandiose attempts by a small group of innovators such as missionaries and administrators, to implement radical changes upon a massive and often unwilling or uncomprehending population (Beidelman, 1982, p. 2). "Imperialistic colonialism involves a sense of mission, of spreading a nation's vision of society and culture to an alien subjected people (ibid, p. 2)." In common usages, the term is usually used to imply the extension of European and American powers in the non-Western world during the Vasco da Gama era (1492–1947) (Neill, 1966, p. 11).

Colonialism can be differentiated from Imperialism. Imperialism for Edward Said is 'the practice, theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory', a process distinct from colonialism, which is 'the implanting of settlements on a distant territory' (Ashcroft et al, 2002, p. 90).

The differences between empire and imperialism can be understood as under:

   Empire is the relationship, formal or informal, in which one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society. Imperialism distinguishes itself from empire, because while the establishment of empires by the active colonisation of territories has ended, Imperialism 'lingers where it has always been, in a kind of general cultural sphere as well as in specific political,
ideological, economic, and social practices'. Its very investment in culture makes imperialism a force that exists far beyond a geographical empire, corresponding in contemporary times to what Kwame Nkrumah (1909-72), the first President of Ghana, called 'neo-colonialism' (1965) (ibid).

Colonialism exhibits "an expansionist and proselytizing ethos" based on a sense of both 'duty and domination' and manifested in a policy of paternal guardianship (as cited in Beidelman, 1982, p. 4). This involves an attempt at transforming a subject people who are judged inferior to the colonial rule yet capable of conversion to a "higher" level, albeit one judged unequal to that of their masters and teachers. These notions are intensified in a religious mission and appear in all such colonialist endeavours (ibid).

Views on the colonial impact on a society are markedly different from a missionary or coloniser's point of view to those of the colonised native as also amongst the scholars. For Homi Bhabha, the objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin. This is done in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction (Bhabha, 2001, p. 391). The discourse of colonialism would have it that the colonized subject is the 'Other' of the Westerner, essentially outside Western culture and civilization (Bhabha, 1994, p. 66-84).

Padel examined the relationship between the colonisers and the Kond tribe of Orissa; more specifically the former's reaction to the latter's customs and ways of life. He wrote:

Missionaries' self-sacrifice is often extreme and their benevolence, especially in education and medicine, seems beyond question. But it is a fundamental bias in their outlook which polarises people, in the idea that Christianity is superior to other religions and that only Christians can be 'saved'. Behind a mask of meekness, there is thus an enormous arrogance and violence in the missionary
enterprise: a fundamental 'closed ness' and prejudice against other cultures and religions (Padel, 1995, p. 185).

In understanding colonial writings, it would be useful to discuss at the onset the two types of study as given by B.S. Cohn. Cohn differentiates ethno-historians from colonial historians. Cohn considers ethno-history as the historical study of any-European peoples utilizing documentary, oral and archaeological sources and the conceptual framework and insight of cultural and social anthropology. These types of studies attempt to reconstruct the history of indigenous peoples before and after European contact. The ethno-historian tries to perceive historical events from the position of the aborigines rather than that of European administrators. He is more interested in the impact of the colonial policy and practice than in the genesis of these policies in the metropolitan society (as documented by B.K. Roy Burman in Mackenzie, 2007, p. 12). Colonial historians are those who are chroniclers of events, which are relevant from the point of view of colonial administration of the time (ibid, p. 13).

3.3 Administrations of Hill Areas during Colonial Period

The arrival of the British in North East India goes back to 1761 when the East India Company and the Nawab of Bengal (through their combined armed forces) assaulted Tripura (Chaube, 1973, p. 3). It was after the Treaty of Yandabo, concluded at the end of the first Anglo-Burman war, between the East India Company and the kingdom of Burma on 24th February 1826 that British rule began in North East India (Downs, 1992. p. 6). The earliest recorded visit to North-East India was made in 1626 by two Jesuits, Frs. Stephen Cacella and John Cabral, who were looking for a passage to Tibet (Downs, 1994, p. 40). In the nineteenth century, the Baptists of Serampore under William Pettigrew, an English missionary of the Arthington Aborigines Mission Society, showed missionary interest in the North East of India (Sitlhou, 2006, p. 4). He became the first missionary to go to Manipur with full patronage from a British official Mr. A. Porteous, the acting Political Agent (Dena, 1988, p. 31).
The geographical division of Manipur into valley and hills undoubtedly provided the best opportunity to the British for the application of their well-known "divide and rule" policy. J. Shakespeare, Political Agent (1905-1907), placed the scheme for future administration of the state, which deliberately excluded the hill territory on the plea that "the hill tribes are not Manipuris and have entirely different customs and languages" (Dena, 2006, p. 3).

After the Anglo-Manipur War of 1891, the hill areas were brought under the British rule by keeping the hill administration under the personal responsibility of the Political Agent (Kipgen, in Priyoranjan Singh's (ed), 2009, p. 332). "The Sanad issued by the British authority to Raja Churachand Singh clearly stated that the final authoritative control rested with the British (ibid)." Besides the Political Agent, the administration and control of the hill tribes were also left in the hands of the vice-president. In their approach to the hill peoples, the colonial officials adopted a paternalistic attitude. This was merely confined to the formal recognition of tribal chiefs only and beyond this, nothing was done to improve the living condition of the people (Dena, 2006, p. 3). It is to be noted that in the Hills of Manipur, as a legacy from the British period, individual rights given to the Tribal Chiefs over the jurisdiction of their village land was given cognizance by the government. The rights of the chief within the jurisdiction of the village were recognised. The document issued by the Sub-Division Officers or District Magistrates was considered to be equivalent to patta in the valley (Gangte, 2010, p. 132). In 1893, the hill areas were divided for the first time into five subdivisions namely Mao, Ukhrul, Tamenglong, Tengnoupal, and Churachandpur (Kshetri, 2006, p. 4).

During the colonial rule particularly after 1891, the hill forests were for the first time classified into three categories—village reserved forests, state reserved forests and open reserved forests. The only method of cultivation, as practised by the indigenous population, was shifting which required a vast expanse of cultivable forests. Surprisingly, the management of forests came under the direct
control of the durbar in which no hill men were represented. According to the forest act of 1927, the hill forests continued to be administered exclusively by the state government (Dena, 2006, p. 5).

Under the Constitution Act of 1935 or the Government of India Act of 1935, the central government was anxious to bring all states still in relations with local governments into direct relation with the Government of India. There was a special consideration in the case of Manipur. Relations with the state were to be conducted by the Governor of Assam in his personal capacity as an agent of the crown representative, and by letter No. F.544—P/36, dated the 1st April 1937, he was authorised under section 287 of the Act to discharge such functions of the crown in relations with Manipur state as had hitherto been performed by the Governor in council of Assam (Reid, 1997, p. 95).

After suppression of the Kukis in 1919, the British introduced certain innovative measures for consolidation of powers and better administration of Manipur which heralded the dawn of modern system of administration. They are—

1. State boundary of Manipur defined and well demarcated;
2. State Darbar for administration of the hill areas surrounding the valley of Imphal continued with improvements in the system;
3. The Governor of Assam made the appellate authority in the event of differences between the Maharajah and the Darbar, a measure that has an effect of virtual removal of the hill areas from the jurisdiction of the Maharajah;
4. Setting up three administrative sub-divisional headquarters at—
   a. Tamenglong—North-west Sub-Divisional headquarters with William Shaw appointed as SDO
   b. Ukhrul—North-East Sub-Divisional headquarters with LR Peter as SDO
c. Churachandpur—South-West Sub-Divisional headquarters with Casper as SDO (Gangte, 2010, pp. 152-153).

The President of the Darbar was responsible for administration of the entire hill areas of Manipur state on behalf of the Maharaja (Das, 1989, p. 12). A separate budget was set aside for the administration of the hill areas for the first time. The village administration remained unchanged. Most disputes, except certain heinous offences against the state, were settled in accordance with the tribal customs (Kshetri, 2006, p. 5). The demand for responsible government gained momentum in Manipur during the 1940s. The Maharajah wanted to introduce some political reforms in the state. Pearson, the president of the state durbar, insisted that until and unless separate hill administration regulation was sanctioned, no new constitution would come into effect (Dena, 2006, p. 4). The Maharaja formed the Manipur State Interim Council on the eve of independence. Out of the seven members of the councils selected by the Maharaja, two were hill representatives (Kshetri, 2006, p. 6). One amongst the hill representatives was made to be in charge of the hill areas. This was the first time in which the hill people were given the chance to participate in the management of their own affairs (ibid).

3. 4 British Policies towards the Kukis

According to T.S. Gangte, the British policy towards the Kukis changes from the policy of ‘non-interference’ or Political Laissez Faire to Forward Policy (Gangte, 2010, p. 120). This has to be understood in the larger context of their policies towards the North East India and Burma (ibid, p. 118).

3. 4. 1 Policy of Non-Interference or Political Laissez Faire or Kukis as Buffers

Initially, the British colonial policy was to insulate British territory from any Burmese threat. When the large-scale migration of new Kukis took place in 1840, McCulloch, Political Agent, was entrusted with the work of settlement of Kukis.
The general policy of the British towards the Kukis in Manipur was that of non-interference. Col. McCulloch adopted this policy from the very beginning of their settlement in Manipur in the mid 19th century (Ray, 1990, p. 76). The British policy of non-interference with the Nagas was abandoned long before in 1861. This was to protect the British subjects from the Naga raids. The initial policy towards the Lushais was to refrain from the direct administration and giving the chiefs full independence in the administration of the hills. This policy was abandoned afterwards when the Lushai Expedition was harbourd under the leadership of Col. Lister in 1950. This was in response to the outrage committed by the Lushais in the British territory, Cachar and Sylhet. This culminated in the Lushai Expedition of 1871-72. Compared to the two immediate neighbouring tribes, the Thadou-Kuki chiefs enjoyed Laissez Faire for a considerably longer period of time (Ray, 1990, pp. 76-77).

In the words of Asok Kumar Ray, this independence was adopted as a tactic of divide and rule. At the time of settlement of the Thadou-Kukis, the Lushais and the Nagas were the main enemies of the British. In order to subdue them, the Thadou-Kuki Chiefs were given special benefit of autonomy by the British as a part of their appeasement policy. This was done so that they might not only recognise the British authority as a saviour and friend, but also organised their tribal subjects against the neighbouring recalcitrant tribes under the protection and directives of their colonial masters (ibid, p. 77).

McCulloch, the Governor General studied the Kukis carefully before approaching them. He adopted a superficial sympathetic approach to the Kukis (Thadou-Kukis). He knew that the sole objective of the Kuki exodus was to secure land for cultivation and not for conquest (Gangte, 2010, p. 122). He befriended them, allotted lands in different places according to their number, and where their presence would be useful on exposed frontiers, thus scattering them all over the hills surrounding the valley of Imphal without being allowed to occupy compact areas so that they might be easily subdued in the event of
such future exigency (Johnstone, 1987, pp. 26-27). McCulloch made the following observation:

...I encourage them to come and go, though if it were possible, the Sootie (Sukte) tribe to be attacked, and treacherously planned to protect themselves by exposing other Kuki tribes with arms to confront with the Sukte Kukis and the Lushai Kukis as and when the latter attacked Manipur. In connection with these people (Sukte and Lushai Kukis), and as a protection to the South of the valley, the Raja and I have established in the south villages of Kookies (Kukis), to whom are given arms, and whom we call sepoy villages. They are to be unrestricted in their cultivation, and have to send scouts to watch the tribes at the season when they are most able to move about and to mischief. These sepoy villages are not quite settled, but by care they might be brought to a proper state of usefulness (as documented in Gangte, 2010, p. 121).

McCulloch purposely settled Kukis on the exposed frontiers and among the Nagas. He is said to have given them a large sum of money to the Kukis from his own pocket and also recruited many of them in the service of the state. The policy of McCulloch in the settlement of Kukis was highly appreciated by both the state government and the supreme authorities in Calcutta. The settlement of close to the frontiers served double purposes. The Kukis had to act as a buffer, first against any Burmese invasion, and secondly, against Nagas or Mizos. In this way, the Kukis constituted a very strong base for frontier defence. In like manner, the British officials had previously used the Nagas first against the Burmese and then against the Kukis and Mizos. On different occasions, such as the invasion of Mao-Nagas in north Manipur, the Suktes in south Manipur and the Naga uprising in Kohima in 1879, the British army officers effectively used the Kuki warriors and this was perhaps the time when the first seed of enmity was sown between the two ethnic groups (Dena, 2006, p. 5).³
Alexander Mackenzie wrote the Kukis as migrants from the south who had previously occupied the hills south of Cachar. From there, they were driven by the advanced northward of a more powerful people from the unexplored country between British province and Burma (Mackenzie, 2007, p. 146).

Before the establishment of the Naga Hills District, proposals were frequently made to utilise these Kookies (Kukis) as a buffer or screen between our more timid subjects and the Angamis. In 1856-57, lands were assigned rent-free for 10 and afterwards for 25 years to any Kookies who would settle to the east of North Cachar beyond the Langting River. Government gave them firearms and ammunitions. In 1859, about 600 Kookies (Kukis) had accepted free settlement on these terms, and in 1860, the colony contained 1356 inhabitants in seven villages. The Angamis avoided these villages, so the country in the rear of the Kookie (Kuki) settlement was free from incursions (ibid).

Out of this policy, two significant developments took place. First, the Thadoe (Thadou) Kukis, due to their association with the British army, they became militarily much stronger than other neighbouring tribe, and this prove advantageous for them. The most likely reason for choosing the Kukis in their schema could be that the British Government always preferred tribal organisation led by chiefs to a democratic organisation, probably because it was easy to control them through the chiefs (Bhadra, 1975, p. 21). The Thadous’ due to their services to the state enjoyed a special position. As Hutton wrote “the Thado (Thadou), ruled as they are by their own well recognised chiefs and treated as they had been in the past at any rate, by the Manipur state as allies as much as subjects, managed their own affairs in their own way and had recourse to their courts only in exceptional cases” (as cited in Bhadra, 1975, p. 21).

In pursuance of its policy of non-interference, the British tried “direct control, personal influence, conciliatory intercourse supported at the same time by adequate strength” as its measures (Gangte, 2010, p. 124). The British arranged an annual gathering of chiefs at some convenient place in the hills. In the
occasion, the Superintendent representing the British Government received trifling offerings from each chief. He bestowed on them presents in return. He also took the opportunity of hearing and redressing all complaints and grievances, and of encouraging free and friendly communication between them and the people of the plains (ibid, p. 125).

During the initial period of the Kuki Uprising between the years 1917 to 1919, the Political Agent Higgins tried the policy of negotiation and conciliation in deference to the desire of higher authority (Gangte, 2010, p. 120). Higgins became the Political Agent on Colonel H.W.G. Cole’s departure to France with the Labour Corps (as cited in Chishti, 2004, p. 11). He arranged for a Durbar and invited the Kuki Chiefs to attend (Shakespear, 1977, p. 210). The main objectors among the Chiefs, Chief Ngulkhup of Mombi and Chief Ngulbul of Longya, two important villages south of Imphal, refused to attend the Durbar. They gave “insolent replies” and threatened that if force was used against them they would retaliate in like measure to resist the British (Palit, 1919, p. 62).

Mrs. Cole, the wife of H.W.G. Cole, the Political Agent who was away in France with the Labour Corps decided to take hand in the proceedings (ibid). Both she and her husband had been good friends of the Chief of Mombi and she thought the officiating Political Agent was not handling the state of affairs properly (ibid, pp. 62-63). She reached Shuganu (Sugnu) and hold talks with Chief Ngulkhup and three of his headmen. Unfortunately, Mrs. Cole was not successful in persuading the Chief to compromise with the British plan (ibid, p. 63).

The aftermath was that, there was a change in approach from conciliatory to the use of show of force (ibid, p. 62). Thereafter, Higgins, the political agent in charge, prepared a policy of ‘active interference’ (Forward Policy) in the form of subjugation with arms, which he thought was the only way the Kukis could understand (Gangte, 2010, pp. 120-121). Colonel L.W. Shakespear wrote:
The insolent messages from Mombi and Longya requiring active notice being taken, the officiating Political Agent, with Captain Coote and 100 rifles, marched in September to visit Mombi, six days out from Imphal, where open hostility greeted them. A skirmish followed and the place was destroyed, after which they were en route for Longya, when orders were received to return and take no further action with the Kukis (Shakespear, 1977, p. 210).

3.4.2 Forward Policy or Kuki Punitive Measures during the Anglo-Kuki War of 1917-1919

The ‘Kuki Rebellion,’ as the British termed the uprising, was more in the nature of a tribal outburst against oppressive measures than a ‘rebellion’, that is, the term ‘rebellion’ might be an inappropriate term to define (Palit., 1919, p. 61). The records of 1917-1919, available in the archives of the British Library in London, is entitled ‘Kuki rising’, and not ‘Kuki uprising’. ‘Rising’ is a political terminology symbolising the national status of Kuki, who were not under British rule; ‘uprising’, on the other hand, implies a subjugated nation in rebellion (Haokip, 2002).

The event that leads to the revolt can be summarised in the following manner. The First World War required the British Government to ask for labour force to assist them in the battlefields of France (Bhadra, 1975, p. 11). The British government demanded the province of Assam for furnishing quota of labourers for employment with the army in France during the war (Ray, 1990, pp. 64-65). “Labour Corps had been raised for France in 1916 amongst various clans of Nagas, Lushais and others, who willingly came in, having in many cases done this sort of work for Government before in border expeditions, and knew the work and good pay (Shakespear, 1977, p. 209).” In 1917, with the support of the Maharajah, the British enlist labourers to serve the Allied forces in France (Parratt, 2005, p. 42). As demands for labourers from France and Mesopotamia increased, the Political Department decided to extend the recruitment to the
various clans of the Kukis settling in the hill regions of Manipur state (Palit, 1919, pp. 61-62).

The various Kuki clans inhabiting the native State of Manipur were a people who had never left their hills and knew very little of the English man's way. They refused to cooperate and argued that this was not their war and that they did not intend to cooperate with an administration that had treated them unjustly (Shakespeare, 1977, p. 210). Furthermore, they pointed out that by the ancient custom of their people, they were under no obligation to provide young men to serve a government that had not conquered them in battle (Downs, 1971, p. 169). The Administration Report of the Manipur State for the year 1917-1918 records:

> As regards the hill tribes, political conditions were abnormal throughout the year. The two outstanding events were—(1) the despatch in May 1917 to France of the 22nd Manipur Labour Corps consisting of 2,000 Nagas and Kukis living in Manipur Hills; (2) the development of opposition on the part of the majority of the Kuki tribes to recruiting for the Labour Corps into an open armed rebellion against the British Government.4

In a letter to Mr. J.E. Webster, Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam, Mr. Higgins the Political Agent in Manipur wrote:

> When I returned I found things very bleak, as regard recruiting, all the Kukis and the Maram tribe have refused to send coolies. On Thursday, I heard that many of the Kukis chiefs had assembled at a village 20 miles west of here to hold a council. I at once send out a Lambu (hill peon) to tell them to meet me on Friday, I started out to meet them. However, I met men with news that they had dispersed two days previously, but that they wished to see me ten days later if I would meet them. I have accordingly sent out word to all the chiefs to meet me three marches from here on the 9th October. This gives the farther villages time to

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4 Administration Report of the Manipur State for the Year 1917-1918, p. 2
come in. But it is still extremely doubtful whether they will supply the men we required.\(^5\)

In the first week of March 1917, Chengjapao Chief of Aisan, held a gathering of various chiefs to deliberate on the impending war. According to Kuki custom, a buffalo was slaughtered on the occasion, and *Shajam lha* was performed. *Shajam lha* is an auspicious tradition: the flesh of the animal is distributed among the chiefs to mark solidarity; the heart and liver is shared, symbolising commitment to the cause. The same tradition was observed at the Chassad Conclave, as well as at Jampi, Henglep, Mombi (Lonpi), Joujang, Phailengjang (present day upper Chindwin), Haflong (present day Assam) and Mechanguang (present day Nagaland).\(^6\) The first person to adopt an obstructive means was a Thadou chief, Mr. Chengjapao of Aisan (a village in present day Ukhrul district of Manipur) who had sent orders to all the leading chiefs to resist recruitment with force if necessary. Other influential chiefs also reported to have taken similar steps, and the messengers sent to several villages met with opposition (Ray, 1990, p. 68).

The Kukis had a very ingenious system of spreading news, which was very effective in this area. The message consisted of burnt wood, a chilli, a bullet; gunpowder etc. each signifying some kind of instruction (Bhadra, 1975, p. 34).

Colonel L.W. Shakespear wrote:

> During these operations, all the advantage lay with the active scantily-clad Kukis, armed certainly only with the old “Brown Bess,” but who know their hills and forests, carry no packs, do not bother themselves over supplies who are rarely seen in their forests, and who are adepts at guerrilla and jungle warfare (Shakespear, 1977, p. 236).

Major John Butler wrote that savages people are likely to manifest greater boldness and presumption when their aggression is passed with impunity or their acts of violence are not instantly chastised. Procrastination or forbearance

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\(^5\) Letter from Mr. Higgins, Political Agent in Manipur to Mr. Webster, Imphal dated 24-9-1917

on the part of the Britishers to deal with it immediately is construed by them as fear (as cited in Shakespear, 1977, pp. 211-212). Thus, the start of the rebellion was largely due to the habit of procrastination of the Britishers' in not dealing at once and fully with it when the trouble first showed itself (ibid).

According to Shakespear, the government's mistake was that when the trouble first showed itself, it was not firmly dealt with (ibid, p. 235). Moreover, because the First World War was in progress, large force of regulars could not be employed in suppressing the rising (ibid). Bhadra opined that the British official documents have viewed the Thadoe (Thadou) war as the outcome of two causes—(a) the recruitment for labour corps for warfare in France and (b) the wrong administrative approach (Bhadra, 1975, p. 14).

Chishti (2004), Bhadra (1975), Ray (1990) and Reid (1997) suggested the role of Lambus as intermediaries as one of the possible causes of the rebellion. According to Ray (1990, p. 66), Lambus were appointed by the British and acted as a go between the hill people and the British administration and would convey the directives of the government from time to time. The Lambus were originally intended to be interpreters, but they soon developed into petty officials, advisors and administrators, whose role devalued the traditional authority of the chiefs. They were said to be open to bribery. This caused considerable antagonism and resentment on the part of the local people who felt alienated from the administration (Parratt, 2005, p. 43). The administration was seriously out of touch with their hill subjects, that the latter were not always well treated, and that there were genuine grievances and genuine abuses behind the immediate cause, i.e., the question of recruitment for the Labour Corps, which turned discontent into open rebellion (Reid, 1997, p. 79).

The Thadous section of the Kukis had from the start taken the lead in opposing recruitment, and one chief had actually even threatened to destroy any villages, that cooperated with the second recruitment. During the same time a Meetei
Prophet, Chingakham Sanajaoba, was going about the hills declaring that British rule as coming to an end, and that warriors who opposed it would be immune to British bullets. The smouldering resentment broke out in December 1917 and the Thadous' raided the South of the valley (Parratt, 2005, p. 43). Parratt wrote:

Initial attempts by the Assam Rifles to subdue them proved ineffective, and the Assam Rifles suffered heavy casualties in attempting to take the strongly fortified Kuki stockades. The Thadous then destroyed telegraph lines and cut the road to Burma. Thus was more alarming since the Burmese Chins, who were ethnically related to the Kukis had begun to rise up at the same time (ibid).

T.S. Gangte stated that the case of the Kukis from Burma was different from that of Manipur Kukis (Gangte, 2010, p. 99). The Kukis from Burma had really no grievance against the Government, but joined the war simply out of sympathy with their brethren across the border and in token expression of clan royalty as tradition and culture provided for (ibid).

The war directed against the British also had serious repercussions towards the neighbouring tribes as well. In the early months of 1918, some section of the Kukis began to take advantage of the unrest to settle old scores with their traditional Naga enemies. The Kabuis, Tangkhuls and the Koms all suffered from violent attacks and the Assam Rifles had to be sent back to protect them. T first, the British appeared to be losing control as destruction of property and loss of lives spread into the Somra tract. When the British offered an amnesty in the later part of the war, several of the Kuki chiefs accepted a settlement (Parratt, 2005, p. 43). A campaign led by the General Officer Commanding of Burma and the Political Agent Higgins, assisted by cooperation from Kuki chiefs finally led to the quashing of the uprising in 1919 (ibid). It had been a serious episode, costing some Rs. 28 lakhs and many lives. It had also exposed the inadequacies of the British administration in the hills (ibid). As Reid (1942: 78-82) later acknowledged that, there were genuine grievances and genuine abuses behind the revolt, quite apart from the recruitment issue which is the most common
assumption of the cause of the war (as cited in Parratt, 2005, p. 43). "Very little was known to the public of these operations; one or two Calcutta papers only published short and erroneous accounts of what they wrote of as ‘outings of Political Officers and their escorts,’ and generally belittling a long, hard ‘show’ carried through eventually to a successful issue by the combined Military Police forces of Assam and Burma (Shakespear, 1977, p. 235)."

These operations, known officially as the Kuki Punitive Measures, were entrusted by Government to the control of the General Officer Commanding of Burma, who had under him a large force of Assam Rifles and Burma Military Police. The Administration Report of the Manipur State for the year 1918-1919 records:

By March 1919, Pachei, the last of the leading Kuki rebel chiefs to surrender, had been placed in Imphal jail. Since the close of the year a tribunal examined the cases of some of the leading Kuki chiefs, who in addition to the Manipur pretender, Chingakhamba Senachaoba Singh, have been removed to Kohima for deportation under Regulation III of 1818. During the Kuki Punitive Measures some 650 guns, mostly unlicensed, were withdrawn from the villages in the Manipur Hills in addition to some 350 guns in the adjoining Somra Tract, where the Kukis, who previously lived in Manipur, had many guns (ibid).

The punitive measures alone could not bring the situation under control without resorting to strong economic measures. In the words of Sir Robert Reid:

Any attempt to bring the enemy to battle and inflict losses on them would have been useless. Instead, economic measures were taken. The rebellion broke out after the Kukis had reaped the harvest in 1917. Columns operating over a wide area prevented them from sowing and reaping a crop in 1918, and by 1919, resistance collapsed owing to the lack of food (Ray, 1990, p. 75).
The military operations against the Kuki Chiefs under General Sir Henry Keary were officially closed on 20th May, 1919. During the military operation, one Kuki chief, Ngulbul of Longya was killed in the battle at Lonpi Fort (Gangte, 2010, p. 76). “The hostile chiefs in Manipur territory were detained under Regulation III of 1918. The armed police of Burma arrested the rebels in Burmese territory after a fierce battle at Molvailup village in Burma. Those arrested from the Burmese territory were dealt with Section 16 of the Chin Hills Regulation, 1896 (Ray, 1990, p. 75).” It took more than 5,000-armed men about two years to suppress the uprising.

Some of the key leaders were deported to the Andamans in 1919 while others were put at hard labour (Downs, 1971, p. 169). According to Downs, the local Nagas were active in the governments' operations, assisting them by providing intelligence or leading government forces to Kuki encampments. The rebellion did nothing to improve the relations between these two communities (ibid). The conflict had devastating consequences for the social and economic lives of the affected villages, which were burned down several times. Epidemics that broke out during and after the fighting eventually killed more people than the operations themselves had (ibid).

3.4.3 Cultural Discontinuities: Waves of Changes

The defeat of the Kukis in the war was more than a defeat of arms. It was a defeat of the old ways of life. One significant result of the uprising was that large number of the Thadou-Kukis began to profess Christianity and move away from their old belief systems. A possible reason could be the fact that Christianity was the religion of their conquerors and thus considered superior to their own (Downs, 1971, p. 169). “Sometimes conditions, as Dr Mc Gavran has pointed out, attending defeat conduced towards acceptance—acceptance of the conqueror's
religion. Equally important, the opening up of better means of communication, properly cut-roads through the forests in various directions also made the evangelistic tours a far less laborious matter (Dena, 1988, p. 48).” Therefore, the Kuki Uprising 1917-1919 was an important landmark in the history of the Thadou-Kukis in two ways. It resulted in changes in the administration of Manipur by British administrators, which for the first time acknowledged the Hill population. It also resulted in the transformation of the socio-cultural life of people due to mass conversion to Christianity. Thus, the anti-colonial movement paved the way for a massive change affecting the very social structure of the society.

3. 5 **Spatializing the Missionary Encounter: The Interaction between Missionary Work and Space in Colonial Settings**

Colonialism and Christian missions followed each other in North East India, like in other parts of the world. In 1813, the British Parliament removed all restrictions on missionary activities in India. Christian Missions in India began with the passing of Clause XXXII of the Charter Act of 1813 by the British Parliament (Dena, 1988, p. 18). “The Charter contained a provision that persons desirous to go and settle in India for the purpose of introducing religious and moral improvement should apply for permission to the Court of Directors, and if refused by this authority, the application could be transmitted to the Board of Control which was also empowered to grant permission to the missionaries. The same Charter ascertained government protection to each person thus arrived in India (Barkataki, 1985, p. 84).” This encourages the missionary movement to enter the North East India. The advent of Christianity in the North East India can be marked by the Treaty of Yandaboo concluded at the end of the first Anglo-Burman war, between the East India Company and the kingdom of Burma on 24th February 1826 (Downs, 1992, p. 6).

The year 1894 marked the arrival of William Pettigrew in Manipur. Sponsored by the Arthington Aborigines Mission, Pettigrew started his work at Imphal, the
capital of the state on 6 February 1894. Pettigrew not only mastered the Manipuri language, he also reduced it into writing (Singh, 1991, p. 57). Soon after permission was granted to him, Mr. Pettigrew immediately went to Imphal, the Capital of the State, and began his work by opening a school for Manipuri boys (Pettigrew, 1934). Within six months, the British authorities who were administering the State on behalf of the Hindus rajah, then a minor, decided against allowing Mission work among the Manipur Hindus of the valley, and Mr. Pettigrew was instead given permission to take up work, 'at his own risk' among the Tangkhul Nagas in the Hills to the northeast of Imphal (ibid).

The risk referred to here is better understood in Pettigrew's own word. He wrote:

To accept either one of the two conditions was the alternative sent us from Shillong a year and half later: Say "Yes" to the proposal of leaving the valley alone, and establishing mission head-quarters among the head hunting Naga tribe called the Tangkhul Nagas in the hills in the north-east corner of the State, bordering on Upper Burma. Say "No" and leave the state for good. This was the ultimatum given to us in November, 1895. It is interesting to note that a few months before this announcement was made, one of the villages of this tribe had been raided and over 140 heads cut off and carried away (Pettigrew, 1932).

At the request of the then Political Agent Colonel Maxwell, Pettigrew headed to the west in Ukhrul in 1895 and made it his first centre. Consequently, the Tangkhul-Nagas in Ukhrul district became the first to accept Christianity in the hills (Singh, 1991, p. 68). When Pettigrew decided to settle and work among the Tangkhul-Nagas, the Arthington Aborigines were no longer in position to support his work. Pettigrew placed his case before the American Baptist Missionary Triennial Conference held at Sibsagar in December 1895 (Sangma, 1987, p. 274). The Assam Mission Records show that the Missionary Union took

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9 Rev. Jonah M. Solo and Rev. K. Mahangthei compiled the autobiographies, accounts and personal diaries of Pettigrew. The research will make use of these materials to represent the perspectives and experiences of the first missionary William Pettigrew as well as the early missionaries' encounters in Manipur Hills.
over the Manipur field from the Arthington Aborigines Mission on 1st February 1896 (Singh, 1991, p. 68).

During 1910-11, Pettigrew as Superintendent of Census got an opportunity to visit other hill areas of Manipur (Sangma, 1987 (vol.1), p. 277). The Thadou-Kukis were the second tribe to accept Christianity in Manipur. Pettigrew went to a Kuki village called Senvon in the southern hills and requested the chief for permission to work in that place. He was denied the permission. In 1909, apparently having changed his mind, this same chief invited Watkin Roberts of the Welsh Presbyterian Mission at Aizawl to establish a school in his village (Downs, 1971). Though all of Manipur was technically an American Baptists field, the southern hills were far removed from the centres of that Mission’s work where the Presbyterian centres in the Mizo Hills were much closer. In 1909 itself, Roberts organized the Indo-Burma Thado Kookie Pioneer Mission for work in that area (ibid). The Senvon church in the southern hills was the first to be established among the Kukis, but the progress was more rapid among the Kukis of the North and North West once work had begun among them (ibid, p. 167). Since, our field areas lies in the North West of Manipur, the thesis will concentrate on the work of the Baptist missionaries’ in the region.

Massive conversion to Christianity occurred amongst the Thadou-Kukis only after the defeat of this tribe in the Kuki Rebellion (1917-1919) or the Kuki War of Independence. The first Kuki Baptist church was established at Tujang Vaichong village in 1916, largely through the work of Ngulha Thomsong (Down, 1971). Crozier and his wife assisted Pettigrew in this mission field. They contributed greatly by opening a leper asylum and translated the scripture into Thadou dialect (ibid).

During the First World War, the British Government in its requirement to raise labour corps from amongst the hill, people were faced with a large-scale rebellion. Certain section of the Kuki tribe (mostly the Thadou-Kukis) rebelled
on the suggestion to provide a second labour corps (Chishti, 2004, p. 10). The organisation and recruitment for the Manipur Labour Corps among the hill tribes was under the charge of Pettigrew (Dena, 1988, pp. 37).

Pettigrew had to study Thadou-Kuki language in order to reach out to them (Dena, 1988, p. 109). According to Missionary Report for 1916, the Thadou-Kuki primers prepared in 1912 were printed in 1913. One significant contribution of the missionaries among the various tribes of Manipur was the translation of the Scriptures. They recognised the need for translation in the dialect of the three most important tribes in Manipur state, viz. the Manipuri, the Tangkhul Naga and the Thadou-Kuki. It had fallen upon Dr. and Mrs. Croziers to master the Thadou-Kuki language and translate the Scriptures into that language (Sangma, 1987 (Vol. 2), p. 243). The natives also contributed not only in preaching the Gospel, but also in the translation work among communities other than their own. For instance, Pakho Sitlhou, a Thadou Christian of this period gave most of his life in service among the Rongmei Nagas. He prepared a hymnal in their language and assisted in the translation of Scripture portions (Downs, 1971, p. 170). The gospel also got propagated by the local people themselves through their interaction with the other neighbouring tribes.

In 1924, the Bible Society published the gospel of John, translated by Ngulhau Thomsong, revised, and prepared for press by William Pettigrew. Under him, the New Testament was printed under the name “Thadou-Kuki” in 1942. The

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10 During his tour of investigations in south-west Manipur, Pettigrew also discovered that in western portion of Manipur, north of the Cachar Road, is inhabited by the Thado (Thadou) branches of the Kuki clan, and the areas south of the Cachar road, although having many Thado (Thadou) clan villages, is to a great extent occupied by different branches of the Lushai and Old Kuki clans. What did strike Pettigrew was the predominance of the Thado (Thadou) language among all these many and varied branches. Even the Kabui Nagas who occupied many villages to the north and south of the Cachar Road, and whose population is estimated at about 6000 persons at that time, use the Thado language in intercourse with other villages. Therefore, Pettigrew was no doubt that the lingua franca for all these branches of Kukis and Lushai who occupy these areas, and whenever Mission work is established in these sections, Thado (Thadou) should be made the medium of instructions for all. Also the Thado (Thadou) literature will not only reach the Thados (Thadous) but all the varied clans that cover the southern and western hills of Manipur (Sangma, 1987, p. 278).
Bible Society of India published a translation of the Old Testament together with a revised New Testament prepared by Tongkhojang Lunkim in 1971. This was the first complete Bible identified as being a "Kuki" version (Go, 1996, p. 81). Besides the early converts and the Lambus (interpreters) who helped in translation works, the native clerks, Chaparasis and village chiefs were also involved as informants at various points in the codification of customary laws and textualisation of ethnographic works. In fact, they were active participants in the process and acted as an indispensable aide to the missionaries. From the very beginning, the expansion of Christianity has indeed been about such a 'shared enterprise'. Local people were as much missionaries as were members of the mission societies. They were often the driving force in the work of evangelisation, Bible translation, printing, creating education and health facilities, and building up and providing pastoral care for the community (Visvanathan, 1993, p. 9).

As the missionaries generally were in closer contact with the local population than colonial officials were, studying their spatial practices and strategies offers better potential for analysing the dynamics of intercultural interaction in the colonial setting. Dena had rightly said that the missionary movement was seen as the most effective force of colonisation, not only because it did not use force, but especially as it penetrated more deeply into the life of the people (Dena, 1988, p. 8). The Missionaries aimed at overall changes in the beliefs and actions of native peoples, at colonization of heart and mind as well as body (Beidelman, 1982, p. 6). However, to understand the nature of the influence of the missionary, it is important to understand the location of the missionary within the colonial structure. The influence of the missionary in the colonial policies towards the hill tribes is analysed. This would help us in understanding the location of the missionary within the colonial structure.

156
3.6 Colonialism and Christian Mission

The most common dilemma is often whether to look at the Christian missions as a part and parcel of the colonial structure and seek to construe it within that system or whether to look at it as a completely separate entity altogether. Christian mission and colonialism were two movements opposed to each other fundamentally (Dena, 1988, p. 12). William Pettigrew first brought Christianity to Manipur in 1894. Pettigrew’s original plan of preaching the Gospel among the plains of Manipur was put to an end by a notification of the Political Agent on 11th December 1894:

Under instructions of the local government I have the honour to inform you that owing to the Manipur state being administered on behalf of the minor Raja, no missionary of any denomination intending to work in the state territory can be admitted into Manipur without the precious sanction of the chief commissioner of Assam.1

According to Singh (1991, p. 61), since most of the Manipuris hold to the tenets of the Hindu religion bordering in fact almost to fanaticism, the Political Agent could easily conceive the trouble, which would arise as soon as the Raja of Manipur was placed in charge of his state on reaching manhood. Pettigrew headed to the west in Ukhrul in 1895 and made it his first centre. The Tangkhul-Nagas in Ukhrul district became the first to accept Christianity in the hills of Manipur (ibid, p. 68). The ‘Thadou-Kukis’ were the second tribe to accept Christianity in Manipur (Downs, 1971, p. 167). The Manipur Baptist mission field was broadly divided into two areas, the Tangkhul-Nagas (Ukhrul in the North East) where Pettigrew had worked for about twenty-five years and the Kukis of western hills, where Pettigrew began work just before the war, though at that time not yet permitted to tour in that section (Crozier, in Zeliang, 2005).

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1 Notification no. 806, dated Manipur the 11th December 1894, addressed to Rev. W. Pettigrew, Missionary, Manipur as documented in, K. M Singh, 1991
Although the relation between the colonial administrator and missionaries started off on a bad note, it gradually changed as situations compelled them to interact and depend on each other. The state government appointed William Pettigrew, the American Baptist Missionary, as superintendent of the census of the hill tribes (1910-1911). This was because the missionary was the only man who knew the language of the hill tribes. The census work definitely enabled the missionary and his native workers to explore more areas hitherto unvisited.\(^{12}\) Thus, the missionary was ready to cooperate with the government if he was convinced that its policy was of benefit to the people and for his mission.

During the First World War, the British Government in its requirement to raise labour corps from amongst the Hill people were faced with a large scale rebellion. The aggression which came to be known as the ‘Kuki Rebellion’\(^{13}\) (1917-1919) lasted for two years before the chiefs surrendered and the strife ceased. For the period of the war, Pettigrew was active in recruiting Labour Corps for France. It was because of Pettigrew’s war service that the government gave him permission for a second Missionary family to work in Manipur. Earlier government stipulation was that only two missionaries were allowed in the entire state to care for the two vast fields of Ukhrul and Kangpokpi (Zeliang, 2005, pp. 6-67).\(^{14}\) Consequently, Crozier was allowed to assist Pettigrew in his mission work as a full time missionary (Downs, 1971, p. 160). Manipur, under the American Baptist, was divided into two ‘spheres of influence’. Pettigrew supervised the North East and Sadar regions (the area North of Imphal up to the Nagaland border) and Crozier, the North West (ibid, p. 158).

The interconnection between them was more in the nature of highly temporary process solely determined by the principle of expediency (Dena, 1988, p. 12). The

\(^{12}\) Minutes of the ABMC, 10th Session held in December 18-29, 1886, Gauhati, 1992, p. 81
\(^{13}\) This war was significant in two ways:--there was large-scale conversion to Christianity among the Thadou-Kukis after their defeat and various land acts was introduce to curtail the land rights of the hill people.
\(^{14}\) Reports by Rev. J.S. Anderson, CBCNEI, 1954-55, as compiled by Elungkiebe Zeliang, 2005
relationship between the administrators and the missionary was cordial as long as the other did not affect the functioning of the other or, in cases when one can act as a means to the other’s end. However, when the missionary enterprises become a threat to political stability, the government was not hesitant to curtail it. In the same way, the missionaries go along with the administrators as long as it served their evangelistic fervour.

3. 7 Quotidian Contestations: The Missionary and Local agencies

3. 7. 1 Re-ordering of Spatial arrangement of Land

During the years of the Kuki Rebellion, Crozier had served as a government medical officer. In appreciation for the services rendered, the Mission was finally given permission to purchase land for a new centre at Kangpokpi on the Imphal-Kohima road (Downs, 1971, p. 160). In the year 1920, the state had granted for the mission 212 acres of land for the Kangpokpi mission station and another 18 acres a quarter of mile away for a leper colony (Zeliang, 2005, pp. 58-62). After the Maharajah had given his consent, the clearing of the site and building began at Kangpokpi under the supervision of Mr. Seilut Singson, a Thadou-Kuki convert (Vaiphei, 1979, p. 58). The site was divided to accommodate an educational institution, roadside dispensary, a cemetery, a hospital and ladies’ compound (Zeliang, 2005).

The work among this tribe commenced in 1912 and resulted in a large number of baptisms in 1914. The massive conversion to Christianity occurred only after the defeat of this tribe in the Kuki Rebellion (1917-1919) or the Kuki War of Independence (Downs, 1971). Moreover, annual fund of Rs. 45,000 was sanctioned for the development of the Hills, but this facility lasted until only 1939-1940. The Government of India approved measures for the proper administration of the Hills, i.e., the opening up of roads and bridle paths; the extension of education among the tribes; and the bringing of medical reliefs within the reach of the people of the Hills (Reid, 1997, p. 83). Therefore,
missionaries through the funds allocated by the government did massive changes in terms of conversion as well as developmental works. It is not surprising that optimum impact of the missionary movement took place during these years.

In the initial days of missionary work amongst the Thadou-Kukis, the new converts or aspiring Christians had to travel from far to meet the missionaries. New centres for Christian missionary work were formed in different parts of Manipur:

According to the Missionary report for 1917, in Manipur, the centres of Christian work were located in three places. The most northern was at Tujang Vaichong, a wholly Christian village of 24 houses with a community of about 100 persons. The church was organised in 1916, and the existing membership was 86. Ngulhao, the evangelist looked after the interest of this community. At Christmas time, 83 of them travelled from their village to meet the Missionaries at the rest-house at Karong on a cart road. For three days there was happy fellowship with them and their conduct at the various services held, and their memorizing of hymns sung in hearty unison and to tune, made the Missionaries glad. Owing to restrictions, all these western Kukis (Thadou-Kukis) had to meet the Missionary far from their villages, and the absence of accommodation for them, and the necessity for worship to be held in the open air, made it difficult for all (Sangma, 1987, pp. 280-281).

Church planting was done at a rapid rate as a part of the missionary’s project. Whenever there were converts in a village, the Christian church in a nearby village sends a teacher to organize a church (Vaiphei, 1979, p. 57). Initiatives were also taken up by local Christians themselves to erect permanent church buildings in the villages. Cash crops like cotton, linseed and paddy were grown and the sale proceeds raised funds for building purposes (Sangma, 1987, p. 284).

The Thadou-Kukis were receptive of education even before a mission station was established in their area. The Ukhrul Field Report for 1916 recorded that of the 87 boys in the Ukhrul station school, 36 of these were Kuki young men from the
western hills (Zeliang, 2005, p. 48). This must have encouraged Pettigrew to set up a mission station among them as soon as he got the chance to do so. In the educational report for 1921, Crozier wrote that the Kangpokpi station school was started on December 9, 1919, with boys and girls just 32 days after they set the site (Zeliang, 2005). “The field report in the North-West of Manipur said that the state had ten schools in these areas and the Mission seven, two of the latter being Night schools. They had about 80 boys and 40 girls (Sangma, 1987, p. 239).”

The girls’ school at Kangpokpi continued during 1927. This was under the supervision of Mrs. Pettigrew. Despite the lack of enthusiasm from among the Christian parents and they preferred to keep young girls at home for housework and fieldwork (ibid). In 1935, under the Missionary Mr. and Mrs. J.E. Tanquist, there were 35 schools, besides the Mission Middle English School in Kangpokpi with a total enrolment of 191, of whom 130 were girls. The government Mission educational grant to school outside Kangpokpi was entirely withdrawn from 1st January 1940 (ibid, p. 240). The statistics for 1950 show the Kangpokpi field as having 234 churches, 1295 baptisms and a total church membership of 10,725. There were 124 primary schools and one Middle English school (Zeliang, 2005). All schools except the one in the main mission centre is entirely self-supporting. The mission school was accepted with positive response from the local population.

Thus, the Missionaries introduced a completely novel way of arrangement of land and spatial order. They introduced the system of division of place and institution according to the function it could provide. There was re-organisation of land and society through the implantation of Church and the establishment of mission fields. The whole of Manipur was divided into three mission

15 ABMC of the ABFMS, 1916, pp. 45-48, as compiled by Elungkiebe Zeliang, 2005
16 Crozier, Educational Report for 1921, as compiled by Elungkiebe Zeliang, 2005
17 Brock, E.E., CBCA, Kangpokpi Field Report for 1951-1952, as compiled by Elungkiebe Zeliang, 2005
associations—North-West, North-East and Central called Sadar (Sangma, 1987, p. 290). The mission compound had both educational and health-care amenities available, besides the Church. People moved closer towards mission centres and built their homes and villages around it. The converts were part of the paternalistic economy that developed around the Missionary and the Mission station. Education gave an alternative means of livelihood other than agriculture through the jobs provided by the mission stations, which diminished the dependency and pressure on land. Land was no longer the only determinant of one’s status or the only means of livelihood in the village.

3. 7. 2 Gender relationships within the Colonial Setting: Impact of the Missionary Compound

In comparison to her counterparts in the Indian mainland, the tribal women enjoy a comparatively privileged position. Yet, on the other hand, there is strong evidence of gender-specific cultural practices that undermine this apparent equality. According to Mangkhosat Kipgen, in the social organisation and village administration women had no place except under special circumstances where the widow of a deceased chief might rule over the village on behalf of her minor son until his maturity. The society was male dominated. The women’s domain was considered the home. In community matters, women were not consulted—and if they volunteered their opinions were not given weigh (Kipgen, 1997).

Chapman and Clark wrote about the widening gap between man and woman in tribal societies with the introduction of education when it was confined only to the men. They wrote:

As the schools opened the minds of the men and boys to new ideas, the gap between them and the women widened; Christianity, as it was actually being practiced, increased the differences in the status of the sexes instead of diminishing it (Chapman et al, 1968, p. 5).
A secretary of the missionary society visiting the district realised that the Church could not developed on sound lines until women were given their rightful place in it (ibid, p. 5).

Though there is not much record on the activities of women in the early Christianity, women were equally proportionate in number among the first baptized Christians along with man. Though the mission school in Kangpokpi was not very successful in terms of education for the women section, it did change in the participation of women in public sphere of community life through church and mission activities. Earlier, even Christian parents preferred that the girls should be at home to tend to household chores and to work in the field. However, woman emancipation was nowhere close to the battling of the Zenana system by missionaries. According to Mrs. Pettigrew, lack of sympathy, lack of funds, and lack of trained woman missionaries for girls work at Kangpokpi, was in a great measure responsible for the mission’s lack of success in female education in Manipur (Sangma, 1987, p. 239).

The organisation of Christianity gave them a space, which was not provided to them by the traditional and customary village administration. In the report of Mrs. Alice Pettigrew, wife of Mr. Pettigrew, she wrote about how the revival meetings in Kangpokpi had caused much unrest among a band of girls. The young maidens in certain sections of hills had formed themselves into parties, and visited neighbouring villages to preach and to teach (as documented in Zeliang, 2005, p. 96). In 1923, there were a number of Christian widows and their children of about tens or more who had been living in the Kangpokpi

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19 Zenana Mission is an evangelical movement conceived and organised in Britain with the objective of proselytizing the Bengalis and Indians. The imperial design was to win over the womenfolk culturally and finally religiously, by giving them western education at home. It was planned that women missionary teachers ought to visit the 'native' Zenana and gave them vernacular and English education so as to enable them to question the validity of heathen belief and social practices.

20 Mrs. Alice Pettigrew, Women’s Work Report for 1923, as compiled by Zeliang, 2005, p. 96
compound under the charge of Mrs. Crozier (ibid, 97). These women and their children became influential personas in the society.

Women groups had started as early as the 1921 as per the Evangelistic Report given by Dr. G.G. Crozier. The women group of the largest Kuki village was supporting an evangelist-teacher in a village in another area which was closed against the mission (ibid, p. 75). In 1940, some women preached the gospel in the non-Christian villages in Assam. All churches today have a separate fellowship for the women known as the women society department. This seems to be the only space in the society where women group exercises an independent role unchallenged and without being subjected to ridicule. They have their own president, secretary, board of members as well as their own aims and objectives. Nevertheless, there is a hierarchy inside the church in which the women are not allowed in certain area, which were strictly the domain of the men section. Education changes the very structure of the society by changing the status of women. The education of girls contradicts the stereotypical role of women in the tribal society. It was a role that saw them as the centre of domestic life, but not in fact active participants in the kinds of decision-making positions and processes that education encourages of those who receive it.

3: 7: 3 Chieftainship and Colonial Missionary

The Missionary enterprise was received with mixed response from the Thadou-Kuki chiefs. Some chiefs sensed it as a threat to their space or domain of territory and authority that they had thought to be exclusively their own. The advent of colonialism and introduction of Christianity undermined the authority of the chief largely. The chief had to share his rights to authority with the colonial administrator and the missionary. Many chiefs also had serious issues against the new religion, which they felt was a threat to the village community life and

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21 G.G. Crozier, Evangelistic Report for 1921, CBCNEI, as compiled by Zeliang, 2005, p. 75
23 Records of the women’s society, 2004
besides his influence. Christianity was considered as the white man’s religion. With this comes the pre-conceived notion that the white man who preached was no different from the white men who rule. Subsequently, some groups of chiefs were involved in persecuting the early converts, who were beaten, tortured and driven out of their villages (Downs, 1971, p. 181).

According to Padel, the missionary church built a system of authority, which contradicted and deferred fundamentally from traditional (Kond) authority. The church undermined the chief’s authority in many areas (Padel, 1995, p. 235). “Missionary therefore created a new kind of community superimposed on the old village and clan-based community (ibid, p. 236).” When the new Christian convert refused to participate in the old ways of life like raids, their reluctance to do so made them the object of persecution. The degree of persecution they suffered was extreme. In many instances, they lost everything (ibid, pp. 235-236). Persecution occurred in different ways in different places. However, there was one thing that was common. The preaching of the Gospel was regarded as an encroachment to the age-old customs and religion (Vaiphei, 1986, p. 68).

In Manipur, until 1923, the chiefs and elders in all areas were up in arms against the mission work more intensely than ever. Some Thadou-Kuki chiefs vehemently opposed their people from going to schools because they were suspicious of the Missionaries education system as a cover for proselytisation. Every village under chieftainship system has a day for community work in the village. The village chiefs intentionally set the day of community on a sunday because he knew that sunday was the day of worship for the Christians. The villagers who fail to abide by it were expelled from the village (Vaiphei, 1979, p. 68). There were instances in which the Sub Divisional Officer sides with the

24 A report by William Pettigrew, Evangelistic Report for 1923, p. 88
25 Singsit, Douthang,Keithel Manbi Village, Senapati District, Manipur, Interviewed on 5th September, 2006 (during pilot survey)
village Chief and elders in ordering the Christians to leave the village within a week, forfeiting all their belongings (ibid, 69). Prim Suantak Vaiphei narrates his own experiences, "...when we first constructed our church building in my village, the chief came inside the church one day while we had our service and he scolded my father calling him dirty names. He kicked the wall, the post and said, ‘these wood posts, this thatch, these wood (benches) are from my land, from my forest’ (ibid)".

However, if a missionary is able to convert a chief, it is a great advantage. If an influential chief has professed conversion, many will follow him. Pettigrew says, "...the fact of the Thados (Thadous) having a chief in each village with absolute authority is a great advantage, compared to the democratic Nagas, where everyone has his say in matters that come before the village courts" (as cited in Sangma, 1987, p. 278). So, on the other end were a group of chiefs who were enthusiastic about the new religion and enterprises of the missionaries. At the Nowgong conference of 1916, William Pettigrew narrated a story of an influential Thadou chief asking for Pettigrew's presence at his village of Shangnao, and of the gift by him of a cornelian stone, which denoted an act of friendship and the appeal for help. In the writings of Pettigrew, "the authorities at that time opposed our visiting the North-West area, and so we were not be able to respond to his call. The beginning of this year saw us there for the first time. The chief died a few years back, but his wife is acting as the Chieftess, and she was anxious to carry out her late husband’s wish for the Christian teaching, and on her request being made to and granted by the S.D.O, we opened a school there last april."26 The oppositions by the Chiefs and elders continued with great intensity till 1925, but in the next year, such oppositions have died down and the non-converts started enquiring about the new religion (Sangma, 1987, p. 282). On a holistic aspect, there was a change in the power structure of the villages.

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26 Pettigrew, Evangelistic Report for 1923, compiled by Zeliang Elungkiebe, 2005
3. 8 Colonialism and Identity Transformation

3. 8.1 Reflections on Colonial Writings

Colonisers and Missionaries were among the first outsiders to make sustained contact with the Thadou-Kukis, the encounter and experiences of which had a lasting impact on the cultural identity of the people. The missionaries like Rev. William Pettigrew and Mrs. Alice Goreham Pettigrew, Dr. Galen George Crozier and Mrs. Mabel Borsworth Crozier, the Rev. & Mrs. M.M. Fox, Dr.& Mrs. Werelius, Dr. & Mrs. E.E. Brock, Dr. & Mrs. J.A. Ahlquist, Dr. & Mrs. J. S. Anderson assisted by the local missionaries had attained a standard of competence in the local language (MBC, 1997, p. 26). The British administrators who wrote on the society were - John Macrae 1979 (1801), B.C. Allen, R. Brown (1874), Edward Tuite Dalton, 1872, Captain E.W. Dun 1992/ 1886, Robert Reid, Colonel L.W. Shakespear 1977 (1929), Lt. Colonel J. Shakespear 1975 (1912), William Shaw (1929), C.A. Soppitt 1976 (1893), Lieut R. Stewart (1855), Surg. Lieut. Col. A.S. Reid, J.E. Webster, Lieut. R. Stewart (1855 &1856) and others.

Their writings frequently contain accounts of local culture and society, oral tradition etc., which, whatever their deficiencies, have an indispensable documentary value precisely for standing right at the beginning of modern cultural change (Peel in Bickers et al, 1996, p. 71). These writings were important because they were the pioneer medium through which 'little communities' like the Thadou society, unknown to the literary world became associated with a more established 'great tradition' of the European society. The oral tradition was supplanted, but the missionary's and colonial ethnographer's records became the reservoir for saving proverbs, oral verses, folktales and vernacular language that had every possibility of becoming extinct. J. Shakespear's (1975/1912) "The Lushei Kuki Clans," and William Shaw's (1929) "Notes on the Thadou Kukis," contains rich record of folklores. Documentation of linguistic and grammar usages were also made by C. A. Soppitt (1976/ 1893) in "A Short Account of the Kuki-Lushai Tribes," and Lieut R. Stewart (1856) in "A Slight notice of the grammar
of the Thadou or new Kookie language.” Moreover, these missionary’s histories and accounts are still shaping the views of academicians and social scientist (Sitlhou, 2006, p. 16) who refer to them as primary materials in their construction of the history of the Thadou-Kukis.

In readings of colonial ethnography, in whatever form, we find that the discourse of colonialism is frequently populated with terrifying stereotypes on the natives as ‘savages’, ‘wild’, ‘untameable’ and ‘heathen tribe’. Coincidentally, the most common reason for British annexation of a hill tribe, be it Nagas, Garos, Mizos or Kukis was to stop them from raiding the plains or their stations. “Indeed, it was in order to prevent such practices spilling over into the British territories on the plains that the ‘forward policy’ of annexing the hill areas had been adopted (Downs, 1994, p. 172).”

For many of the tribes, especially the Naga and to a lesser extent the Kuki tribes, head-hunting was not simply a matter of taking trophies in war. Heads were often taken in ambush, with those of women and children being especially prized because they proved the cleverness and daring of the ambusher in penetrating the inner defences of the enemy. The taking of heads was essential to the image of manhood (certain types of clothing and bodily ornaments could only be worn by men who had taken a head, and the more eligible young ladies would refuse to marry a man who had not) and was a necessary part of certain ceremonies that ensured the welfare of a family or village and the fertility of the fields. The principal role of the men, and the basic social institutions of the village were closely related to raiding and head-hunting (ibid).”

The Thadou-Kukis believed in the existence of an evil spirit by the name ‘Kulsamnu’ who resides in the path leading to the abode of the deaths. She sits along the roadside, seizes all poor wandering souls, and troubles them unless their relatives who had died before come to their rescue. Kulsamnu dare not detain spirits of those who have slain men and beasts (Shakespear, 1975, p. 199).
This belief also encourages the practice of headhunting. The early narratives of British expansion in North East India (Mackenzie, 1884, p. 7) were replete with reference to the numerous savage and warlike tribes that frequently raided the plains of Assam for slaves and booty. Many writers used the term 'rebels' or 'recalcitrant tribes' to describe the Kukis' position during the Kuki Uprising 1917-1919.

A common feature in colonial ethnographies is that they beset with accounts and descriptions of the missionaries' encounter with a hostile tribe; the oppositions they faced initially, but how despite the odds, they were eventually able to triumph over them. In the process, the native contribution or role in the success of their endeavour either have been overlook or undermined (Sitlhou, 2006, 136). The role of the native agency is not difficult to imagine in a region like Manipur, which is characterised by linguistic and cultural diversity. "Colonial missionary activity was acutely dependent upon the native catechist. He supported the missionary in the work of evangelization, of pastoral engagements and involvements, in education work as native teacher or master, in medical work as doctor and dresser, as translator and colporteur, and of course in Zenana work, as native Bible woman, teacher and visitor (Visvanathan, 1993, p. 9)."

Douthang Singsit, an old man in his mid nineties belonging to the Thadou clan of the Kukis, narrates his experiences with the pioneer missionaries. 'The missionaries,' he says, 'busied themselves with the translation works, the administration, the medical work and education system, so much so that they hardly had time to conduct the groundwork of pastoring the local convert. Therefore, it was the local pioneer pastors like Ngulhao thomsong and Pakho Sitlhou who had intimate contact with the people and did the work of shepherding the converts.'

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27 Singsit, Douthang, Keithel Manbi Village, Senapati District, Manipur, Interviewed on 5th September, 2006 (during pilot survey).
Today, the colonial spectre continues to haunt the present day intellectual consciousness though the colonisers and missionaries departed the region many years ago. Ashis Nandy (1998) has discussed at length the damaging impact of colonialism on the subject people. He continued that 'colonialism' is a psychological state rooted in earlier forms of social consciousness in both the coloniser and colonised. A form of re-colonisation is evident in literatures written by the local inhabitants who continue to reproduce the derogatory description given by the colonial ethnographies while narrating their history. These writings directly refer to colonial ethnographies or make an interpretative analytical version of their own based on earlier writings. Ro Pakhuongte writes, "When we look back, our ancestors were heathens. What we have seen is a sudden change from darkness to light" (as cited in Jeyaseelan, 1999). The local people have internalised the colonial ruler's description in this case. Therefore, though the local agencies have started writing today, it is a perspective or a sense of reality seen through the lens of the colonisers.

3. 8. 2 Standardisation of Language

The time tested oral tradition of the Thadou-Kukis found another medium of expression in the form of the written and the printed word. The Gutenberg Revolution entered the region through as a part of the missionaries' project to make the Bible intelligible to the local populations. The Protestant missions place such emphasis upon creating a written language because they believe that the availability of vernacular translation would make it possible for them to lay emphasis on the use of mother tongue in both worship and the reading of the Bible (Downs, 1992, p. 191). It has been estimated that Christians created written forms of their language for as many as fifty tribes in North East (ibid).

Though the Garos of Meghalaya had numerous dialectical groups, they lived in a compact geographical area, and had only one mission working among them. A
standard language based on one of the dialects (Awe) was created which became the language of scripture translation and of the educated members of the entire tribe. These have been indirectly refuted in the case of the Kuki community of Manipur, as propounded by a local thinker Khup Za Go. For him, Bible translation has become a starting point for the emergence of dialectical identity and widening of the gap of ethnic divides among the various Scheduled Tribes of Manipur (Go, 1996).

Jusho observes that a factor for the fragmentation of the Kuki group of tribes has been the publishing of the Holy Bible in 1960, in Thadou dialect. Being the majority tribe and one of the most progressive tribes among the Kukis, the version of the Bible in Thadou dialect was designated as the “Kuki Bible.” Other Kuki tribes like the Paites, Gangtes, Vaipheis, Zous and other tribes sternly objected this, as they were not happy to call the Bible as Kuki Bible, because it was written only in Thadou dialect. They therefore, insisted the Bible be referred to as the “Thadou Bible” rather than adding “Kuki” appellation. However, the Thadou being the dominant tribe were adamant to change and they preferred it to be referred as the ‘Kuki Bible’ or the “Thadou Kuki Bible.” Consequently, the resentment over the designation of the Bible became more pronounced after the other tribes brought out their own language versions of the Bible (Jusho, 2004. pp. 39-40). Thus, we see from our analysis a two differing effect of the missionary contribution in translation and to the standardisation of languages.

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28 The dialect used on the north side of the Garo hills.
3.8.3 Opposing Categories and the Construction of the ‘other’

A respondent narrates the accounts of Ngulhaos Thomsong’s\textsuperscript{29} visit to London:

*Being a man of short stature, the Englishmen were unsure as to whether he could reach the podium of the Church where he was invited to speak. Some men lift him up so that the whole congregation could see him. As he looked up from the podium, he could see thousands of white faces, all waiting to hear him speak. There was pin drop silence all around. He was for them, the living evidence of the missionaries’ ‘fruits of labour’. The pastor for the Londoners was like a specimen of the condition of the people in the missionaries’ field. The respondent recalls that he and many of his friends went eagerly to listen to Ngulhao’s narration of his visit to the great and distant country rather than the gospel sermon delivered by him.*\textsuperscript{30}

The narrations shows how both the coloniser and the local people were both awed by the presence of the ‘other’, and how the difference between them was a subject of curiosity to both. In some instances, the missionaries were humiliated and they were laughed at because they had blue eyes and hairy bodies, which the local people thought look like those of animals (Jeyaseelan, 1999, p. 80).

“The discovery of the New World in the sixteenth century dramatically presented the British and the Europeans with the problem of cultural discontinuity (Savyasaachi, 2001, p. 80).” This sense of discontinuity was introduced in India with the British colonial rule. The forest-dwellers in India were compared to the aborigines in Australia, Africa and the Pacific islands and were described as ‘backward’, ‘primitive’ and ‘uncivilized’ tribal people. After

\textsuperscript{29} Ngulhao Thomsong is one of the pioneering native pastor amongst the Thadou-Kukis. It was under his pastor ship that the first Kuki church was built in Tujang Vaichong in 1916. He also contributed greatly in the translation of the Bible in the Thadou dialect. He translated the gospel of John (Go, 1996).

\textsuperscript{30} Singsit, Douthang, Keithel Manbi Village, Senapati District, Manipur, Interviewed on 5\textsuperscript{th} September, 2006 (during pilot survey).
India's independence, this colonial understanding continued. Nehru's 'Panchsheel' was formulated around this understanding (ibid)." "These discontinuities have been arranged and understood in the framework of linear historical development and in conformity with the normative order of industrial production. Accordingly, social formations progress from simple to complex, primitive to modern, savage to civilized, and irrational to rational (ibid)." The notion of the centre and the frontiers, dominant, mainstream versus the marginal, or peripheral developed on account of colonialism (ibid).

For Levi-Strauss, the cultural forms typically take the form of combinations of opposite qualities called binary oppositions—e.g. raw and cooked (Levi-Strauss, 1970). In early texts such as "Of Grammatology," Derrida suggests that the whole of Western thought since Plato and Aristotle is structured in terms of binary oppositions. This means that the Western tradition (philosophy, art, literature, culture, and so on) tends to divide conceptual materials into categories of binary terms (e.g. men, women; black, white; voice, silence; speech, writing etc.) (Derrida, 1976).

The colonial missionary degree of contact with the local people was on a day-to-day basis. "The cultural background of missionaries influences their behaviour in ways not necessarily determined by their Christian beliefs and work, and it also relates to the broader colonial milieu in which these missionaries function (Beidelman, 1982, p. 9)." Thus, they contribute more on issues regarding the clash or dialogue between Christian and tribal morality.31 Early Christian missionaries in their zeal to preach the gospel often labelled the tribal customs as pagan and sinful. The same accusation was heap upon cultural dances, songs, folklores... (Jeyaseelan, 1999, p. 88). What the missionary does not allow the

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31 Some people see religion as a limited set of personal beliefs about God and worship which should be isolated from a person's general culture and can be changed without necessarily upsetting that person's culture and world-view. Others see it as an affair of the community so intimately bound up with its way of life that a change of religion necessarily involves a change of culture and the development of a new conscience (Sitlhou, 2006, p. 19).
native to continue reflects his attitude towards the custom of the local people. The missionaries demand the converts to reject cultural forms in no way opposed to Christian tenets: traditional dress, grooming, music, diet, and naming (ibid, p. 11). This could be attributed to the insecurities of the missionaries that the people, still immature in faith, would be tempted to turn back to their old religion.

The problem has, for South India, been addressed by Dennis Hudson (cited in Visvanathan, 1993). Hudson accounts the complex web of caste networks that ramify a convert's experience of social life: how may a native Christian convert continue to live as a Christian amongst his own people, and how do they distinguish between the social and the religious (ibid, pp. 13-14)? The engagement to Christianity often requires that the converts be in denial of their former world and worldview in order to conform to the colonizer's understanding of the world.

Stephen Neill, speaking about another context said that almost from the start it became the custom of the missionaries to gather into Christian villages those who could be brought under instruction (Neill, 1966, 61). “With the nomadic habits of some people, the constant internecine wars, and the moral degeneracy of which almost all the missionaries complained, it seemed unlikely that any Indian would rise to a high level of Christian achievement unless he could be bought and kept within the sound of the church bell. It was this method, which made possible one of the most remarkable, the longest-lived, and outwardly the most successful of all the experiments in paternalistic and benevolent colonialism of which was recorded anywhere in the world (ibid).” These Christian villages, which were formed with the sole purpose of maintaining Christian discipline, came to be known as “reduction” (ibid) was also built in some areas of the Manipur field.
Within this reduction, the missionary had to be the architect, builder, farmer, lawgiver, doctor, ruler, as well as spiritual guide and leader (ibid, p. 62). The new converts were made to stay close together with a church close by either to avert persecution by the others or to protect them from going to their old ways of lives. The principle of inclusion and exclusion also exist in social structure. Some sections of the people like those born out-of-wedlock or Kho-Lai-Cha or Leitolchapa meaning ‘children of the community’, those involved in deviant activities like theft or murder, those who were said to have come from a descent that has been possessed by evil spirits called Kao-Se and those who were extremely poor or widowed were look down upon. They were not always outwardly stigmatised, but were rejected on issues like marriage and leadership roles in the society. Christianity reduced these demarcations with its teachings and education imparted to the local people, but the new religion brought in its own principles of inclusion and exclusion by the creation of believer and non-believer. It seemed as if ‘banishment from village’ was merely change to ‘excommunication from church’.

The clear separation between spiritual and temporal domains often organizes protestant theology (Dube, 2004, p. 62). Sometimes, the regulations and institutions governing the community show marked continuities with traditional structure. A number of chiefs, mostly nominal Christians, extend their power even to the administration of the church government, which leads the church to involve itself in undesirable politics. This is similar to the case of Bisrampur in Jharkhand where for almost sixty years the missionary had been the pastor and malguzar, and master of the mission station (ibid). Dube explains this phenomenon by stating that, “the distinction between the two phenomena has been lost in the evangelists’ practice. Further, he notes that this blurring of the

32 Singsit, Douthang, Keithelmanbi Village (Senapati District, Manipur), interviewed on 5th September, 2006 (during my pilot survey) [He spoke about one of the pioneer local missionary Pakho Sitlhou who was an illegitimate child and was denied his rightful share of inheritance in the family. He was brought up and educated in the mission compound. He became an indispensable aid to the missionaries as mediator, evangelist and translation works.]
spiritual and the temporal domains fit well with the political sociology of the converts, which rests on close connection between ritual and power (ibid, p. 62)

In most Thadou Kuki villages, the Chief usually have important place in the church administration of the village in which he belongs except in cases when there are more than one churches and the chief is not a member to the church; or in cases in which the chief himself decline the post of church leadership.  

3. 9 Conclusions: End-Results of the Cross-cultural Encounter

In the chapter we see colonialism changing both ‘geographical territory’ and ‘cultural territory’ resulting in both re-organisation of land relations and ideological and cultural reconstitution of the culture. The colonial administrators and the missionary were equally effective in restructuring space and society. Whereas the former was influential at a holistic and policymaking level, the influence of the latter in lieu of their day-to-day interaction with local inhabitants was significant. Studying the missionary’s influence offer a better potential for analysing the dynamics of intercultural relations in the colonial setting. There was re-organisation of land and society through the implantation of Church and the establishment of mission fields. Both the stipulations of evangelical Christianity and the terms of colonial law contributed in undoing the hierarchies of village life.

The greatest impact of colonialism on the society was that they were coerced to a sedentarised mode of existence. The relation between the coloniser and colonised is characterised by ambivalence. The local natives constituted both a useful ally and a competent opponent for the Britishers at different points of time. The administration before the anti-colonial war was however indifferent to the cause and needs of the Hill population. There was never any representative from the hill areas of Manipur. Though the amendments made in the administration after

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33 Based on my observation and discussion with village elders during the course of the fieldwork
the war was made with the aim of curtailing the liberties of the hill people, it actually recognised their existence as equal proprietors of a defined territory.

The colonial discourse experience is both heterogenetic and orthogenetic process of change. It can be termed heterogenetic because it is a change, which is externally influenced, but also orthogenetic, because the inter-cultural relations also induced the creative urge of the local inhabitants. Following McKim Marriott's theory of 'parochialization', this is a case in which elements from the 'great tradition' becomes confine to particular local 'little traditions' (Marriot, 1967). However, it goes beyond Marriot's theory in that Christianity, as brought forth by the American Baptist Missionaries, is also adjusted to the culture of the society under study. Therefore, identity as Malkki had said, "...is always mobile and processual, partly self-construction, partly categorization by others, partly a condition, a status, a label, a weapon, a shield, a fund of memories, et cetera (Malkki, 1992, p. 37)."