CHAPTER III

BRITISH CULTURAL POLICY AND ITS IMPACT

The arrival of the British in Naga Hills in the second quarter of the nineteenth century touched off an unprecedented socio-cultural interaction between the two socially most distinct and contrasting races - the British and the Nages. It was not so much the geographical factor, which determined their glaring cultural differences, but the socio-political and economic aspects of their lives, which were responsible for their mutually exclusive identities.

British colonialism was largely characterized by their cultural invasion of the colonialized people, the reason being that no colonial political and economic exploitation could be carried out smoothly without colonialisating the inhabitants culturally. Cultural colonialisatisation was thus an important phenomenon of British imperialism. In their pursuit for cultural colonialisatisation, however, the tactics of using various agents for cultural imperialism varied according to the types of colony they governed. Generally in more backward regions where a state of barbarism or savagery existed, the way for the achievement of direct

political control over the native people was often effectively prepared by the missionary influence.\(^1\) Territorial expansion was thus followed by the introduction of agencies such as Christian missions, educational institutions, and charitable dispensaries, which absorbed the attention of the colonised, and in the process the cultural identity of the governed was gradually subsumed under the sophisticated forces and tactics of colonialism.

Prelude to the development of Anglo-Naga cultural contacts, however, there were initial conflicting problems resulting in frequent confrontation. The differences in cultural standards between the primitive Naga tribesmen and the nineteenth century high Victorian society were openly reflected during the early phase of Anglo-Naga relations. More specifically colonial officers' reports frequently labelled the Nagas in derogatory terms\(^2\) such as barbarous race, savages, vile, rude, heathen, ignorant and uncivilized. These reports were in a way a distinctive commentary on the degree and extent of the gap in cultural dimensions between the new comers and the prospective

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1. Ibid.

2. For. Deptt. Pol-A, April 1840, no.12, see letters from Secretary of State where the Nagas were addressed as barbarian. Also see For. Deptt. Pol-A, October 1844, no.122; and For. Deptt. Pol-A, February 1860, nos.291-305; Elgin Papers, MSS, Eur. F.84/72, no.45.
subjects. The Anglo-Naga cultural and social incompatibility was also clearly manifested in the early response of the Nagas to the coming of the British to their land. This was actively demonstrated in the armed resistance to and the distrust of the colonial representatives such as the survey parties, and the Christian missionaries.

II

British Perceptions of Naga Society

Even at the level of superficial contacts, the British discovered the Naga society to be at a low stage of development. The following observation of Captain Brodie in 1844 provides an important insight into the type of society which prevailed at the time of early Anglo-Naga contacts:

The Nagas in those western hills were in a much more disorganized state of society and less under the control of their own chiefs than the tribes in the eastern hills, a circumstance likely to render our interference with their internal affairs more requisite than with those of the former communities and to increase greatly the trouble of managing them. Fortunately though the communities be large, and in possession of a very difficult country, there would appear to be little union


2. When Gadhula, the first Evangelist came to Naga Hills for preaching the gospel, the people of Deka-Haimong, the village in which he first entered, suspected him to be a company agent and mocked the new religion that he preached. See Clark, K.N., A Corner in India, p.11.
even among the inhabitants of the same village, and none with the neighbouring villages except when they may combine together for some occasional purpose of common revenge or attack.

The society as depicted by Brodie represented a total want of social cohesion among the Nagas of nineteenth century. It appears that the Nagas of the eastern hills, consisting of the present tribes of Changs, Phoms, Semas, Sangtams, Khimungyangs, Yimchungers and Konyaks, were mostly under the command of their chiefs and Angas. However, the tribes of the western hills, namely the Angamis, Rengmas, Chakesangs, Zelliangs, Lothas and Southern Semas were more democratic in their social and political life and were thus lacking social integration even at the Khel level and, above all, neighbouring villages gave no sign of union among themselves.

No significant change was noticed after a lapse of two decades by Colonel Henry Hopkinson who observed in 1856:

The utter absence of all rule amongst the Nagas struck me most forcibly, for not only in each village broken up into hostile "Khels" or parties have little or no authority, and any individual who can get a few others to join him is at liberty to make a raid on a few helpless women and children, gain fame and honour, the right to wear clothing ornamented by a certain number of shells placed in rows.2

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Because of such observations, the British were aware of the awfully ungovernable social conditions and accordingly constrained themselves to the essential limit of maintenance of law and order avoiding any direct interference in the internal affairs of the Nagas.

III

Goal of Cultural Policy

Basing themselves on their initial observation, the British were convinced that some practical measures of a more permanent nature should be taken for securing peaceful relation with the Naga tribes. They believed that the Naga areas could not be rendered of importance to the colonial state in India and unless they were 'redeemed' from their primitive ways of life and 'civilized'. To achieve this, the administration introduced christianity and education.1 While the proclaimed intent of this policy was to 'humanize' the rude Naga, its primary purpose was to help the administration in the maintenance of law and order in the colony, the task which the administration had been endeavouring to accomplish for many a year.2 To

2. The British in their bid to impose law and order on the Nagas sent 10 expeditions during the intervening period of 1832-1850 and continued to despatch expeditions for the pacification of the Naga Tribes till 1879, when major Naga resistance was brought under control and after that the active Administration of the District began. See Census of Assam, 1951, Naga Hills district, p.iii.
implement cultural policy, the British administration followed both direct and indirect measures.

A. Direct Measures

Even after the assumption of colonial administration in Naga Hills, the British did nothing directly to disturb the traditional religious beliefs of the people. It was seen to be inexpedient to interfere with the Naga customs and beliefs. The policy and attitude of the Government towards the Nagas and their culture was one of prudent caution. Accordingly the administration scrupulously remained accommodative to the cultural practices of the Nagas in so far as they could be compatible with the smooth administration of the district.

At the same time, although the government did not make any drastic social reformation in the Naga society, it took various necessary measures to remove certain social evils and practices associated with the customs and traditions of the Nagas. All Government's measures for rectification of the native customs were, it appears,

aimed at rationalisation of social practices and produce gradual reformatory influence on the Nagas. On the whole, however, the spirit of accommodation marked the cultural policy of the British in Naga Hills. It was with the expressed motive of affecting slow and indirect change that the Government encouraged the Christian missionaries to preach the gospel and along with it introduce western education.¹

It should, however, be noted that in the interest of smooth administration, Government took coercive measures for the suppression of certain evil social customs; it also modified some of them. However, with a view to maintain cultural status-quo, the administration also took adequate measures to preserve the unique culture of the Nagas.²

**Repression of Certain Cultural Practices**

In matters where native cultural practices were found to be detrimental to social peace, the Government took repressive measures against such practices regardless of any native cultural values which might have been

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¹ For detail, see the indirect measures below.
² J.F. Mills & J.H. Hutton, both D.Cs. Naga-hills and anthropologists, took keen interest in the preservation of Naga customs and traditions. The policy was consistently followed by C.R. Pawsey, the last British D.C. at Kohima. As for the measures taken by them, see policy of cultural protectionism, pp.11 ff. below and The Nagaland Code, vol.1, Appendix II.
attached to them. As for example, in June 1888, the trans-dikhu Nagas belonging to the Meaung tribe (Sangtam tribe) made headhunting raids on Ao villages - Mongsenyanti and Lungkum - killing 207 people including women and children. As a consequence, in winter 1889, the Government of India despatched an expedition under the command of A. Porteous, officiating Deputy Commissioner, Kohima, against those recalcitrant villages consisting of Noksen, Litam, Lungra, Yarr, Chamiyatung, Lakstang, Bentek, Langtam and Mazungzami and burnt down their villages in different engagements. The colonial administration had thus no hesitation in using force for the suppression of barbarous practices such as headhuntin;;s, slave trade, human sacrifice and slave female child infanticide which were closely associated with the customs of the Naga Tribes.

Headhunting, slave trade and human sacrifice were practically interlinked. The captured people from

2. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
raids were treated as slaves and slaves sold for economic gains were often sacrificed by their new masters. The practice was that the captured people were afterwards ransomed by their friends or relations who paid in cloth, conchshells, beads, cows or pigs. Economic lure was thus the main motives behind slave trades. The price of a male slave was said to be one cow and three conchshells. Female was more valuable and her ransom was fixed at three cows and four or five conchshells.¹

The awful practice of slave-child infanticide was in prevalence in the Ao Naga community where the wealthy often put to death the children born to their slaves. Moreover, the slaves were not allowed to marry or to possess property.² The reason which prompted this infamous practices was to avoid the diversion of the attention of the mother to her child, her services being required for household works as well as for cultivation, the latter being the only major source from which the Nagas acquired their annual food supply.³

2. For. Deptt., Ext1-A, February 1830, no.156.
3. Ibid.
Although Government did not take immediate measures for the emancipation of the slaves, it was determined to gradually check the practice. In his letter to the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam, the Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills, A. Porteous, while denouncing the practice of slavery, argued that "such a state of things cannot be allowed to continue in British territory".¹ The Government, however, sought a slow process of its disappearance by following the method of refusing to enforce the supposed rights of slave-owners. This was in part because Government would have the obligation of paying compensation to the slave owners once the abolition of slavery was formally declared and the domestic slaves released.² As a matter of fact, although Government did not regulate rules for its immediate eradication, it also directly checked the practice of slavery in the district.³ Thus with the establishment of administrative centre at Mokokchung in 1889⁴ the practice of slavery along with

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. In April 1896, during his visit of the villages, the S.D.O. Mokokchung found the practice of slavery and released 3 slaves at Kongomyenti, 22 at Susu and 7 from Korangkong respectively. See S.D.O.'s Diary, D.R.O., Mokokchung, April 1896.
other social evils such as headhuntings were checked successfully.

These infamous practices continued in places where effective British administration had not been consolidated. While the extension of British rule led to their virtual disappearance in the administered areas, the practices of headhunting and slave trade, arising out of inter-village and tribal wars, continued in the rest of the Naga tribal areas. Of the tribal villages, Pansha and Yimpang were known for their notoriety in raiding the surrounding weaker villages and taking them for slaves.\(^1\) India, having been a party to the slavery convention in 1926, had undertaken to bring about the complete abolition of slavery in all its forms.\(^2\) Accordingly, with the objective of suppressing the practice of slavery, in winter 1928 the Government of India sanctioned and sent an expedition to Pansha and Yimpang with a column of 3rd Assam Rifles headed by the Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills.\(^3\) The two villages, under the threat of the imperial forces and the persuasion of

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2. Ibid.

the civil officers, surrendered their slaves to the Deputy Commissioner and also promised not to indulge in slavery in future. The expedition thus achieved its object of freeing seven slaves and restored them to their relations and friends.¹

Searing Government restrictions on headhuntings and slavery, the British did not interfere much with the Naga ways of life. To quote Elwin: "Upto the time of the Japanese invasion in 1944 the Nagas had lived in an age of almost uninterrupted continuity with past.² The Naga customs and traditions prevailed at the village level under the guardianship of the traditional authority.³ As discussed earlier, the administration of the villages was carried out according to native customs and traditions without much official interference.⁴

Modification of Naga Customs

Apart from the suppression of evil social practices, British administration modified some of the tribal customs

1. Ibid.
3. Low, J.A., Lion Rampart, p.78. Traditional authority was defined by Max Weber as "Resting on an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of the status of those exercising authority under them".
and traditions which they considered to be unreasonable for the society. Thus assuming the role of moderator, the colonial administration occasionally intervened in the arbitration of certain local customs and traditions.\(^1\)

To cite a few examples, the Semaas realised unreasonably high bride price often causing the exhaustion of all the resources of a bridegroom. The prevalent practice was that when a groom failed to pay the bride price, he had to become a member of the in-laws' family, called "Angulishi".\(^2\) This practice often put the prospective grooms in a precarious position. The district administration accordingly modified the bride price for the community and fixed it at one mithun called 'Aphiathome'\(^3\) or body price. The rest of the payment had to be made in proportion to the beads, ornaments and goods given by the father of the bride. In case of 'Amini Kimiji'\(^4\) the highest in the

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1. D.C.'s standing order no.1, D.R.O., Kohima, April 1925.

2. "Angulishi" means literally becoming the flesh and blood of the in-laws' family. This information was gathered during my interview with Mr. Lukhashe, a retired Government officer at his residence, Zunheboto Town on 5th October, 1979. He was a member of the Sema Naga Literature Committee.

3. "Aphi-Athome" or 'body price' means the price of the body of the bride which was fixed at one mithun.

4. In "Amini Kimiji" marriage, the bride's parent would have to give their daughter ornaments including necklace, bangles, earrings, headwear, beads of all kinds, clothings, iron stick, utensils and other essential goods for running a new household.
community's marriage hierarchy, the maximum price was fixed at 16 mithuns including the body price.  

In another instance, the Lotha community followed the practice of marrying off minor girls. In a bid to stop this, the Government served a warning notice to the parents that they risked the forfeiture of bride price in case they gave in marriage minor girls. The Government accordingly disowned the responsibility for suits, which might be arising out of marriage price such as the payment of Losuma, in case of the marriage of minor girls.  

Policy of Cultural Protectionism

It was the policy of the Government to conciliate the Nagas, and accordingly as far as possible they tried not to do things which might unsettle their minds or tend to alienate them. The administration was also determined to keep the Nagas from any outside cultural influence.

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1. B.C.'s standing order no.13, D.R.O., Kohima, April 1923.
2. "Minor girls" means a girl below the age of 14.
3. "Losuma" means fine for divorce.
4. B.C.'s standing order, op. cit., no.1.
5. Elwin, V., op. cit., pp.77-78.
Therefore, as part of their policy of leaving things as they were (or in their endeavour to maintain cultural status quo) so long as their social practices did not hinder keeping public peace in the District, the Government opposed any outside influence that tended to upset the Nagas' established ways.\(^1\) Thus, defending what they conceived to be right and proper, the British restricted any innovation in the culture of the Nagas well against the pressure for it. In keeping with that policy, Nagas were not permitted to have a roman hair-cut, hair-bopping for the girls and the use of short pants.\(^2\) J.H. Hutton, Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills, used to carry a pair of scissors and often removed the "quiffs" of hair.\(^3\) The Naga students were not allowed to come to the schools putting on half pants and petticoats. What the authority desired of the Nagas was that they should put on only their traditional dresses.\(^4\) Similarly, in winter 1945,

\(^1\) Ibid.


\(^3\) S.D.O.'s Diary. D.R.O., Mokokchung, 13 September 1932.

\(^4\) This information was provided by Mrs. A. Kevichus, during my interview with her husband at their residence, Dimapur town on 14th December, 1984. She once told J.H. Hutton to go back to their cave life which was the practice followed by their (the British) forefathers.
C.R. Pawsey, Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills, during his visit of the villages undressed Kaghato Sukhai off his short pants.¹ Nagas were not permitted to wear dhotis either. The restriction on the use of dhotis was often enforced by the Deputy Commissioner by flogging Nagas who were caught putting them on.²

Protection from the influence of Hinduism

One of the important measures taken by the colonial administration was the protection of the Nagas from the influence of Hinduism. Hinduism as a religion had already got a firm foothold in both the princely states of Assam and Manipur.³ The British had no wish that the Nagas should come under the influence of Hinduism.⁴ Therefore, to forestall the onslaught of Hinduism, the administration proposed the early introduction of Christianity in Naga

1. This incident took place at Usutomi village in the Sema areas, and the information was gathered during my interview with Kaghato Sukhai at his residence at Zunheboto Town on 9th July 1980.


3. For. Deptt. Pol-A, August 1874, no.274.

Hills. Firmly suggesting the necessity of taking early measures against Hindu influences on the Hill tribes, Capt. Gordon in his letter to Capt. Jenkins, Agent to the Governor General, North East Frontier Agency wrote:

The establishment of the Thanah will afford a favourable opportunity for the introduction of missionaries who will probably, soon afterwards, be able to commence their labours in the adjoining villages. I think it of consequence that the missionaries should be early in the field as the hill tribes in this part of the world are apt to follow Hindoo customs and observances.1

The gradual extension of British control over the Nagas, the propagation of the gospel by the American Christian missionaries and the introduction of innerline regulation together effectively checked Hindu influence on the Nagas.

**Preservation: the core of British cultural policy in Naga Hills**

From the evidence of the practical measures taken by the British, it is clear that the colonial cultural policy in Naga Hills was guided by the zeal to preserve traditional culture rather than to promote changes in it. The modification of certain customs was made in the interest of colonial administration and not as a part of the policy of change.

1. Ibid.
In fact, under the British rule the Nagas did not enjoy the cultural freedom to make changes on their own. On the other hand, they were ordered to preserve their old customs and traditions. As shown above, tendencies towards innovation were suppressed by floggings and force.\(^1\)

Thus, in 1947, during the debate in the parliament on colonial policy in Naga Hills, K. Chaliha, M.P. and A.K. Chaudhuri, M.P., both from Assam, regretted the pattern of British administration which isolated the Nagas from the rest of the country.\(^2\) On the other hand, in her book *Nagapath* Ursula Graham Bower strongly justified the colonial policy as follows:

> The object of this was neither repression nor the artificial preservation of primitive cultures; it was designed to protect the hillman from exploitations, to reduce to a minimum the bureaucracy with which he had to contend, and to cushion him against the impact of civilization until he was educated to withstand it alone.\(^3\)

Similarly, in 1961, Elwin in his book *Nagaland* interpreted the policy in consonance with Bower. To him the policy of cultural preservation was introduced to protect

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2. Ibid.
the Nagas' socio-cultural and economic exploitation by the people from outside.¹

The protection given to the Nagas from economic exploitation seems to have fairly benefitted the Nagas. However, the introduction of Christianity as a cultural thrust and also its role of warding off Hindu influence appears paradoxical in the context of colonial cultural policy. As a matter of fact, the British openly encouraged one type of interference and 'exploitation' to suit their policy of dominating the Nagas which successfully prevented the influence of the others (Hinduism). This policy of promoting the cause of Christianity alone strongly suggests that the cultural protection given to the Nagas was primarily directed towards safeguarding the interests of colonial administration in Naga Hills.

9. Indirect Measures

Although the Government took certain measures to restrict and modify certain native cultural practices, its direct role affected peripheral cultural aspects of the Nagas. The real agencies which brought about considerable socio-political changes were indirect agencies which functioned under the explicit protection

¹ Elwin, V., op. cit., p.44.
of the Government. Of these, the most powerful were
Christianity and education. These two agencies had far
reaching consequences for the Naga society. Christianity
and education functioned as two sides of the same coin.
For the purpose of disseminating Christianity and at the
behest of authorities, the American missionaries opened
schools. The two agencies functioned inseparably each
co-ordinating with the other in the promotion and
performance of their respective roles.

IV

Colonial motive in introducing
Christianity in Naga Hills

From their early observation of the Naga society,
the British had realised the importance of propagating
Christianity amongst the Naga tribes.¹ Its introduction
was seen by them to be a sine-qua-non for the upliftment
of the Nagas, a society which they considered to be not
only backward but also uncivilized. But the reality of
their motives was more complex.

Christianity, popularly known as the religion of
imperial Britain was closely interlinked with colonialism

1. For. Deptt., Pol.-A. August 1840, no.93.
both in Asia and Africa. It's considerable contribution to Britain in her global quest for colonies was amazing. In his letter to Richmond Richie, in 1897, Babington Smith wrote about the contribution of the Christian missionaries to the British Empire: "...in many places, they (Christian missionaries) are the most effective agency for doing what is wanted." Both in Asia and Africa the British introduced Christianity along with their territorial expansion. For example, on handing the Kabaka of Buganda a Bible, a Uganda missionary told him it was 'the key to the secrets of England's greatness and glory'. Spread of Christianity was thus seen as a major factor, in Britain's worldwide power and prestige.

The late nineteenth century speeches of the British imperialists provided clearer insights into the colonial motives in introducing Christianity in her colonies. The period not only epitomized the height of British

1. Shivaram, V., op. cit., p.10; Low, D.A., Lion Rampant, p.116; see also Metcalfe, Aftermath of Revolt, p.98.

2. Elgin Papers, MSS. Eur.-P.84/19. See letter of G. Babington Smith Esqre., Private Secretary to the Viceroy to Richmond Richie, Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for India, 16 February 1897.


imperialism but also witnessed her quest for further colonies in the passionate clarion call of her politicians, statesmen, administrators and poets.\(^1\) The craze for colonial expansion was notably identified with both commercial interest as well as the desire to spread the Christian gospel to the acquired colonies. For example, in a speech before the Manchester Chamber of Commerce in 1894, an adventurer, Henry Morton Stanley said: "There are forty millions of people beyond the gateway of the Congo, and the cotton spinners of Manchester are waiting to clothe them. Birmingham foundries are glowing with the red metal that will promptly be made into iron work for them and the trinkets that shall adorn those dusky bosoms, and the ministers of Christ are jealous to bring them, the poor benighted heathens, into the Christian fold".\(^2\)

Cecil Rhodes, another British adventurer in Africa, claimed divine dispensation for his insatiable ambition for territorial expansion. He said: "I contend that we are the first race in the world, and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race..."

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., p.32.
And epitomizing the expansionist spirit of late nineteenth century imperialism, he further said: "The world is nearly all parcelled out, and what there is left of it is being divided up, conquered, and colonialised. Think of these stars that you see over head at night, those vast worlds which we can never reach. I would annex the planets if I could; I often think of that. It makes me sad to see them so clear and yet so far".1 But the most eloquent call to imperialist expansion was trumpeted by Rudyard Kipling in 1899 - the heyday of imperialism - when he urged the Empire builders to "take up the white man's burden" to civilise the world.2

Obviously, the introduction of Christianity and imperialist expansionist policy went hand in hand. On the other hand, the machineries of colonialism such as Christianity, education and other natural byproducts of colonial administration assumed the role of 'white man's burden' in civilizing the backward peoples. As a corollary, as else where British motive in the introduction of Christianity in Nagal Hills, inevitably, formed a part of their policy of territorial expansion.

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
The Christian missionaries generally enjoyed an unusual degree of protection and moral support within the British empire from the imperial authorities. As for example, speaking of the close co-operation of the British Government and the Christian Mission in their colonies, in April 1938, Sir Robert Reid, Governor of Assam wrote about his delightful visit of Lushai Hills (Mizoram) to Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy: "I met all the missionaries who are working there and was much impressed with the fine work they are doing and with the sincerity of their outlook... I call the Superintendent, is I am glad to say, on excellent terms with them all".

The sound relationship between the imperial officials and Christian missionaries within the British Empire could not be exaggerated.

As in other parts of the British Empire, in Naga Hills the Christian missionaries enjoyed protection and moral support from the British Government. The opening of mission centres at Kohima, 1880 and Wokha, 1885 were in fact the sequels to the establishment of British

civil and military stations. The government and the missions' mutual needs were clearly recognised when in 1882 C.A. Elliot, Chief Commissioner of Assam declared his willingness to assist any missionary efforts to establish schools at Kohima with government's grants-in-aid.  

On the other hand, the saying that in the expansion of British colonialism the Bible follows the flag became evident when in 1886, Rev. S.W. Nivenburg while giving report of the Kohima mission field said: "The presence of a regiment of infantry and five hundred armed police indicated that the day of peace was at hand and of all points among the Nagas this appeared the most favourable for missionary labour".  

Further, the motive of cooperation between the British officials and the American missionaries both at official as well as private levels exhibited their smooth coordination. The schools run by the missionaries received grants-in-aid from the Government and they were inspected by the district authorities from time to time. The official visits of villages went hand in hand with

the inspection of schools all over the district. For example, in 21 September 1912, Needham, sub-divisional officer, Hokokchung, during his visit of the villages, inspected Impur Mission school and recorded his appreciation of pupils' cleanliness.\(^1\) Moreover, at the private level, the British officials enjoyed the personal friendship of the Christian missionaries. In his diary, Needham recorded that the Christian missionaries were his only neighbours among whom he spent a pleasant time.\(^2\) Evidently, the Christian missions and the government administrative machineries functioned together smoothly and for the promotion of their mutual interests.

**Early Missionaries to the Naga**

The missionaries gladly accepted the invitation of the government\(^3\) - taking it to be a God-sent opportunity for the prospects of winning the tribes of the North-East Frontier of India to Christ.\(^4\)

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2. *Ibid*.
The first missionary who laboured with the Nagas was Rev. Miles Bronson of the American Baptist mission. As early as 1838, Bronson from his Jaipur Station (Assam) made contacts with the Nagas and Simpos in its vicinity. In the same year, he opened a school at Namsa Naga village (now in Arunachal Pradesh) and continued his school work with a monthly grant of a. 100 from the Government.\(^1\) In June 1838, Bronson wrote to Captain Francis Jenkins expressing his joy and delight over the encouraging progress of his mission especially in his relation with the Nagas.\(^2\) After one year, however, he discontinued his work. The death of his sister and his continued ill-health compelled him to retreat to the plains.\(^3\)

With the exception of Bronson's initial contacts, the early missionaries despite their zeal for the propagation of the gospel had no easy access to the Nagas. This was perhaps due to the lack of proper communication with the tribes. Some missionary contacts with the Nagas continued from Sibsagar (Assam), the place where the American Baptist Mission had established its

\(^{1}\) *For.* Deptt. Vol-A, *op. cit.*, no.128.

\(^{2}\) *For.* Deptt. Vol-A, June 1938, no.42.

\(^{3}\) *Ibid.*
station and which was a good commercial Centre at which the Nagas were frequent visitors for business transactions.

Apart from the contact made with the Nagas from this outstation, nothing was done to preach the gospel to them till the year 1871.¹ In the same year, Rev. E.W. Clark, an American Baptist missionary at Sibsagar, induced Gandhula, a fervent Assamese Christian, known for his tact and Christian zeal, to acquire the vernacular of some Nagas then residing at Sibsagar. Gandhula proved himself an excellent liaison by establishing friendship and meaningful contacts with the Nagas. His missionary work with the Nagas was not confined only to Sibsagar but took him further into the interior Naga villages. He thus distinguished himself as the first Christian Evangelist to the people of Naga Hills.² Thus, during the intervening period of 1871-1876, with the help of his vernacular teacher, he visited Deka Haimong* village a number of times. During this period he had already converted some Nagas who as a consequence came to Sibsagar and received

² Ibid.

* Herein after Molungkimong.
baptism. A chapel for worship was also built in the village by the new converts. Gadhule had made the way possible for Rev. Clark's smooth entry into the Hills.¹

After Gadhule's initial spadework in evangelistic thrust into the interior parts of Naga Hills, Rev. E.W. Clark sought permission from the Government to enter Naga Hills.² However, in view of the brutal murder of Captain Butler by the Lotha Nagas at Pangti village in December 1875, the British Government was cautious in granting him permission to go beyond British territory.³ Nevertheless, Rev. Clark's request was granted with one clear injunction from the Government. To quote Colonel Henry Hopkinson: "...if Clark goes into the Naga Hills, he will go there, not only with the full and free consent of the Nagas, but in a manner I may say at their invitation".⁴

As discussed earlier, spadeworks having been done before hand, Rev. Clark entered Naga Hills on 2nd March, 1876 as the first American pioneer Baptist missionary.

1. Ibid., pp.79-81.
2. Clark, M.M., op. cit., p.16.
3. Ibid.
among the Naga. He along with Gadhula established a missionary station at Molungkimong village, north of Mokokchung. In this village, he and his one Assamese servant boy occupied a house till the 24th of October, when he went with a company of Naga to establish a new village station at Molung. In the new village he lived in a small hut till February 15, 1877, when a new rough house built by the Naga was ready for occupation. From this village Rev. Clark established considerable contacts with the neighbouring villages of the Ao Naga tribes.

With the arrival of Clark in Naga Hills, the work of Christian mission started off with dynamism. As a good general, he exerted a determining influence in laying down the initial missionary network and strategy in Naga Hills. On his initiative and strong suggestion, in 1879 the American Overseas Missionary Board at Boston appointed Rev. C.D. King as a missionary to Naga Hills. King arrived at Calcutta in December 19, 1878 and, on the 24th, was married to Miss Anna Sweet of Howzong, Assam. Leaving

2. Ibid., p.81.
his bride in Calcutta, on the 25th he proceeded on his
journey to the Naga country—calling at Tura for a
few days to examine the methods and work of that mission.¹

The establishment of the civil government and the
presence of British army at Kohima in the heart of
Angami country made this part the most favourable one
for missionary labour. Accordingly, Rev. King wished
to proceed to Kohima to establish the mission station
there. However, in consequence of the unsettled condition
of the people, government refused him permission. As a
consequence, Rev. King established himself at Samaguting,
the station formerly occupied as the headquarters of
Her Majesty's troops. Mrs. King joined her husband in
27th June 1879. With the help of one Assamese teacher,
Punaram, the school work commenced at Samaguting. In
October, however, on account of Naga attacks on the
British, they had to escape to Sibsagar. On the restoration
of peace, Rev. King received permission to enter the
hills, and he proceeded directly to Kohima where he
established a new mission centre in March 1880.² Similarly,

¹ Ibid., p.84.
² Ibid., pp.84-85.
in early 1885, the government granted permission to the American Baptist Mission to open another centre at Wokha, a British post almost equidistant from both Kohima and Mokokchung.

Rev. Witter, who was then working in Sibsagar mission centre, Assam, was the person whom the missionaries considered to be 'in direct accord with the mind and will of the Lord' to proclaim the gospel of the 'Prince of Peace' among the rude Lotha Nagas, who had recently murdered Captain Butler, a British surveyor. Rev. and Mrs. Witter left Sibsagar for the Lotha country in the hills. Accompanied by several sepoys and 100 Naga coolies, on the evening of April 9, 1885, after varied and exciting experiences of mountain travel, they reached Wokha station where a rest house was placed at their disposal by the Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills.¹ For the first time on Sunday morning, August 2, 1885, Mrs. Witter gathered several boys about her and began the first formal teaching of Christianity to the Lotha Nagas.²


2. Ibid., p.91.
Simultaneously with the establishment of these missionary bridge-heads spread over the three regions of Naga Hills, the Christian missionaries devoted themselves to the cause of propagation of the gospel to the Naga tribes.¹

In their endeavour to develop the mission work, the later events suggest that, the Christian missionaries were known for their tact and understanding of the people with whom they worked for evangelization. They tackled the problems of the people with care and sincere acumen.² They worked to win the people for Christ through personal contacts and the missionary based institutions such as schools, churches and dispensaries.³

Chiefly concentrating their focus on physically reaching out to the tribes, the American Baptist Mission initially laid out their mission centres at different strategic regions of Naga Hills.⁴ The first mission centre, which was opened at Molungkimong village in

1. Robinson, L.N., Descriptive account of Assam, p.382.
1876, was later shifted to Impur on the Northern side of Naga Hills in 1894. This centre served the tribes of the Ao, Sangtams, Changs, Phoms, Lothas and Semas for purposes of schooling, evangelisation and in training the tribal youths of this region in Biblical education.¹ Kohima mission was mainly instrumental in imparting education as well as training to the southern tribes consisting of Angamis, Chakesangs, Western Semas, Southern Semas, Zoalings, Mengmas and Naga Hills Kukis. Although separate mission centres and schools were later established at Vokhosung for the Lothas and at Aizuto for the Semas respectively, initially the two areas were treated as appendages to Impur and Kohima centres for purposes of evangelistic outreach to their tribes.²

Learning of tribal languages was the key to further facilitating communication with the people and also reducing the tribal dialects to writings. Preparation of school primers, catechism, hymn book, Bible translations and short stories for the tribal students formed the major activities of the pioneer missionaries.³

2. Ibid., p.137.
Although there was no uniform pattern for the propagation of the Gospel, the Christian missionaries followed certain strategic way of presenting the gospel to the tribes. Along the pattern already set forth by it, the Government ordered the missionaries to first seek the consent of the village chiefs for preaching the Gospel in Sema areas. This was because most of the Sema villages were still in the unadministered areas. Hence this advice was given as a precaution against any untoward incident. Also a village chief's status in the community having a determining influence, it was believed that a favourable impression would be created on the people through the conversion of the chiefs. Missionaries, therefore, had to make initial contacts with the chiefs and convince them to embrace the new religion. Thus, interestingly, Kiyesha, a village chief of Naghutomi and a strong opponent of the gospel, became a Christian convert. Similarly, Inaho, a Dobhasi of Mokokchung, was reputed for his opposition to the new religion. His


2. Kiyesha often prosecuted the converts at his village. Once he heard the prayer of the one whom he prosecuted and that fervent prayer changed his attitude to Christian religion and he embraced it. See Downs, P.S., op. cit., p.151.
conversion was another instance which deserves mention as a strategic conversion. Yet another notable conversion of a staunch opponent of the gospel was made when after becoming blind and like Apostle Paul of old, Luzukhu a Bobhasi of Mokokchung confessed Christ. Such incidents, seen as miraculous by many, greatly influenced the people around.

Apart from a direct preaching and proselytisation through pastors, evangelists and lay workers, the missionaries successfully used educational institutions as a nexus in public contacts. Christian missionaries regarded education as one of the instruments of conversion. In schools they started, religious spirit prevailed. This was because all the teaching staff were mission school products. Most of them worked both as school masters as well as pastors in the villages they served. In mission schools, students organised Christian endeavour

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., p.52.
3. S.D.O.'s Diary, D.R.O. Mokokchung, May 1913. The mission school teacher at Sangtong (near Mengenyanti) was paid £.6 per month from the mission at Impur, at the same time he also received £.2 and 10 Inchi (basket) of paddy from the villages in recognition of his duties as teacher and pastor.
societies and conducted weekly meetings. These Christian youth organizations actively propagated the gospel to the neighbouring villages.\(^1\) Year after year an increasing number of new schools was established throughout the district. These schools were in fact the mission's main evangelistic agencies. To quote Downs (p.93):

> The main purpose of the school was evangelistic as the missionaries so often stated in reply to those in America who objected to their educational activities.\(^2\)

While the village primary schools were looked upon as evangelistic agencies, the mission did establish station Middle English schools for the purpose of bringing up church leadership. The schools at Impur and Kohima were designed to serve this purpose. They were for training Christian workers - teachers, pastors, evangelists, women workers, etc.\(^3\)

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1. *Baptist Missionary Magazine*, *op. cit.*, p.18. Further information in this regard was provided by Socie Swu, M.P. Rajya Sabha, during my interview with him at his residence, 19th South Avenue, on 22 June 1982. He himself was the Secretary of Christian Endeavour Fellowship at Kohima Mission School during 1947-48.


As a measure of encouragement to join the schools the American Baptist Mission largely subsidized the cost of learning for the Naga youths. At Impur and Kohima centres, they provided free food and lodging, clothing, soap, besides the distribution of paper boxes to enable pupils to keep their belongings. However, these facilities were not given to students who failed in their annual promotion test examinations.

Students from such schools were largely responsible for the spread of Christianity in Naga Hills. The missionaries not only influenced the students with the gospel but also appointed some of them as evangelists, teachers and pastors. In 1920, Yemhi, a Sema student of Kohima school, was baptized and appointed travelling pastor for his tribe. The fact that schools were used as agencies for the propagation of Christianity is testified to by the historic conversion of a Sema student. In 1906, H.B. Dickson, a missionary at Impur, who was

1. During my oral interview with Mrs. S. Shikhu on 15 November 1984 at her residence, Kokokchung town, I gathered this information. Mrs. Shikhu was a student of Impur Mission School during 1937-40s.

2. Ibid.

appointed as the first missionary to the Sema, moved
to Kohima to preach the gospel to the Sema students
enrolled at Kohima schools. At his instance, Ivilho,
a student, was converted. He became the first Sema
Christian when he was baptized in 1906.1 Following his
conversion, he returned to his village, Chokimi, and
constructed a small chapel for preaching the Christian
religion. He thereafter became active in evangelising
the Sema tribe.2

People's response to the Gospel

The initial response of the Nagas to the gospel
was largely unreceptive. This was due to the alien nature
of the gospel and their devotion to their own animistic
beliefs.3 People's attitude to the early Christian
missionaries and their mentors directly determined the
corresponding degree of Christian influence on the people
and their response to the gospel. To the initial dis-
advantage of the missionaries, the pioneer evangelists

1. Ibid., p.148.
2. Ibid.
3. Hunter, W.W., Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1908,
vol.XVII, p.5.
were regarded as the agents of the British towards whom, the Nagas were not well-disposed off.\footnote{Clark, M.M., \textit{op. cit.}, p.11.} This feeling was reflected in the treatment meted out to Gadhula, the Assamese Christian and the first evangelist in Naga Hills. Gadhula, during his visit to Holungkimaong village, introduced himself to the people as a teacher of a new religion. In response, the people impugned his motive. "What do we want of this new religion?" exclaimed one of the chiefs, who was among the first to espouse the cause later on. "Send him off", "get him out of the way", "A spy, doubtless, of the company", exclaimed others.\footnote{Ibid.}

The early response of the Nagas to the gospel was thus not only poor but also contemptuous of its agents. Nagas' strong attachment to their old beliefs and sets of social norms remained strong and that contributed to the setback to the missionary work.\footnote{Even after a lapse of 2 decades of Evangelistic work in Naga Hills, nearly 95 per cent of its population remained faithful to their animist religion. For detail, see Hunter, M.N., \textit{op. cit.}, p.5.} Opposition to the gospel was not uncommon although some people embraced
Christianity. Unsurprisingly, therefore, even after about a decade of missionary contacts, the statistics show that the number of Christian remained conspicuously insignificant. The 1881 Assam census report confirms the number of native Christian at 2 out of 25 Christian population of the Naga Hills district. However, consistent labour of the missionaries bore fruit in time. By the early 20th century, acceptance of the gospel made headway. Encouraged by the rapid acceptance and positive response to the gospel, S.A. Perrine enthusiastically remarked:

The Naga Mission must not be looked at simply of and for Nagas, but rather as a part of a great system to reach the Mongolian peoples of Asia. 2

With the increasing labour of the missionaries and their few converts, who had also become faithful witnesses of Christ, significant progress in proselytization was made. The high watermark of Christian conversions in Naga Hills was reached in the period between 1921 and 1931. Within ten years, the number of Christians rose

1. Assam Census Report, 1881, Table III, p.46.

* S.A. Perrine was the Missionary at Impur from 1894-1899. See No Centenary Album, 1973.

remarkably from 8,734 to 22,908 or by 162 per cent.¹

Steady but growing conversion of the Nagas can be ascertained from the decennial statistics given below:²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Christian</th>
<th>Total Naga Hills population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>95,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>95,637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>101,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>3,308</td>
<td>149,038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>6,734</td>
<td>158,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>22,908</td>
<td>178,644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>34,000</td>
<td>169,841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>41,237</td>
<td>205,950</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus over a period of seven decades, the Christian missionaries had an amazing success in converting the animist Nagas to Christianity.

V

**Government’s Educational Policy**

Education as one of the most powerful agents of British Colonialism began with the Christian missionaries. It may be noted that from the very beginning of their contact with the Nagas, the British officers perceived

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2. *Census of India, 1921*, vol.III, Assam, Part I, Ch.IV; *Census of India, 1941*, vol.IX, Assam, Table II, p.9; *Census of India, 1951*, vol.XII, Assam, Manipur, Tripura, 3-II, Religion.
the necessity of introducing Christianity and education among the Naga tribes, for they considered education as the best agency for reclaiming the rugged Nagas to order and civilization.\(^1\) With this viewpoint, the Colonial Educational policy was mainly directed to the extension of pecuniary grants to the Christian Mission in Naga Hills.\(^2\)

However, notwithstanding the Naga Hills District, the government had not made adequate efforts for the development of education in Assam province as a whole. In 1904, it noted that the primary education in Assam province in general was still in an experimental stage. In 1903-04, 60 per cent of the students in schools were classed as illiterate as they were unable to read and write.\(^3\) The government attributed slow progress of education in the province to the lack of funds.\(^4\) In Naga Hills District, although government largely depended on mission schools for the education of the tribes, it also opened schools on its own. For example, on 31st March

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{For. Deptt. Pol-A}, May 1840, No.148.
\item \textit{Quinquennial Review of the progress of education in Assam}, 1912-17, p.99.
\item \textit{Imperial Gazetteer of Assam}, 1906, pp.71-72.
\item Ibid.
\end{enumerate}
1904, the district had six lower Primary schools maintained by the government and sixteen mission schools were receiving grants-in-aid from the government.\(^1\)

**Change of Policy**

Although, initially, government's policy was to leave the responsibility for education to Christian missionaries with its annual pecuniary aid, in view of the necessity of providing healthy rivalry to schools run by American Baptist Mission, it made a significant change in its educational policy during the first decade of 20th century.\(^2\)

The factors which chiefly influenced the government's new policy were, firstly, that it saw that education was not the primary object on which missionaries were engaged; on the other hand, education went hand in hand with their religious works. It was therefore considered that when the interests of the two would clash, education would be made to take the second place. Secondly, it was seen that

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1. *Gazetteers of Naga Hills and Manipur*, Vol.IX, 1905, pp.67-68. The six primary schools maintained by the government were located at Mokokchung, Wokha, Henima, Khonoma, Jakhama, and Cheswejuma, and the sixteen mission schools were situated at Molung, Yagong, Sirteam, Womaken, Nerangkong, Akola, Asauma, Waramung, Chungleyimse, Changki, Mametong, Longkum, Ungma, Lungs, Lungpa and Lungsang.

the mission schools were understaffed and often faced
with a dearth of qualified teachers. Thirdly, in view
of the teaching of the gospel in mission schools and the
subsequent conversion of pupils, animists were reluctant
to send their children to missionary-sponsored schools
for fear of conversion. In the circumstances, the
government feeling that it had a moral obligation and
responsibility towards their animist subjects, even though
it had no objection to conversion, realized that simply
on account of fear of proselytization, animist Nagas
should not be deprived of modern education. In conser-
deration of all these aspects, government modified its
educational policy in the district, and accordingly started
taking over more and more of village schools, which were
in fact, mission-venture schools.

It appeared that the missionaries did not quite
approve of the government's initial attempt to take over
the village schools. The quinquennial report on the
progress of education in Assam (1901-07) stated: "In
Naga Hills after somewhat delicate negotiations, government
has taken over the village schools leaving the missionaries

1. Ibid.
in charge of the training schools which are to supply
ing village schools with masters.\textsuperscript{1} Nevertheless, Christian
missionaries still continued to establish schools with
the grants-in-aid they received from the government.\textsuperscript{2}

The missions had many venture schools which it ran
with government's annual grants-in-aid. As for instance,
in 1922, the number of government lower primary schools
and aided venture schools had risen to 42 each.\textsuperscript{3} However,
by the 1930s, the general policy of the government was to
take over the responsibility of education from the missions
as early as possible. In 1937, government stated its
view on missionary schools: while acknowledgement must
be made of the debt owned to the missions for their work
as pioneers in the field of education it must also be
recognised that the missions have interested themselves
in education solely with object of christianising the
children. Portions of some of the hill tribes have refused

\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibid.
\item During 1937-42, the Impur Mission Training School
used to get the annual grants of Rs.600. It appears
that with government grants, the mission also supported
some venture village schools. Because the lump-
sum grant was later withdrawn and schools were given
direct grants from the government.
\item Quinquennial Review of the progress of Education in
\end{enumerate}
education because it brought Christianity with it, and it is unfair that they should be deprived of education because they are unwilling to abandon their tribal customs.\(^1\) Meanwhile, during the 1930s, government schools had significantly increased. Nevertheless, there were still considerable number of mission schools in the district.\(^2\) In 1938 out of 167 educational institutions, 115 were government lower primary schools, 10 government aided lower primary schools, 36 mission aided lower primary schools, 1 government middle English school, 2 government aided training schools (upto middle English standard), 2 mission aided upper primary standard and 1 government industrial school.\(^3\)

In trying to take over the responsibility of education in the district, the government in 1939, further decided to take over 10 schools annually for a period of five years.\(^4\) This step as stated earlier was also directed to reduce the number of mission schools in the district. As a consequence, the number of government schools

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\(^1\) Ibid., 1932-37, p.63.

\(^2\) Legislative Assembly Debates, vol.IV, 1938, pp.779-800.

\(^3\) Ibid.

increased year by year; but it appears that the government
did not keep up its policy of taking over 10 schools a
year.¹ Table below shows the number of schools and
students in each category during the 1882-1948.

**Education under D.C.'s control**

Education as a subject of colonial administration
was placed under the general control of the Deputy
Commissioner.² Accordingly, government schools were
opened from time to time on his recommendations. Moreover,
the schools were under his close supervision. In 1912,
giving the report of education in the district, the Deputy
Commissioner stated: "...the Nagas as a rule failed to
appreciate the advantages of education, so that year by
year the number of primary schools and scholars dwindled
until from 32 schools with 767 pupils on the rolls on the
31st March 1907, the number has fallen to 22 schools with-

1. *Assam Education Report, 1892-1946.* The number of
schools and scholars continued to fluctuate from 1880s
to early 20th century. Ostenbibly schools during
these periods were at the experimental stage and
accordingly the number of schools and scholars during
the period had frequent rise and fall. Data for the
1940s are not available at all. This is attributed
to the disruption of the Second World War. However,
the significantly increased number of students in 1948
is a clear show of the progress of education in the
district.

   " " " 1912-17, p.102.
   " " " 1932-37, p.63.
   " " " 1933-42, p.109.
Table IV

Table below shows the growth of education in Nagaland district during the British period, 1882-1917.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of LP schools</th>
<th>Number of MS schools</th>
<th>Number of High schools</th>
<th>Number of Primary students</th>
<th>Number of Secondary students</th>
<th>Total students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1882-1883</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883-1884</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884-1885</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885-1886</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886-1887</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887-1888</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888-1889</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>221</td>
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<tr>
<td>1889-1890</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890-1891</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891-1892</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892-1893</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893-1894</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894-1895</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895-1896</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896-1897</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897-1898</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>372</td>
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<tr>
<td>1898-1899</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899-1900</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-1901</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901-1902</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902-1903</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>87</td>
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<tr>
<td>1903-1904</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904-1905</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>1905-1906</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906-1907</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907-1908</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

contd...p.

* During the colonial period, the district had a total of 165 educational institutions consisting of 161 primary schools, 3 middle English schools located at Mokokchung, Dimapur and a government high school at Kohima.
### Table Contd...

<table>
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<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
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<td>1910-1911</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>1911-1912</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>1912-1913</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1914-1915</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>525</td>
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<tr>
<td>1915-1916</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916-1917</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>659</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917-1918</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>773</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918-1919</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>815</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919-1920</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1946-1947</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1947-1948</td>
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327 pupils on the 31st of March 1912.¹ The declining aspects of schools and scholars became a matter of concern for the government. The Deputy Commissioner attributed the decline to the literary nature of the educational system. This opinion was backed by other officials saying that the Nagas had a very practical turn of mind and hoped that they would do well if given education which would be of practical use.² Moreover, one of the causes of the decline of enrolment the government identified was the heavy language burden in the school curriculum.

**Technical Education**

The large scale dropout of students and the dwindling number of schools in the district compelled the government to re-examine the system of school education. It was considered that practical type of education would be suitable for the Nagas. To meet that requirement, in 1907, an industrial school, called the 'Fuller Technical School' was opened at Kohima for training the Naga boys in carpentry and blacksmithery.³ This institution offered

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² Ibid.
³ Quinquennial Review of the progress of education in Assam, op. cit., p.118.
a three-year training course for the pupils. At the initial stage, the school admitted 3 students annually but increased the annual intake to 7 students per year during the 1930s. In 1941, the school was brought under education department and amalgamated with the first government high school of the district, located at Kohima. Since then, the high school boys attended technical classes in the afternoon as part-time pupils.¹

Medium of Instruction

The diversity of tribal languages posed considerable difficulties in determining the medium of instruction in schools in the district. At the initial stage, however, the pupils were taught in their local vernaculars, Assamese and English. Out of the three media of instructions two were foreign languages for the Nagas boys. It was proved by experience that the course was difficult for the beginners in modern education. Subsequently, in order to remove the linguistic burden, Assamese was dropped as a compulsory subject and the vernacular and English were taken as media of instruction, with English acting as the medium for higher classes. Nevertheless, Assamese was also retained as a compulsory subject, though it was

¹ Quinquennial Review of the progress of education in Assam, op. cit., 1942-47, p.36.
made a non-examinational subject, in consideration of the fact that the Nagas needed to learn it for their commercial transactions with the people of the plains.¹

**School Curriculum**

The text books used in schools were mostly translated by the missionaries and their converts. However, in view of the language difficulties involved in translation work and the absence of a script in tribal languages, the government readily accepted the available books for use in schools as text books.²

As discussed earlier, because of diversity of language, no vernacular books could be used as uniform school textbooks in the district. Accordingly, each tribe had to use books translated or written in their own local language. As for instance, books written in Angami could not be used as textbooks for Sema students and vice versa. Consequently, the government closely co-operated with the missionaries in the publication of school textbooks. Textbooks translated into tribal languages were mostly published

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2. Allen, a.c., *op. cit.*, p.68. Although it was difficult for the primary student to take the gospel of St. John and the Acts of the Apostles as their textbooks, for lack of printed books in tribal languages, they were used as textbooks.
at the expense of the government although Christian
missions also partly met the cost of some publications.¹

Stipends

As a measure of encouragement for the prosecution
of post-primary school studies, the government also provided
scholarships to the Naga students. In 1942 there were three
primary scholarships of Rs. 3 each and three middle English
scholarships of Rs. 10 each available to the Naga boys. In
1946, there was a significant increase in the grant of
scholarships, whose total number rose to 13. These scholar-
ships were of the value of Rs. 3 a month, each tenable for
three to four years for post primary education.²

Constraint in Government Educational Policy

In view of the lack of employment opportunities, the
government followed a very cautious policy in the promotion
of education for the hill tribes. While welcoming the
increase of primary education, it expressed doubts regarding
the expansion of secondary school education. The quinquennial
review of the progress of education in Assam, 1932-37 stated:
"There is very little chance of employment for Naga and Lushai

¹ Quinquennial Review of the progress of education in Assam, 1901-07, p. 118.
² Ibid.
matriculates in their own hills, and practically none for them outside."\(^1\)

The government discussed the problems of Hill education at a conference in Shillong in 1935 and again in 1938 and decided that education up to class VIII should be given to the Naga boys in their home hills, and that they should then be given opportunities for training in mechanical pursuits or agriculture, and that facilities for high school and college education should only be given to exceptional boys.\(^2\) Needless to say, the backwardness in hill education was partly the direct effect of government policy which restricted the scope for higher studies in general.

Even though government's efforts in the development of education reached a significant mark, as is seen in the table below,\(^3\) its policy for tribal education was later found to be defective. The analysis of colonial education policy in Naga Hills may be summed up in the words of the report on the North East Frontier Agency of

\(^1\) Quinquennial review of the progress of education in Assam, op. cit., p.63.

\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) See Table which shows the categories of schools in the district of Naga Hills, 1882-1948.
June 1944, which noted; "No educational policy has yet been laid down and the matter will require very careful consideration. Our present system is clearly gravely defective when applied to primitive tribes, for it tends to affect the individual rather than the community and, instead of making the individual more fitted for his community, to separate him from it and cause him to seek a living elsewhere, with the result that such good as he may have received is not ordinarily passed on by example to his fellow villagers". 1

Thus, though government had made considerable progress in imparting rudiments of education in the district, it still had to make efforts for higher education oriented planning of education. However, with the exception of taking over of a high school at Kohima in 1941, 2 no further notable measures were taken for the improvement of education in the district.

VI

Socio-Cultural Impact

The colonial administration made no significant conscious efforts to introduce western culture in Naga

Hills. The administration as stated earlier, concentrated on practical problems, such as the maintenance of law and order, the foundation of an administrative system, and the raising of the revenue necessary for the discharge of the functions of the government. As a matter of fact, government's influence on the people remained only at the superficial level without disturbing the cultural current of the Naga. The more closer and intimate contact with the people which was affected by missionary enterprise — through preaching of the gospel and schooling — not only proselytised the Naga, but also interrupted the flow of their indigenous culture as well.

Effects of conversion

The deepest impact on the Naga society was made by the Christian missionaries, because they were active and most closely in contact with the Naga population. It was the American Baptist Mission which flourished under the patronage of colonial administration and made abiding


impact on the cultural life of the Nagas.¹ In fact, it was the missionary, and not the administrator, who was the main harbinger of change in the beliefs and ways of life of the Nagas. The spread of the gospel and the consequent conversion of the Nagas and the establishment of mission school made a major contribution to the furtherance of the gospel. Christian schools trained the Naga youths in the rudiments of modern education the main elements of which were reading, writing and arithmetic. The schools, which were established with the primary purpose of communicating the Christian gospel, were notably successful. In fact, the mission schools were the training institutions of Christian evangelists, pastors and school teachers.²

The missionaries saw conversion as a total about turn by the converts from their old ways of life. Conversion was thus not enough. The new converts had to sever all connection with the rites and customs relating to the so-called pagan worship. With the restrictions placed on animistic rituals and practices for the new converts,

¹ For. Deptt. Pol-A. February 1873, no.43, Dr. Clark was accorded permission by the govt. and acknowledged as a Missionary to the Nagas.
² Downs, F.S., *Christianity in North East India*, p.128.
the Christian missionaries interfered in the social and cultural practices of the Nagas to a far greater extent than the Government did. They insisted that a convert restricted himself to one wife; and he was not permitted to eat the flesh of animals associated with sacrifices at 'heathen festivals'. The missionaries also stopped the great feasts of merit. They even stopped dancing which was regarded to be a part of ancient or heathen practices.1

Thus, significantly, with the gradual and progressive acceptance of Christianity, the shift of cultural loyalty from animism to Christianity began changing the outlook and living culture of the people of Naga Hills.

The progress of proselytization was significantly followed by changes in the native culture. A naga convert could no longer observe the rituals associated with the so-called 'heathen worship'. They also had to stop tribal folk songs, dances, sacrifices and celebrations of various kinds (those connected with cultivation, construction of houses, founding of new villages, feast of merit, use of Morung or Bachelor's house, etc.). These were slowly removed from among the Christians.2 The abandoned animistic

1. Elwin, V., op. cit., p.78.
practices were replaced with new practices acceptable to Christian norms of life. The old dormitories where the youths practised their heathen culture associated with singing of 'objectionable' songs, telling of 'doubtful' stories and engaging in 'indecent conversation' were replaced by new buildings of separate Christian youth dormitories where songs of praises, prayer meetings and other 'spiritual' values were encouraged. Rice beer, the most popular drink of the Nagas, was replaced with tea, Christmas feasts replaced the feasts of merit; and total abstinence from rice beer became a 'basis of church membership'.

'The Christian gospel' created social tensions in almost every village in the district. The consequence of conversion was social and cultural conflicts between the new converts and the animists. Their co-existence in the same villages with parallel religious affiliation and practices could not go along smoothly. Christians' refusal to observe the animists observances and vice-verse created social problems in many Naga villages. Speaking

1. Clark, H.M., A Corner in India, p.139.
3. Political Case No.11, D.R.O. Kohima, January 1937. Almost all the political cases in Naga Hills during our period are connected with the conflicts between the ancients and the Christians.
on the impact of Christianity in the tribal society of
India, Hutton wrote: "Christianity has too often brought
not peace, but a sword dividing father against son and
a household against itself". Whenever the gospel was
preached, some people appreciated and embraced it and yet
many others strongly objected to it. This kind of scenario
was created everywhere in Naga Hills where in the same
village, people were divided into two communities —
Christians and ancients. The experience of the first
Naga village where Gadhula, the Assamese evangelist and
Dr. Clark, the American Baptist missionary, entered and
preached the gospel will give us an eloquent insight as
to how the spread of Christian gospel had divided the
Naga tribes. Following the preaching of the gospel at
Nolungkimong, some people of the village embraced Christia-
nity. However, the majority strongly objected to what
the missionaries called the gospel of 'peace and love'.
The creation of the Christian community in the village
developed new relationships in that village. Christians
alleged their prosecution and harassment by the ancients

1. O'Malley, L.S.S., Modern India and the West, p.430.

2. Clark, M.M., A Corner in India, p.17. In 1876, Clark
opened American Baptist Mission at Nolungyimse and
later in 1894 shifted it to Impur, near Mokokchung.
See Allen, B.C., op. cit., p.39.
and sought a place where they could practice their faith freely. They thus separated themselves to be found a new colony called Molungyimsen. The same problem of the two distinct religious communities followed wherever the gospel was preached in the district.

The consequence was that the British administration had to intervene for the settlement of disputes quite often resulting in the establishment of separate colonies for the Christian and at other times regulating rules for them to respect the religious practices of the animists as the only means of maintaining co-existence in villages. Thus in one of the ancient-Christian disputes, in 1937 Pawsey allowed the Christians of Lossama village to establish a new village which finally settled the conflict. Pawsey declared: "Christian can make new villages on land called Ngulekho, which is reasonably close to the old village. Land belongs to Keewhateri. All Christians must move in a body and will not be allowed to split and make more than one hamlet. Christians in the ancient village can stop there until the new Christian village is made next cold weather but they will observe all

1. Ibid., pp.19-21.
ancient genas until they do move. Similarly, disputes as to the observances of ancient Genas arose between the two religious communities in the Chezubami village during the 1930’s. Pawsay, Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills, settled the problem, and ordered the parties to observe the genas as stipulated. Their violation was made liable to a fine of one rupee. However, in 1928, dispute arose over the question of gangs for field work. The problem associated with them was the food and drinks and religious observances. A convert would not drink rice beer or foods connected with animist rituals. Besides, Christians observed Sunday as a rest day, the day which had no concern for the ancients. This situation created inconvenience for them to get a long in one gang for the purpose of cultivation. However, government ordered the Christians remain in their existing gangs.


2. Political case No.31, D.R.O., Kohima, May 1939. Taakro 3 days genas, Alkitha 1 day, Shekere 1 day, Vuta 5 days, Shesma 1 day, on death of Thavo 1 day, when Thavo’s house is built 1 day, Vathu 1 day.

The effects of colonialism on the Nagas become evident in their dresses as well. With the influence of colonialism, changes took place in the ordinary dresses of the Nagas. Half-pants, long pants, peticoats—gradually replaced indigenous dresses. The conservative Nagas were afraid that the old native structures would become outmoded in the long run. Thus in their endeavour to preserve the native culture the animists objected in vain to the changes which had been upsetting all old established customs and practices. Blah, Sub-divisional Officer, Mokokchung, observed the reaction of the Nagas to Christian and western influence and said: "There is a complaint in almost all the villages against the Christians for their attempt to upset all old establishing customs and practices."¹

**Impact of Christianity on Village Polity**

The introduction of Christianity in Naga Hills resulted in socio-political instability in the village. Christian gospel largely dominated the socio-religious life of the Nagas during the colonial period creating not infrequently social and administrative problems.²

The Christians in their endeavour to be faithful to the new religion often came into confrontation with the village administration which was under the ancient chiefs. Christians refused to pay customary contribution of meat to their Headmen who had not turned Christian. But the Government intervened and on its order they had to pay as usual.¹

One important order of the government was that village headmen turning Christian were not to continue as headmen on the ground that the converts would not be able to serve the interests of the ancients on whose welfare and obedience the Government put great emphasis. In such cases, the authority of headship had to devolve to any ancient who might be in the direct line of succession.² Although a Dobashi had nothing to do with succession problem as in the case of Headmen, the nature of cases to be dealt with prompted the government to prefer a non-Christian for the post. This was because ancient customs were often matters of dispute between ancients and Christians. Inaho and Lzuuku, the two Sema Dobashis in Mokokchung became Christian during the wave of conversion

¹ D.C.'s Standing Order No. 8, D.R.O. Kohima, March 1938.
² Ibid.
in Sema areas in 1930's. As their substitute, the Government proposed to appoint ancients on an undertaking that once a Dobashi became a Christian he must resign from the post. As J.P. Mills, Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills, said in 1936: "There is no desire to put pressure on them to remain ancients, but they become useless when they cease to represent the interests for which they were appointed".¹ However, Government's policy in this respect became infructuous when during the 1930's and 1940's a large number of village Headmen and Dobashis embraced Christianity. The Government had to gradually relax the condition and it laid down in 1946: "In future any Christian who should by custom be appointed Geon Bura (village headman) will not be turned out of the village for failure to officiate in the office".²

Christianity had its impact on the Naga society in various dimensions. However, it was not always for the better. For instance, among the Ao Nagas, where the education of girls was carried on by the American Baptist

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² Political Case No. 3, D.R.O., Kohima, January 1946. Failure to officiate in the office means even though the Christian Geonburas did not participate for the village functions specially connected with the animist traditional practices.
Mission, the conservative member of the tribe complained that an educated girl would not work in the fields and that consequent idling in the village has increased immorality. Moreover, the mission teachings, said Mills, the Deputy Commissioner, tended to undermine the structure of the tribe. Each Ao village was governed by a council of elders some of whose functions were religious — and Christians often refused to serve on the council. As such, there was the official concern that the tribe might be left without a proper social organization.

Among the Sema Nagas, apart from the Pax Britannica, the preachings of the gospel influenced the cessation of warfare. It had, however, adverse effect on the authority of the village chiefs. The chief could no more wage war for annexation of further areas for his sons to found separate villages. This led to intrigues among the brothers on the consequent dissolution of authority.

**Impact on Education**

Prior to the colonial administration, written form of any script was unknown to the Nagas. Quite naturally

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1. *Census of India, 1921, Assam, Ch.XI.*
they depended exclusively on informal education. Every household was in itself a teaching institution educating the children in the way they should grow up to be good and successful housewives and warriors. Home schooling was mostly supplemented by their dormitory experience where both boys and girls learnt social customs of their own.\textsuperscript{1} Learning process was simple and yet practice oriented.

The introduction of colonial education, however, disrupted the indigenous system of learning and redirected them to the new pattern of modern education. Undoubtedly with the increasing acceptance of colonial education, indigenous system was gradually relegated. Thus modern education had substantial influence on the socio-cultural life of the Naga.\textsuperscript{2} The Naga education which the British rulers largely entrusted to the American Baptist Mission had a revolutionising impact on their society. It affected their religion, demeanor, customs and habits.\textsuperscript{3}

\begin{enumerate}
\item Ghosh, B.B., Gazetteer of Nagaland, Mokokchung District, pp.72, 209. In the dormitories, the girls learned cotton ginning, spinning, spindling, folk songs and dances. The boys on their part learned making of bamboo baskets, and various other handicrafts, folk songs and dances, martial arts both for defensive and offensive purposes etc.
\item Elwin, V., Nagaland, p.78.
\item Clark, M.M., \textit{op. cit.} p.139.
\end{enumerate}
British colonial education not only revolutionized the cultural ethos of the Nagas but also led them to a new dimension of valued system of life. With the progressive dissemination of modern education, the outlook of the people which formerly remained narrow significantly developed and along with it, appreciation of modern education also received further momentum.\(^1\) The development of broader and healthier outlook of the people enabled them to accept the new trend of change in their society. As a consequence of the growth of modern education, the Naga society witnessed gradual tendency for social cohesion the characteristic of which was conspicuously lacking among them in pre-colonial period. It was the educated Nagas who spearheaded the formation of Naga Club, Tribal Council and the Naga National Council.\(^2\)

However, the living standard of the people changed notably as a result of the effect of modern education.\(^3\) It played the role of renaissance in the Naga society for it came to them with Christianity as bread and butter.

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1. See Table IV, pp. 156-57 of this chapter, which shows the growth of education in Naga Hills during the colonial period.

2. For details of their formations, see Ch. V, pp. 252-66.

3. For details, see Social Cultural impact, of this chapter, pp. 163 ff.
Consequently, most educated Nagas were also converts. As a matter of fact, there was no notable events when this class of people opposed or renounced Christianity or questioned its belief. On the other hand, it was they who readily accepted it and were largely responsible to the native conversion; for they acted as pastors, school teachers and native evangelists. The impact of education on the socio-cultural life of the Nagas was in fact the impact of christianity, for it permeated their culture through the agency of colonial education.

1. For details of educated Nagas' role to the changes of native culture, see pp. 145-147 ff. of this chapter.