Culture change is the conceptual formulation that refers to the many ways in which societies change their patterns of culture. Internal factors such as new inventions may lead to an increased food supply and population growth or external factors such as conquest by other society may bring about culture change. The patterns of culture of every human society are rapidly changing but the rate and type of change may be slow or gradual.

In dealing with culture change of any society some of the basic questions which one has to deal with are: (i) What are the internal or external factors that are responsible for culture change? (ii) What is the process by which culture change takes place?

Any change in ecological niche occupied by a society influences culture change. Such a change may occur as a result of either natural environmental change or migration of a society from one ecological niche to another. Also changes may occur due to any contact between two societies with different cultural patterns influences change in both societies. It may also occur as a result of any evolutionary change occurring within a society.

The study of the process of culture change refers to the actual social mechanism by which the change takes place. Some scholars are of the opinion that the basis of all culture change is located in change in the
attitude and behaviour of individual members of a society. Yet, other takes the point of view that although individuals are the carriers of a culture, there are processes of change in social and cultural system which have dynamic properties of their own that can be isolated and studied. Yet, still there are others who believes in dialectic materialism and think that change takes place according to definite laws. They believe that material life is primary and the rest is dependent on it. From these came the idea of structure and superstructure and their interrelation. Thus one can study the mechanism of change in different ways by different emphasis depending upon what theoretical framework one would like to use.

In this study the position that I have taken is to observe the factors like the colonial administration and Christian missionaries activities in the district as primary factors for the cause of cultural change among the Lotha people. The change in one sector is likely to influence the other sectors and aspect of the society. In human society it is not possible to control other variables and therefore it is not possible to show in mathematical precision as to how one factor is influencing the other but by surmises one can indicate the possible interconnection. This is exactly what will be attempted here.

In this chapter, I will discuss the change of culture under the following aspects: Occupation, source of income, agricultural programmes and their implementation, method of cultivation, implements, animal husbandry, landholding, wages, standard of living,
dress, ornaments, food and drinks, houses, consumer goods, religious beliefs, festivals, marriage and education.

Occupations

In the past generation people of this district solely depended on agriculture for their livelihood. There was no other means to adopt for their sustenance. Therefore, one has to devote most of his time and energy on agricultural activities throughout the years. Service under government had little attraction for him. Even if he took a job he often throw it up after a year or two and said he would rather go back to his native village and cultivate his land. This shows how much these people have keen interest in agricultural activities rather than government services. Every family had to put in all efforts towards agricultural activities as it was their main sustenance. The larger a plot of land a family is able to cultivate the more prosperous rich that family be. The result of this was that few people could be spared for some other works other than agriculture. Even if a person did engage himself in any other work he considered it as a subsidiary occupation. But now things have changed.

In Wokha district quite a good number of people have changed their occupations. Yet the majority of people are still engaged themselves in agricultural activities. For instance, in Wokha village out of 206 households interviewed, 89.31 per cent are found engaged in agricultural activities. While out of 123 households 91.12 per cent are cultivators in Phiro village. This indicates that the people in general are cultivators, but there are some, who, besides cultivation, engaged themselves in other
 vocations like blacksmithy, contract work, carpentry, bamboo and cane works etc., as subsidiary incomes.

A period of rapid agriculture growth in small developing economies is usually followed by the establishment of service facilities. Nowadays, many young people are coming up and many of them get employment in various fields. There are altogether 196 government employees from Wokha village, employing in different services like police service, school teachers, compounders (medical) and miscellaneous government jobs such as clerks, drivers, peons and chowkidars in various offices. In Phiro village also there are already 52 government employees serving in different offices as police personnel, school teachers, clerks, drivers, peons, chowkidars etc. Besides the government employees, there are also some other people who are engaged in contract works, carpentry, masonry, and labourers who earns main income of their families.

In Wokha village alone eight shops have come up by the road side. These shops were generally run by those villagers who do both cultivation and business simultaneously. These shops mostly deals in goods of domestic requirements such as sundries like country cigarettes, cigarettes, matches, candles, sweets, soaps, salt, oil, betel-nut with leaves. The greater number of shops coming up in the village is one visible sign of increased wealth of the villages in the district.

Those people who could not pursue higher studies or one school-left-outs and drop-outs usually joins police service or become automobile drivers. In Phiro village at least 15 are in police service employing
outside the village and 5 drivers as against 35 police servicemen and 19 drivers in Wokha village. The rapid increase of numbers of drivers in Wokha village was mainly due to recent introduction of commercial taxis and auto-rickshaws in the area.

Many women engaged themselves in weaving and knitting as profession and a number of them are also serving as school teachers, and clerks in different offices. These are signs of change in respect of women’s role. A few years back there was not a single woman in both Wokha and Phiro who would go for a job. But now a number of them choose a career for themselves.

Source of Income

The colonial administration did not bring about much major change in their economy of the district. However, the nature of their control over the tribe combined with limited changes in the method of agricultural production and in communication etc., has a certain impact on economic life of the people.

The traditional village communities that the British encountered were in the main primitive economic units with a system of subsistence agriculture which provided them with barely enough for their needs. The economic condition of the people that prevailed during the early decades of the colonial rule provides a clear picture of the pre-colonial administrative economy as it was quoted by Allen:

Most of the people of Nagas have a sufficiency of food and clothing, but there is little accumulated capital, and some villagers are said to have experience difficulty in raising the
very moderate revenue imposed on them. Apart from cotton, chillies and pan exported to Golaghat, there is nothing grown for sale, and cash is generally obtained by working for the Public Works Department, and occasionally on the tea gardens in the winter time. The cash expenditure of the people is, however, very small, and generally they seem fairly well-to-do.¹

Although agriculture was their principle occupation as an additional source of income, these farmers have also engaged in other part time activities. Of course, there was no separate artisan class but many are experts in making their own ornaments and handicrafts such as basket, mats, wooden plates, benches, bed, earthen pots and all household needs produced according to their domestic requirement (Hutton, J. N., 1921).

In Wokha village, out of 206 households, 89.21 per cent depends on agriculture for their livelihood and the rest are either in government services, business or contract works. In Phiro village it was found that out of 123 households, 88.21 per cent are cultivators and the rest are in government services or business. This indicates that the main source of income of the people in both villages is agriculture. But these days more and more people are being attracted towards other occupations besides agriculture. Now Wokha village has 10.09 per cent, out of 206 households, people engaged in different government offices. In Phiro village out of 123 households, 11.78 per cent are being employed in

various government services. Consequently, majority of the people in the
district are now depending on combination of more than a single source
of income. The pattern is that during the agricultural season, people
engage themselves in agricultural works but during agriculture off
seasons quite many are engaged in other occupations. Even those people
who are in service and are posted in the village also engaged themselves
in agriculture or other business. The main interest is to earn more cash
which also indicates that the economy has radically changed from barter
to cash.

Implementation of Agricultural Programme

During the pre-colonial period the economy of the people in the
district was solely depended on the agricultural products only. Hence,
people were largely engaged in agricultural activities. The means of
production were decentralized and therefore the relations of dependence
were not created within the system of production. Their household
economy was self-contained, and the foodgrains produced were largely
consumed at home. Therefore, the productivity in the agrarian sector was
low and production was not sufficient to build stocks, and thus the
economy remained fragile. Except for occasional exchanges, the
tendency was to produce for the direct consumption of the producers.
Surpluses were exchanged between groups or members of groups.
Control of the means of production and labour was exercised by the
producers themselves, and exchange was an exchange of labour and its
products. Everyone worked for an immediate need and that was all. Thus
the pre-colonial economy had not progressed appreciably from the
subsistence level (Hutton, J. H., 1921). While appreciating the effort
made by the British, B. B. Ghosh summed up the progress of agriculture in the district during the period as being “practically nothing or very little” (Ghosh, B. B., 1979). On the whole, the government’s policy and efforts for the promotion of agriculture in the district did not lead to major transformation in the agricultural economy of the district.

Method of Cultivation

Previously, people were dependent solely on agriculture. But now the situation has changed considerably both in respect of agriculture and other means of livelihood. In the field of agriculture a member of development measures have been adopted in the district. Practically, nothing or very little was done before independence to introduce any significant change in respect of agriculture. Around the time when the British administration was about to come to an end, a few demonstration plots were made in the district but there was no much progress. Only after the formation of the interim government, Nagaland, the Directorate of Agriculture at the state level came into being. At the time when Wokha was made a sub-division under the Mokokchung district, it had only one Extension Officer at Wokha. But after Wokha was made into a district one District Agricultural Officer has been posted there (Ghosh, B. B., 1979). He looks after the needs of the farmers by supplying improved seeds, fertilizers etc. He also recommends financial assistance for opening new terrace field and farms. He helps the peasants by providing demonstration to improve farming on modern method.

Hence notable efforts have been made by the administration to encourage terrace cultivation which is a new type of method of
A TERRACE FIELD IN WOKHA DISTRICT
(To face p. 100)
cultivation being introduced in the district. The administration has, therefore, offered to extend assistance to farmers at the rate of 50 per cent subsidy of the expenditure (Ghosh, B. B., 1979). Moreover, technical advice is given by demonstration to ensure a successful undertaking. Many farmers have utilized such help and have made terrace fields.

Another measure is the distribution of fertilizers such as ammonia sulphate, sulphur phosphate, urea of potash and bone-mealate to the villagers for use to increase the output of crops. Proper demonstrations are done so that effective use of such fertilizers may be implemented in the district.

Insects and pests cause some damage to plantation from time to time. The people formerly used traditional remedies against pests by performing sacrifices and offering prayers to the spirits. But now, particularly among the Christians, such practices have been abandoned. Now people utilize the service of the agricultural department and use scientific chemical remedies such as ammonia grammexane, DDT powder, nicotine sulphate etc., which have been found to be very effective.

Demonstration has been done on the use of improved seeds of potato, vegetable, paddy, hybrid maize seed and sugar cane cutting etc. Other seeds, seedlings and crops such as orange seedlings, pineapple, plum, pear etc., have also been introduced on 50 per cent subsidy basis. Hybrid seeds of wheat, maize, paddy are also distributed. Fruits cultivation is being encouraged and reviewed in Wokha district. For such
purposes the government of Nagaland is paying Rs. 2,500/- in cash and kind, per hectare for orchard plantation (Ghosh, B.B., 1979).

Agricultural loan is also extended to the farmers who show good results. It was also proposed to the farmers on 50 per cent subsidy basis for draft animals for cultivation in the field of the plain areas where ploughing is possible (Ghosh, B.B., 1979). However, owing to the sloping land no farmer could use draft animals for ploughing and hence was not eligible for the loan.

The administration has been encouraging local farmers to adopt new tools and implements and in order to improve the farming operations such tools are sold to the farmers on 50 per cent subsidy. Many farmers, particularly of Wokha village area, have made use of such schemes.

**Implements**

Formerly, people of Wokha district used traditional types of agricultural implements. Even at the beginning of this century, iron implements were rare, but with the advent of modern civilization things have improved and improved iron agricultural implements are used in the district these days.

As it has been mentioned earlier that the main form of cultivation in the district is jhum and on account of slopes and hilly conditions of the land the plough cannot be used in the area. The tilling of jhum field is done with the help of spade, hoe and scraper and that of terrace is done with spade only.
At present most of the agricultural implements are made of iron and the rest are made of bamboo and wood. A list of agricultural implements and their uses are given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implements</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Obtained from</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dao (Lepok)</td>
<td>Iron blade with bamboo handle</td>
<td>Self-made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Axe (Opvū)</td>
<td>Iron with wooden handle</td>
<td>Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoe (Chukchū)</td>
<td>Iron with wooden handle</td>
<td>Market, self-made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scraper (Ehe)</td>
<td>Iron with bamboo handle</td>
<td>Self-made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickle (Vekhvūro)</td>
<td>Iron with cane handle</td>
<td>Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mat (Ophūk)</td>
<td>Bamboo stripes</td>
<td>Self-made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnowing (Mvūro)</td>
<td>Bamboo stripes</td>
<td>Self-made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basket (Lüksa, Phari)</td>
<td>Bamboo stripes</td>
<td>Self-made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okhyak, Khūngro)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortar and Pestle</td>
<td>Heavy log</td>
<td>Self-made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Tsūmpho &amp; Menki)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Dao is the most important of all the implements. It is a life long companion for an ordinary villager because wherever he goes either to the field or to the forest or to a friend, he carries his dao. It is an all purpose implement because with it the jungle is cleared, the branches of jhum trees are slashed, the medium size trees are felled. Lots of other
AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS

SPADE

AXE

SCRAPER

SICKLE

DAO

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works are also done by it, such as slaughtering animals and dressing them up and cutting vegetables.

Axe is used mainly for felling bigger trees and making firewood from heavy logs. With it they make Tsümpho (Mortar). Formerly, all the works which are now done by dao are done by axe. It is a tool which did not exist earlier among the Lothas. Likewise spade, is also not a traditional implement in this area, but is found to be useful for tilling the fields. For earth cutting the spade is most convenient.

Hoe is used more for tilling jhum field. It is also used for weeding. It is more used than spade in jhum cultivation. When the plants are grown, scraper is used to weed out the unwanted grasses. Weeding is done two or three times in the jhum field with the help of scraper.

Sickle is used only when the paddy is ripened and is used to reap it. The Lotha sickle is of Assam type, that is, almost straight with curved working end.

Mat is made of bamboo slit stripes and is used in the field to thrash the paddy. It is also used for drying any other things.

The winnowing fan is used to winnow the paddy and rice. It is made of bamboo stripes (slited). It is round or rectangular in shape with rounded corners.

The basket is called luksa, phari, okhüng, okhyak etc. It is also a multipurpose item like dao. It is generally used during harvest time for
bringing the paddy home from the field. Carrying firewood is also mostly done with basket.

Paddy is husked in pounding table called *Tsümpho*. It is made of solid log. The pounding table may have several holes. Generally big pounding tables are found in the house of the chief or some other rich men. Paddy is put in the pounding table hole and pounded by the pestle or *Menki*.

**Landholding**

Among the Lothas a piece of land is cultivated for two years and then it is left for a period varying for four to fifteen years. However, if a person is short of land he obviously has to cultivate each piece at shorter intervals. A large portion of the land is clan land (*Wopan-li*), which is held in common by all members of that particular clan in the village. For instance, in Wokha village the clan land is more than the private land for every kindered (*Mhitso*) must have clan land (*Motsü-riü-li*). A man who leaves a village loses right to clan land in the village. Every year the members of the clan meet and allotted a portion of the land which each is to cultivate that year, the senior men getting bigger share.

In connection with landholding, Mill’s description of Lotha landholding may be found interesting.

A very large portion of the land in the Lhota country is clan land, which is held in common by all members of that particular clan in the village. A man who leaves a village loses all rights to clan land in the village, a far better system than the Sema system by which a man claims through usually in vain, ancestral right of clan land in the village in
which his great-great-grand father was the last member of the family to live. Every year the members of the clan in a Lhota village meet and apportion out the land which each is to cut that year. The senior men getting the bigger share. Strangely enough, this delicate operation never seems to result in a quarrel in Lhota society. Strictly speaking a man may not sell land which he has inherited. When direct heirs fail, the land becomes clan land. Were this to go on indefinitely, the whole of the land in a village may in time become clan land, and no one would ever be able to buy or sell land. To prevent this, from time to time, when the amount of common land becomes unwieldy, the clan meets and divides it up amongst the members who thus each becomes private owners of a portion of it. The process then begins again.²

However, a man who is short of private land (Kija-li) may cultivate others' land for period of one or two years on rent basis.

Land is the basis of Lotha's economy because most of the inhabitants derive the major part of their incomes from the cultivation of land. Prior to agricultural development in the district the economy of the people was predominantly subsistence: household produced most of their own needs. But now situation has began to change. People no longer produce the major parts of goods they consume but began to grow more cash crops and with the cash earned from such cultivation they buy things of their needs. Cultivation of cash crops brought Lotha's economy to market. Farmers sell vegetables in the market and there they purchase their groceries, clothes and household articles. Nowadays, people of this

district takes more interest in growing more of cash crops for sale outside the district like Kohima, Dimapur, Golaghat and Mokokchung. They are also exploiting other natural resources, especially timbers.

The traditional barter economy which was monetized some decades ago by the British, is being commercialized by the people. At the village level also some significant social structure changes are now taking place. Consequently, a new section of neo-rich people are emerging in the village, which is the emergence of new status symbol in the society.

Prior to agriculture development in the district the price of land was fairly low. For example, before the introduction of such facilities the price of land was between Rs. 500.00 to Rs. 1000.00 per acre and Rs. 400.00 to Rs. 800.00 per acre in Wokha and Phiro villages respectively. By contrast, in Wokha village price of land has now gone up to Rs. 15,000.00 to Rs. 20,000.00 per acre while Phiro village, the price is about Rs. 10,000.00 to Rs. 15,000.00 per acre. Land price in both villages have been raised steadily during the last few years but as various developments began to spread to these lands, particularly to Wokha land, prices began to rise rapidly (Wokha Village, 2000, Phiro Village, 2000).

**Animal Husbandry**

Unfortunately the people of Wokha district have not yet turned their attention towards the scientific method of animal husbandry, most probably because there are other more lucrative economic fields of attention such as contract works and supply works, besides the
agricultural activities. However, though not scientifically done, every household has got some domesticated animals for home consumption.

Formerly, quite a few families could hardly keep pigs and fowls for home consumption purposes. But many families are now keeping cows, fowls, ducks and pigs. Some people rear goats and sheep but such practice is not common to all the villages. They are reared mainly for its meat.

The introduction of development in various fields in the district have enabled them to have more spare time to attend to their domesticated animals. Now, almost every household have got all kinds of domesticated animals like cows, pigs, fowls, goats, bull, both for home consumption and for commercial purposes as well.

For instance, in Wokha village alone it was observed that out of total households of 679; 54.34 per cent are keeping fowls and 46.83 per cent are rearing pigs while 6.30 per cent are rearing cows. Rearing of other domesticated animals such as goats and bulls are rather few as 0.88 per cent and 0.14 per cent are keeping goats and bulls respectively.

Animals reared for market are mostly chicken, piglets and cows. Nowadays, in both the villages, such animals are reared for home consumption and for commercial purposes as well. Pigs are reared for both breeding and meat but piglets are usually reared for commercial purposes only. Formerly, cows are also reared for breeding and meat, but not now because keeping cows for milk is quite expensive. It involves time and labour and remuneration is not enough. Even the initial
Expenditure is relatively tough. Besides, they have other more remunerative activities, particularly agricultural activities. Therefore, it is observed that only those people who have enough resources to make the initial investment and supply of labour keeps cows for commercial purposes. In Wokha village, at present 13 households are found rearing cows for such purposes.

Traditionally, domesticated animals, specially fowls and pigs, are mainly reared for sacrificial activities and also for home consumption. But the practice of such sacrifices is already abandoned by the people due to the introduction of Christianity in the land. Therefore, people have no longer attachment to such kind of indigenous beliefs and practices as the entire population of the district have embraced Christianity. Besides, with the improvement of economic stability in the district, people have more spare time and enough resources to attend to their domesticated animals.

**Wages for different economic occupations**

In the olden days wages were not paid in cash but in kind only. In most cases wages are not paid because every cultivator used to help each other on reciprocal basis. This old tradition was very prominent among the Lothas in the past. But now, with growing number of people working in different vocations there is a marked scarcity of labourers.

It is true that with the increase of price index in the market, the demand for increase in daily wages also increased in all other occupations. Thus the general economic trend of the region correspondingly determines the wages of the labourers also. In the first decade of nineteenth century the average wage for labourer was 4 annas
per day (Bhosh, B. B., 1979). But after the Second World War there was a sharp increase in the price of the commodities as well as wages of labours. The institution of barter system has been virtually disappeared. The price index as well as wages kept on upward trend and it again shot up after Nagaland became full fledged state in 1963. Nowadays, for any kind of work, labourer earns cash wages only.

With the enlargement of various opportunities in different vocation a remarkable changes have taken place in the district. Now there is no exchange of labour. Any kind of work has to be paid in cash only. During 1970s the daily wages for an agricultural labourer varied from Rs. 6/- to Rs. 10/-, depending on the skill of the labourer. For agricultural operations the wages of men was Rs. 10/- but for women it was Rs. 6/- to Rs. 8/-. Wages for house building was Rs. 8/- to Rs. 10/- for unskilled labourers. But for skilled labourers it varied from Rs. 15/- to Rs. 20/- per day. Skilled labourer engaged in carpentry, masonry etc., also got Rs. 15/- to Rs. 20/- per day on an average. The average wages of unskilled labourers for carpentry, masonry, earth cutting, breaking up stone chips and chopping logs for firewood it was Rs. 10/- to Rs. 15/- per day (Bhosh, B. B., 1979).

At present, the daily wages have become comparatively higher than the last few years. Now an agricultural labourer wages for men is Rs. 80/- to Rs. 90/- per day and for women it is Rs. 70/- to Rs. 80/- per day. For children below the age of 15 years is Rs. 30/- to Rs. 40/- per day. Men labourers engaged in works like carpentry, masonry and earth
cutting etc., is Rs. 80/- to Rs. 100/- per day but for skilled labourers it is Rs. 150/- to Rs. 200/- per day.\(^3\)

The increase in daily wages is a clear indication of economic development in different occupations but on the other hand it has led to the breaking down of the age-old traditional practices of paying wages on reciprocal exchange based on kinship obligations.

**Standard of Living**

Generally, the standard of living of the people refers to the economic condition, mode of dwelling, diet and dress etc., of the people. The standard of living of the people may vary from one family to another, depending upon what are their resources and what they earn.

In the beginning of nineteenth century the living standard of all the people of Wokha district was more or less same because rich people were negligibly few. But it was after the Second World War that changes have taken place in multifarious ways. The standard of living of the people also began to differ according to the economic condition and status of the people. Rapid developmental works after the creation of Nagaland as a state in 1963 has brought far reaching changes in the economy of the district. It affected the lives of the people greatly and the distinction between rich and poor began to emerge (Sinha, A. P., 1986).

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\(^3\) The present daily wages of labour for various economic occupations in the district have gone up to almost ten times as compared to the previous daily wages in the last few decades. This information is collected from different labourers in the districts.
Before the introduction of colonial administration and the advent of Christianity, the people of this district were living in a simple life. The general living of the people were poor and not so healthy from hygienic point of view. They have been living for centuries being away from outside influence. But it was only after the coming in contact with the modern civilization and the two great world wars that the Lothas began to search for education and better living, materially, intellectually and spiritually. The creation of Nagaland as a separate state in 1963 and consequent sprut in agricultural and other developmental activities have brought about significant changes in the living standard of the people. The living standard of the people has gone up but one can also notice the distinctions in the economic level of the people which were not existed before.

In the past the cultivators usually lived in thatched houses, consumed traditional food and wore traditional dresses. But now their houses are different, the traditional diet is supplemented with new items and they dress themselves to look modern. Shirts, pants, blouses and foot-wears are now very common. Many of them try to keep more than a pair of shirts or pants. Wearing of coat is also a common thing particularly among those who are in services. A number of people in Wokha and Phiro also wear modern dress. But such trend is limited to those who are in services or business or young. School going children also wear school uniforms.

The introduction of agricultural development programmes in the district has also helped the people in many ways. Such developmental
programmes in agricultural activities provided them better yieldings and thereby enhanced their incomes. Now they are able to send their children to different schools. Normally, the tuition fees of private schools in Wokha district ranges from Rs. 150/- to Rs. 200/- per month. Yet many are able to send their children to such schools in the hope that they may get better education. For example, at present, more than 250 children have been sent from Wokha village to different feed schools. Phiro village has about 96 students studying in such schools.

Traditionally, people had no household furniture except some wooden seats called *Evan*. They used to sleep on a wooden planks called *Tsüngtsö-piling*. But now this has been all substituted by wooden bedstead though of simple type. Of course, in Phiro village still some people use wooden planks. Nowadays, chairs and tables are found in most of the houses. Some of the well-to-do people have sofa seats and other pieces of furniture. For instance, Mr. Yankhomo of Wokha village, who is a contractor-cum-businessman, keeps modern furniture such as sofa sets and a variety of tables in his sitting room. Similar facilities are also found in Phiro village in the house of Mr. Chamikhon, the headmaster of Government Middle English School, Wozhüro. The old type of earthen pots have been replaced by aluminium and steel utensils. These are some of the visible signs of increased wealth in both the villages.

In both villages, there are some people who not only cultivate land but also engage themselves in business, contract works and other project works. Besides, many who are employed in government services as
school teachers, clerks and Dobashis etc. They generally live in the village itself but they carry on all other businesses.

Their standard of living and financial position is, therefore, better than the rest of the cultivators. Such people live in improved houses. Their houses are tin-roofed with separate sleeping room, bathroom, and latrine. Kitchen is attached in the main house. In a few houses it is constructed outside the main house. They keep modern furniture such as tables, chairs and cupboards. Many of them own radios, tape recorders and bicycles, but only few of them own vehicles. They wear all kinds of modern dresses such as shirts, pants, blouses, jackets, coats, trousers, sweaters and shoes. They usually eat better quality food.

Generally, the monthly expenditure of the family indicates the standard of living of the people. Majority of Phiro people spend between Rs. 1500/- to Rs. 2000/- per month on their daily domestic needs as against 2000/- rupees to 2500/- rupees per month in Wokha village. Those people who depend on cash earning like the government servants and businessmen usually spend much more than the rest of the people in the village. Their monthly expenditure ranges from Rs. 2500/- to Rs. 3000/-.

The coming in contact with the modern civilization and the introduction of agricultural development programmes in the district has been the important factor for such changes in the standard of living of the people, though the role of other factors cannot be undermined.
Dress

The traditional dress like Rive, commonly spoken of in Nagamese as ‘lengta’ and skirt called surhium were the only garments in the past among the Lothas. The ‘lengta’ is a long narrow piece of stout cloth ending in a broad flap. In putting it on, the narrow piece is wound once round the waist so that it joins at the back and forms a belt. It is then brought through between the legs and up through the belt, the broad flap being allow to hang down in front. The result is a garment which is both serviceable and entirely decent. The skirt (surhium) worn by women is bounded tightly round the waist and the overlapping top corner. Tucked in front of the right hip. The edge which shows is often ornamented.

The body clothes are of various patterns which indicates the number of social ‘gennas’. ceremonies performed by the wearer. The first is Sittim, a white cloth with broad dark-blue horizontal stripes. This is worn by both boys and men who have performed no social ‘gennas’. A man who has performed the first social ‘gennas’ may wear the Phangrhip. This is a dark-red with a broad strips of black, with a broad stripe of white cloth running across the middle of the cloth parallel with the black stripes. A man who has completed the series of social ‘gennas’ wears a handsome cloth called Longpen-sü, which is a dark-blue with five bands of light blue about one inch broad, and three very narrow lines of light blue at the top and bottom. It is a very prestigious shawl which is worn only by a man who has performed Tsiro-tsoa and Ozu-süa ceremonies by feeding the villagers at his own expenses. The most prestigious shawl is the Rükyu-sü which is worn only by the man of high status and a man who has taken enemy’s head. It is a dark blue with six
MODERN LOTHÁ BOYS
(To face p. 116)

MODERN LOTHÁ GIRLS
(To face p. 116)
broad red stripes, set close together at the top and bottom. The median band is about two and a half inches broad, and ornamented with a conventional design representing human heads, mithun horns, hornbills and tigers. An unmarried girl usually wears a skirt called Konro-sürhüm and a plain dark blue cloth called Muksü as shawl. But on the night of her marriage, however, when she goes to her husband’s house, she puts on a very pretty cloth called Loro-sü. When her husband dragged a stone ceremony she may exchange her Loro-sü for a Longpen-sü.

With the coming of the British rule, Christianity and modern education a drastic and radical change on dress has taken place among the Lothas. The age old traditional dresses have lost its importance and been replaced and supplemented by other dresses like pants, skirts, skirts and blouses. The effect of colonialism on the Nagas became evident in their dresses as well. With the influence of colonialism, changes took place in the ordinary dresses of the people. Half-pants, long pants, peti-coat – gradually replaced the indigenous dresses (Sema, Piketo., 1992). The use of such items of western dress had become increasingly popular and fashionable not only in towns but also in villages. However, during British rule, such items of foreign dress largely remained the luxury of a small section of people especially school teachers, government servants, pastors and secondary students. The use of western dresses was objected by the British government who insisted Nagas on conforming to their national dress. But nowadays even in the interiors, there will be only a few people who still use those old dresses. Many are found using foot wear too. Such change in dress is also visible in both Wokha and Phiro villages. Majority people of these villages are now wearing modern
attires like pants, shirts, coats, jackets, blouses and shoes. Some well-to-do people keep more than a pair. Coat is commonly used specially among the people who are employed under government services. Young people of Wokha village wear all kinds of modern dresses.

Among the man’s traditional shawls there are some which imply rank and status. The most important and prestigious shawl called Rūkyu-sī is usually worn by a man of high status and a man who has taken enemy’s head. Next is longpen-sī which is also worn only by a man who has performed Tsiro-tsoa and Ozū-sū ceremonies by throwing feast of merit at his own expenses. The next prestigious shawl is Phangrbīp-sū which is also worn by a man who had accomplished certain distinction for obtaining higher social status. But now such distinction is not very important and practically every body is using every kind of cloth if he can manage to get one. Factors arising out of administration, Christian conversion and economic development have caused such change in all aspects of living.

Modern transitional phases in socio-economic, religious and other spheres have their impact in the society. New township and advanced villages have sprang up. Village economy has changed over to complex, education has made tremendous progress and far reaching effect have occurred in the district. However, in spite of such changes, the traditional habits are still valued by the peasantry. Traditional dress is still loved by the rural section of the population but a considerable section of men-folk have however changed their dresses to modern dresses. Modern women have also changed their form of dress in town and advanced places with
latest fashion of blouses, coats, scarves and sweaters etc. They also wear
toever. Still then they use their indigenous skirt side by side with
modern dress. Lotha shawls for men and for women are commonly used
in the district. Non-Naga shawls are also widely used by modern women.

Ornaments

Dress without ornament is incomplete. Ornaments which the men
wears are derived from metals, bronze, bones, cowries, shell, cane,
leather, orchids, feathers and wood. Earring comprises of cotton wool
and occasionally brass ornaments. Men further used ivory armlet or
imitation of wood. Wristlets of cowries sewn on cloth is also worn by a
man who has done head-taking ceremony. Necklace made of wild bear’s
tusk hemmed with red cane and pendant of a red bead are much loved by
men.

Women’s ornaments are few and simple. Among the tribe,
women’s ornaments are earrings, wristlets and bracelets of brass or
copper, but sometimes of lead or silver. The earring is made of a bunch
of the bird feathers bounded round with red wool or yellow orchid stalk.
Lengthwise cut pieces of conch shell as well as beads are used as
necklace. A thick round pewter armlets (*Tivû*) are used above each
elbows and on each wrist four or live small flat brass bracelets (*rûmpûm*).
Both male and female use further personal decoration of wild flowers.

Dancing dress is yet more colourful. A man wears on his head a
wig (*Tongkho*) either of the long hairs from the neck and shoulder of the
Himalayan black bear or of the fur of the arm of the male gibbon. In his
wig he may wear three king-crow feathers (*Votsûm-emhi*) if he has done
ORNAMENTS

- Ladies Necklace
- Ladies Necklace
- Ladies Armlet
- Gents Necklace (Wild Boar's Tusk)
- Gents Armlet (Ivory)
the head-hunting 'genna' once, or if he has done it more than once, one hornbill tail feather (*Rhyipta-emhi*) for each occasion. On his ears he hangs big pads of cotton wool and sticks in the lobe of his ear a *thera* (ornament) of scarlet feather. Across the chest he wears *ritssen* (baldrick or sash) which usually strings together with the little basket (*Tssikyip*) behind. A pair of *jori* (legging) are used at dances on ceremonial occasions. In both Wokha and Phiro, traditional ornaments have been changed to modern types of ornaments such as brass or acrylic necklaces, jinger-rings and earrings, watches and modern fashion and styles of dressing. Yet traditional ornaments are still loved by the elderly people.

Ornament is meant for personal decoration. It indicates the social status of the wearer as well. But such value and importance are disappearing gradually owing to the introduction of modernization. Now, most people have given up the old habit and custom of using traditional ornaments yielding to the new things of modern affluence. Hence, there is hardly anybody now using such type of ornaments except those few people in the village. For town dwellers it has become a thing of show-piece in their setting room.

**House**

The Lotha houses are similar to each other. It varies in size from a small house of some old widows to the house of a rich man. Most of the houses are roofed with *Lishit* (thatches) and *Khomo-vo* (palm leaves). The walls are generally made of bamboo plaited called *Okyim*. The *mpong-ki* (porch) is double roofed, roof is like special catchment for the porch and is separated from the main roof which project upward. In the
middle of the porch is a bamboo post, which carried through the roof of the apse to meet the projecting roof-tree of the main building. The roof is supported on the centre-post (Tedhu-pvit). The floor is at the ground level and around the house a drain is dug to prevent the rain water getting in. There is no separate kitchen but cooking is done inside the same house. There is no chimney and the smoke finds its way out as best it can. Almost in every house there is an open air platform called Khantsingsa for basking, washing and sitting etc.

The old type of houses still exists in the villages. However, with the advent of modern civilization and techniques in various fields the economic condition of the people have raised and their housing materials and designs have also widely changed, specially the villages near the town. Most of the houses are now roofed with tin or plain sheets and the way of construction of the building is modern. Even in the villages many building are now found constructed in the modern ways with modern amenities such as sanitary arrangements, electric fitting and other modern appliances.

For example, in Wokha village out of 679 households 91.26 per cent are modified traditional type of house with tin-roofing, 7.88 per cent Assam-type houses and 1.45 per cent of traditional houses. Out of 250 households, Phiro village has 73.17 per cent of modified traditional type houses with tin-roofed, 24.39 per cent of traditional houses and only 4.45 per cent of Assam-type houses. Majority of houses in both villages are found already electrified. These are a sign of change that has been taken
place in the Lotha’s house patterns which did not exist before the arrival of colonial administrators and missionaries in the district.

**Consumer Goods**

In the past days things like mortar and pestle (*Tsümpho & Menki*) and liquor-vat (*ojen*) were commonly used by the villagers. But now in its place rice mills have been introduced in the villages. Therefore, the age old mortar and pestle have ceased to perform its function these days. In Wokha village alone 5 (five) cottage rice-mills have been introduced. Liquor-vat is no longer used by the villagers for they no longer drink liquor or rice beer (*soko*) instead things like cans and barrels are used. Bamboo shelve (*Pfuki*) in which all the kitchen articles are kept, are no longer hung in the kitchen. Now they use wooden boxes as cupboards. Some well-to-do people use modern cupboards in their kitchen. A folded plantain leaf was used as cup in the olden days. These days modern porcelain cups and glass tumblers are commonly used by the people instead of traditional vessels. Things like Naga made earthen pots and a shallow wooden dish (*ophi*) have all been substituted by aluminium and steel utensils.

Besides the kitchen articles, many more modern consumer goods such as radio, tape recorder, bicycle, television and furniture are used by the people. The case of Nyamo Tungoe of Wokha village who was the Chairman of Village Council and also occasionally engaged in business, illustrates the attitudes and interests of Wokha men in material possession. He lives in an Assam type building with modern amenities. He keeps modern furniture and also other things like radio, tape recorder
and television. Jamikhon Odyuo of Phiro village, a school teacher, also keeps the same modern facilities as Nyamo of Wokha village. These two examples show the economic position of the villages in Wokha district.

With the coming of the British rule, western influence gradually penetrated into every aspect of the people's life in the district as stated by Piketo that the ground replacement of the indigenous dress and household article is an example of such western influence (Sema, Piketo, 1992). The use of modern dresses thus have become increasingly popular and fashionable not only in towns but also in the villages. Now, particularly in the household sector, steel utensils of various kinds replaced the exclusive reliance on indigenous pottery and wooden crafts of various kinds. Foreign goods such as tailored clothes, bicycles, sewing machines, lamps and other minor gadget of western civilization gradually become household necessities for some of the Lothas (O'Mallay, L.S.S., 1942).

Food and Drinks

Rice is the staple food for this district. Generally, rice is taken three times a day. It is taken along with meat or fish and vegetable curries.

The Lotha people relish meat, for which reason animals are kept both for food and sacrifices. Pork is the most relished meat. Cows are also kept by many people but mainly for meat, not for its milk. Milking has started just recently. Mithun which is said to have been common in the olden days, has become very rare these days. As far as fish is concerned, both fresh and dried are taken. But since the quality of the fish in the hills is so less, it is not dried nowadays for preservation.
Mostly it has to be brought from Assam. Pork, beef, chicken, fish and mutton are prepared into various curries both in the indigenous and modern ways. Meat boiled with vegetable or herbs are the favourite traditional dishes. They relished cooked, smoked or boiled meat. Games including wild birds, animals and fowl are taken. Bear, deer, hares, elephants and boars and indeed almost all available species of animals including dogs are taken. However, the normal food item consists of rice, vegetable, bamboo shoots and juice, dry fish and quite occasionally meat. A very favourite food is bamboo pickle (riichon-han) are made out of the hearts of young bamboo shoots pounded with water then dried and boiled when required.

Generally, meal is taken thrice a day. The first meal (enyathing-etso) is usually served early in the morning between 5.00-6.00 a.m. At noon, the lunch (Nshi) is taken which consists of the same items as those of the morning meal. Then the evening meal (mmyu-etso) is served again in between 4.00-6.00 p.m. However, there is no specific order of time to when the meal should be served, specially the evening meal, for it depends on their convenience of time. Therefore, it varied from family to family.

Usually tea is not taken but instead rice beer (soko) is drunk. Formerly, the people in the villages used to take meal thrice a day: early in the morning, at noon and in the evening. All the meals contained the same items such as rice, vegetables, meat and dry fish and curry.
Now the food items of those people who are in higher economic group shows that they consume such food which have better food items such as fried food, frequent tea, snacks and bread. Such people consume tea and bread at lunch time instead of rice.

In Wokha village, for example, it is observed that out of 206 households, 71.35 per cent consume other subsidiary foods such as tea and snacks and occasionally fruits. In Phiro village, such food is consumed by 49.20 per cent only. However, as far as the method of cooking and meal timing are concerned, there has not been much change in both the villages as majority of the people are still practising the traditional way of cooking food, that is, boiled food and smoked food. But occasionally some people, particularly those who are in government services and business, do take fry food also. So far their food items are concerned, many people are now consuming more varieties of food items. Both Wokha and Phiro shows about 60 per cent to 80 per cent households consuming an additional food items like meat, fish and occasionally dal, other than rice and vegetables, in their daily food. Such situation taking place among the Lotha people of Wokha is a clear indication of changes that are taking in their food pattern.

Religion

The religion of the Lotha is that type which has been vaguely termed as animistic. He believes in no Supreme Being who rewards the good and punishes the evil. The deities for whom he makes sacrifices are some of the neutral, if kept in a good temper with proper offerings and some of them are also definitely malicious. A Lotha cheerfully carries
out what he conceives to be his religious duties and meets his end like a man when the time comes.

The nearest equivalent to gods is an order of being called *Potsow*, who lives in a world like ours, of the earthly floor of which our sky is the underside. The world of *Potsow* in turn has a sky which supports yet another *Potsow* world and so on for an unknown number of layers. The *Potsow* who affect us are those in the world immediately above our sky. They resemble men in appearance and have hosts of attendants who sometimes regard as their servants and sometimes as their relations. *Potsow* are believed to visit earth from time to time and hold conversation with the *Ratssen* (village seers) and bring articles with them and which indicates the fortune the village is going to enjoy during the year.

Besides the *Potsow*, he also believes in some other deities such as *Siikhyingo* (god of wild animals), *Ngazo* (jungle spirit), *Ronsyu* (god of blessing) and *Jüpvüö* (water-master). The *Tsüngrhamo* is believed to be the evil spirit who causes almost every kind of illness to man.

The Lothas usually consider that they have two distinct souls called *Omon* and *Müngyi* respectively. The *Omon* leaves a man at the moment of death and goes straight to the world of the dead. The world of dead (*Echüli*) lies under our world. Here the dead lives exactly like living people. Those who had done good deeds during their life time, lead a prosperous happy life and those who had indulged in evil deeds lead a life of poverty and misery. The entrance to the world of the dead is through a cave (*Echükvü*) on the precipitous eastern face of the
mythological mountain of Wokha hill called *Tiyi-phonglan*. It is believed that every dead spirit goes to the world of dead through this very cave. Life in the land of the dead is certainly not regarded as everlasting, but the Lotha do believe that there is life after death as once stated by Ezamo.

One of the two souls of a person left the body as soon as the person died and entered the abode of the dead in the underworld, through the caves on the mythological Tiyi Mountain at Wokha. All Naga believe their souls come to this mountain at death. The other soul remained with the family, at least up to the last funeral rite conducted on the twelfth day from the day of death. At all family meals, food for the deceased was kept in the usual plates until that final rite, the day of release (*vachi*). Within that twelve days period, no insect, bird or animal entering the house of the deceased would be killed. Otherwise, the soul of the deceased visiting the family in such forms might be killed in the process. The soul on its way to the world of the dead had to undergo various hurdles and tests before it could reach the place. The soul had to take gifts to the ruler of the underworld, who was a woman with breasts and hair of enormous length. No souls of those dying by accidents could enter the abode of the dead. Those souls were left wandering on earth, scaring the living who wandered outside alone or stayed alone at home. These spirits of the deceased had a strong influence on the lives of their living relatives. These dead spirits were vigilant of what their living relatives did on earth. Such spirits blessed or cursed their living relatives. Therefore, the spirits were occasionally appeased by sacrifices.¹

There are also some people who believe that men die again and become flies. Some others think every man passes through nine successive lives and then cease to exist.

The religion of the Lotha teachers no moral code. The blessing it offers him are material, not spiritual. Yet many Lothas lead clean, straight and honest life. It is true that virtue in this world is vaguely believed to be rewarded with happiness.

(a) Religious Officials

Every village used to have their own priest. The priest, besides performing the sacrificial rites of the household and village, is the custodian and interpreter of religious beliefs. He is also a fortune teller, the secrets are made known to him by the deities. Falling into a trance, a priest may conjure some acquaintances with the spirit and the people hear a divine message from his lips. Thus he is believed to imbibe esoteric knowledge of many things and capable to cope into the recondite mysteries.

There is a distinction among priests, sacrificers, sooth-sayers, diviners and medicine men in the sacredatal aspects. The priest is the priest of the village. He must be without blemish in all respects. The office is either hereditary or charismatic, but once filled it is a life long position. He is the highest religious official of the whole village. He wields spiritual influence. He belongs to the priestly clan with a long standing repute in the society. A principal priest is associated by a junior priest called Yinga. He succeeds to the office in the event of death of the senior man or priest of his own paternal lineage, the investiture being
governed by colourful ceremonies. The priest performs important ceremonies such as inaugurating harvest undertakings, inauguration of sowing, founding of new village and holding of other festivals. He is maintained by seasonal gifts from the people during the religious ceremonies.

Ratssen is the medicine man or woman of the village. The post is hereditary or charismatic in nature and is held for life. He or she is the medium of divine communication to the people, as in the case of God’s visitation as well as predicting events and diagnosing illness. He or she also treats sickness and interprets dreams. In some way he or she acts as a prophet, a surgeon and counselor of the village. He or she prescribed fees for service to the people.

Ha-vae is another religious official who mediates between dead spirits and their living relatives. This post is usually held by women. In the evening of a person’s death the family would prepare a sacrificial food and keep for the night at the house of the Ha-vae (mediator between dead spirits and the living relatives). The spirit of the dead person would tell his or her wishes to the living family, and the medium would pass the message along to the bereaved family.

Besides these religious officials, there are other ministers of lower circles, like those in charge of funerals, child initiations and other family rites. Such minor officials are not appointed by the people formally but the persons concerned volunteer by virtue of their experience and age. They receive light fees in kind from the people served.
The functions of the traditional religious officials has now come to an end as almost the entire population of the Lotha villages have embraced Christianity. Nowadays in every village the whole affairs of the religious activities is dealt with by the church official such as the pastor, elders and the deacons. The pastor administered all the ritual ceremonies but in his absence the associate pastors or the elders of the church may substitute him to initiate the church affairs. Besides the deacon board there are also various departments within the church organization. For instance, in Wokha village there are five branches or departments such as women fellowship, youth fellowship, Sunday school department and evangelistic committee within the church organization. Each department has a standing committee through which the whole affairs of the department is dealt with.

(b) Life Cycle Ritual

In the olden days among the non-Christians, when a baby is born in a Lotha family a *genna* sort of ceremony was observed by the members of the family for 6 days for a male child and 5 days for a female. During those days they did not go for any field work for themselves, but can go to other's field for work. The mother also did not go out of the house or did not walk with people other than her family members.

Soon after the birth, the mother is given chicken soup and rice. This continues for about a week or so, till the mother was physically quite fit. In case of a boy on the 6th day and in case of a girl on the 5th day the ears were pierced and a name is given to the baby. This ceremony is
called *Ngaro-Mvúčuk* (naming ceremony). During this ceremony a formal dress or gear is given to him or her.

Christians do not observe all these *gennas* or rules and do as they like or observe the naming ceremony in a Christian way on the 6th day in the case of a male child and 5th day in the case of a female. In this naming ceremony the church pastor and deacons are invited to the house and they pray for the welfare of the child and name him or her according to the parents’ choice. It may be noted here that most of the Lothas are now Christians and therefore the non-Christian practices are practically given up.

As and when death occurs of a human being in the village a sacrifice immediately follows of a chicken which is then hung above the corpse on the position of its face and it is necessary that its wings are kept on the walls of the house until after burial. If the deceased was an influential person then a dog tied with a string or rope is brought to the apartment where the deceased lies and the string or rope is tied to the hand of the corpse and the dog is killed and removed.

The corpse is then decked with full robes and enmeshed with precious ornaments and is kept inside the coffin. The coffin is hewed out of a tree. In some cases, the deceased is armed with weapons to be capable of fighting against evil spirit which seek to obstruct the soul in its journey to the land of the dead. The custom of killing a dog is to give the soul a companion and killing of the chicken is to scratch the path. The grave is fenced. Then over the grave the belongings of the deceased are kept or displayed by supporting them on a strong bamboo laid crosswise against
GRAVE OF A LOTHENA WARRIOR DECORATED WITH HIS ORNAMENTS AND A TALLY OF THE HEADS HE HAS TAKEN
(To face p. 3)
the weight. Food is offered to the deceased in a basket. Torches of fire are kept on the grave at night time for 6 days for a man and 5 days for a woman.

Changes brought by Christianity are now to be surveyed. In place of bamboo hanger where grave gourds and skull are displayed, we see a cross planted over the grave, while a stone tablet laying opposite perpetuates the cherished memories of the deceased. Rich people build a masonry memorial over the grave. They also perform the death anniversary, sometimes by keeping a bunch of flower over the grave. They regard their dead and maintain the grave yard properly. Christian burials are therefore different and governed by Christian ceremonies.

This new order ushered in a period of tremendous change. The main agent of change was the government itself. Christianity provided the means whereby the people of the region (at least some of them) were able to accommodate themselves to the new world brought in by the British.

But after the assumption of colonial administration in Nagaland, 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 the prudent caution. Accordingly, the administration intentionally remained accommodative to the cultural practices of the Nagas so far as they could be compatible with the smooth administration of the district (Fairer-Haimendorf., 1939). Except headhunting and slavery, the British did not interfere much with the Naga way
of life. To quote Elwin: "Up to the time of the Japanese invasion in 1944 the Nagas had lived in an age of almost uninterrupted continuity with past." The British administration cautiously intervened the native way of life. Thus it was with expressed motive of affecting slow and indirect change that the government encouraged the missionaries to preach the Gospel and along with it to introduce western education.

Christianity was introduced to the Nagas only in the later half of the nineteenth century by the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (Kanito, V. C., 1980). The condition prevailing among the Nagas, so also the Lothas, was under neurotic fear created by the belief in harmful spirit. They were constantly longing for relief from such fear and insecurity as that posed by these spirits. Kanito, a Naga scholar, also speaks of the Nagas suffering from "hope mania" and that a psychic approach would be the best (Kanito, V. C., 1980). Therefore, it is believed that such longing of salvation from harmful spirit is undoubtedly the main factor preparing the people for the Gospel of Christ. But for F. S. Downs, it was modernization and Sanskritization which forced the Nagas to make their escape to Christianity (Downs, F. S., 1983). But whatever the case may be, when Christianity came with its teaching about law, sacrifice, reward and punishment, it appeared to the Nagas as another set of law and ritual akin to those they had in animism. They immediately caught hold of religious aspect of Christianity rather than spiritual aspect of it. Consequently, Christianity became another system to ward off life's problems or a human means to work out their own salvation.

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During the initial period of introduction of Christianity the response of the Nagas to the Gospel was rather unreceptive. It was due to the alien nature of the Gospel and their devotion to their own animistic beliefs (Hunter, W. W., 1908). Lotha’s strong attachment to their old beliefs and sets of social norms remained strong and that contributed to the set back to the missionary works. Even after a lapse of two decades of evangelistic work in the whole Naga Hills, nearly 96 per cent of its population remained faithful to their animist religion (Hunter, W. W., 1908). However, consistent labour of the missionaries bore fruit in time. By the early twentieth 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 people of Asia.6

With the increasing labour of the missionaries and their converts, a significant progress in proselytization was made. Thus over a period of seven decades, the Christian missionaries had an amazing success in converting the animist Lothas to Christianity.

The deepest impact on the Lotha society was made by the missionaries, because they were active and most closely in contact with them as observed by Haimendorf when he said:

The more closer and intimate contact with the people which was affected by missionaries enterprises – through preaching of the Gospel and schooling – not only proselytization the Nagas, but also interrupted the flow of their indigenous culture as well. 7

They interfered in the social and cultural practices of the people to a greater extent than the government did. They insisted that a convert restricted himself to one’s wife, and he was not permitted to eat the flesh of animals associated with sacrifices at ‘heathen festivals’. The missionaries also stopped the great feast of merit. They even stopped dancing which was regarded to be a part of ancient or heathen practices. 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. The process of proselytization has significantly followed by changes on the Lotha indigenous culture. The response to such impact was remarkable that a Lotha converts could no longer observe the rituals associated with so called “heathen worship”. They had also stopped tribal songs, dances, sacrifices and celebration of various kinds such as connected with cultivation, construction of houses, founding a new village, feast of merit, use of Morung or Bachelor’s house etc. They were slowly removed among the Christian.

The most remarkable result of such contact was that the abandoned animistic practices were all replaced with new practices acceptable to the

Christian norms of life. The old dormitories where youths practiced their heathen culture associated with singing of songs, telling of traditional stories were substituted by new building of separate Christian youth dormitories where songs of praises, prayer meetings and other spiritual values were encouraged (Clark, M. M., 1978). Even the rice beer, the most popular drink of the tribe, was replaced with tea, Christmas feasts replaced the feast of merit and total abstain from rice beer became a basis of church membership. It was also true that the later missionaries prohibited all culture songs, dance, stories, folk-lore and festivals on the ground of immoral behaviour such as excessive drink and waste of wealth and energy (Imchen, Panger, 1993).

Now, people are so attached to the western culture and hymns. English songs have completely replaced Lotha in church services, youth gatherings, conferences and social occasions. The younger generation even go to the extent of ignoring their parents or elders or any lover of indigenous culture by saying that they are modern people and the later are old fashioned as remarked by M. Horam:

... One can also find the beginning of the defiance of parental authority and rejection of their advice as an old fashioned, but mostly among the modern homes impatiently dismissing their parents with the wethering comments: "You don’t know anything," "You are too old fashioned." These young people tend to blame all family discord on the 'generation gap', the result are unhappy in the family.  

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The introduction of Christianity and the active missionary venture also created some social tensions in almost every village in the district. The consequent of conversion was social and cultural conflicts between the new converts and the animists. Their co-existence in the same village with parallel religious affiliation and practices could not go along smoothly. Christians' refusal to observe the animist observance and vice-versa created social problems in many villages. Speaking on the impact of Christianity in the tribal society of India, Hutton also wrote: “Christianity has too often brought not peace, but a sword dividing father against son and a household against itself.”

Whenever Gospel was preached, some people appreciated and embraced it and yet many other strongly object to it. Such kind of situation was usually created everywhere in Naga Hills wherein the same village, people were divided into two communities – Christians and non-Christians.

The experience of the early Christians in Lotha area gives us an eloquent insight as to how the spread of Christianity had created tension among the people. When they became Christian the early Lotha converts were driven out from their villages. In Okotso village the early Christians were made to construct a church outside the village because the villagers were afraid that the church bell would disturb the spirits of the crops (Lotha Baptist Association, 1998). Bad crops that year was all the proof required. Even parents of the early Lotha Christian students also made

remark that if they study well they would be able to go on for further education elsewhere that their children would be forced to leave home, never to return. Other thought that Christians singing, like the ringing of the church bells, was a form of demon invocation (Lotha Baptist Association, 1998).

After a bare six month stay at Dekhahaimong, as he won a new converts, Dr. Clark also faced strong opposition and disunity among the villagers. This situation was the beginning of division and split of Ao village society, the first Christian community among the Nagas. Later he wrote to the Home Board in March 1887 saying:

Their village government is a government much higher even from the civilized nations. To build another village separate from the others for the sake of the Gospel creates division. “This religion”, he says, should not disturb their village government system … had I know it before I would never have built a new (Molungyimsen) village.¹⁰

The religious system of the Lotha Nagas in which they had reached the point of change from their constant fear of evil spirit, made them embrace Christianity as a refuge (Murry, Ezamo., 1995). This might have made them discard their old religion along with their traditional way of living, including even helpful values. It is true that the Lothas, at the time of the new encounter were all literate and mere simple than they are today. They did not have sufficient perceptive understanding to choose

¹⁰. Baptist Church, Molungkimung. 1982. Centennial of Town Church, Molungkimung: Baptist Church, Molungkimung, p. 15.
what values might be of lasting importance and what values might be replaced with high values. As a result of which they "throw out the baby with the bath water" (Murry, Ezamo., 1995).

However, in spite of the effort to abstain from the practices of animistic culture, the Lothas have not been able to shake off their old superstitious beliefs. In a sense, they have a double-tired system of beliefs (Murry, Ezamo., 1995). They seem to have believing in two kinds of deities, benevolent and malevolent. When Christianity came they adapted themselves to two types of beliefs – the old animistic belief and the new belief in the benevolent God of Christianity, living practically in the former and theoretically in the later. Therefore, it is clear that they did not hesitate to use any means which they thought appropriate to gain divine favour, means like consulting fortune tellers, retaining propitiatory attitudes in religious acts, and continuing magical associations of holy objects and religious places, though this may be done unaware.

But whatever may be the case, one thing is certain that Christianity has overturned the total aspects of indigenous life of the Lotha people, including their religious beliefs and practices, to a new turn of life which they have never experienced before.

Festivals

As far as festivals are concerned, the Lothas have only two main festivals such as the Pikhvīchak-Emong and Tokvīt-Emong. The year officially opens with the Pikhvākhak festival. Therefore, this festival marks the beginning of the agricultural year. This festival is observed before the rice is sown. It is usually associated by observing ritual
ceremonies such as prayer and cutting of fowl’s throat. The rest of the day is given up to feasting. Next day is kept as an *enung* (restricted day) and no one goes to the field.

Then the agricultural year is closed again with *Tokhvi* festival. It is the harvest festival of the Lothas - the harvest is done, the grains full, there is now time to enjoy the fruits of one’s hard labour. Friends are invited. Mithuns are killed, past offences are forgotten and now ties are established and bonds of closer intimacy are discovered. On the appointed day announced by the priest the village contributes unhusked rice from every home. Then pig is killed and the day is given up to feast the whole village. The main features of the festival are community songs, youthful dances, feast and fun. Young boys and girls engaged during the year are happily married after the *Tokhvi-Enung*. It is the time for renovating village gate, clearing roads, cleaning well and repairing the houses.

But people no longer observe such traditional festivals and ceremonies any more for they have been all replaced by the Christian festivals such as Easter, Christmas and New Year. However, it was realized that it is necessary to preserve the old customs and traditions as cultural heritage of the tribe. Therefore, recently the Wokha elders decided to celebrate *Tokhvi-Enung* on a fixed date by all the range in order to carve unity and uniformity in celebration. Following this *Tokhvi-Enung* was celebrated on 7th November, 1978, at Wokha Town. Ever since the *Tokhvi-Enung* is celebrated by all Lothas on the 7th November every year.
The Lotha traditional religious activities have undergone considerable changes during the last few decades as a result of the spread of Christianity and introduction of modern educational system in the district. Now, majority have embraced Christianity. These days, on account of Christianity, almost all the festivals are no longer observed. The religious usages governed by divination system, animal sacrifices and other features are no longer important. There are few non-Christians in some of the villages in the district but observance of these old ceremonial activities are no more seen in the area.

Marriage

Generally, the Lothas follow monogamy but there is no bar for polygamy. As a result some rich men occasionally have more than one wife. Polyandry is not practiced in this area. The rareness of polygamy before their conversion into Christianity might be due to economic factors as well as their unwillingness to have more than one wife. At present, however, polygamy is strictly prohibited among the Christian ethics and accordingly no husband is permitted to marry second time unless the first marriage has been dissolved by death or divorce according to the legal procedure, approved by the Christian principle. Christianity is, therefore, supposed to have controlled polygamy and any illegal sexual relations.

With regard to the age of marriage there is no fixed age of marriage among the Lotha society. In the past, age at marriage for boys was between 17 to 22 years and the girls between 14 to 18 years (Mills, J. P., 1922). The British Government also objected to such practices.
particularly the practice of marrying of minor girls. In a bit 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 *Losú-man* (fine for divorce), in case of the marriage of minor girls (Sema, Piketo., 1992).

Now, it is found that the age at marriage has been raised. For example, in Wokha village the average age at marriage for boys is between 21 to 30 years and girls between 15 to 25 years. Phiro village also the average age at marriage for boys is between 21 to 30 years and the girls between 15-25 years as indicated in the age variation table shown below.

**Table – 1: Frequency of mean for individual’s age by age group at marriage.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Wokha Village</th>
<th>Phiro Village</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Table 1 shows that there has been a remarkable increase of age at marriage for both boys and girls in Wokha and Phiro villages.
With the introduction of formal education there is no fixed age group for marriage in Lotha society today. Some got married at the early age and some late.

A man in search of a bride naturally thinks first of a girl marriageable age in the neighbourhood of his home. However, strictly speaking a man ought to take his wife from phratry of other than his own. When a man decides to marry a certain girl he informs his parents about his intention. Either his mother or some elderly women relatives goes and sound the matter to the girl’s parents. When they are agreeable the two families discuss and settle their marriage. But these days such procedure is not followed by many young men. Most marriages are arranged by the boys and girls themselves. In most cases negotiation of marriage and making of decision for marriage is left to the individual concern. This clearly indicates that the commonly acceptance type of marriage among the younger generations of the Lotha community is more of love marriage rather than parental arrangement. This is true for both Wokha and Phiro villages. The following table shows the percentage of the individuals for negotiation and making of decision at marriage.

Table II – Percentage frequency of individuals by age group for negotiation and decision making at marriage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Household</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Relative</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wokha</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>77.66</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>19.41</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phiro</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>61.78</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>36.58</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table II indicates that in Wokha village, that out of 206 families, 77.66 per cent practices self negotiation and decision making for marriage as against 19.41 per cent arranged by the parents for marriage. Negotiation and decision for marriage done by the relatives shows only 2.91 per cent. In Phiro village out of 123 families, 61.78 per cent practices self negotiation and making of decision for marriage, 36.58 per cent are negotiated and decided for them by the parents and only 1.62 per cent by the relatives.

With the introduction of formal education and improvement in standard of living these people have become more free and liberal in their attitudes and approaches towards the style of living. Now, they no longer follow the traditional way of life particularly with regard to negotiation and making of decision at marriage.

In the past, the economic status of the family for marriage was a minor point to be taken into account but now it is the most important point to be considered. For most of the parents, particularly the girl's parents, they try to arrange marriage with a boy whose economic status is higher. The parents first observed how much land, both cultivable and reserve forest for collection of firewood is possessed, they also take family homestead into consideration along with the number of domestic animals of the family and their incomes. Besides economic status, the girl's parents also find out the number of sons of the family. If there are many brothers, such a family is regarded as one of the best families and is termed as a good brothers' family. In the olden days such family was regarded as a good family from the security point of view as well as from
the economic point of view. A man who did not possess such status may be considered as unmatch for the girl. In which case the girl’s parents may disapprove the proposal of their child to such person. But the situation has changed now.

For instance, Abemo of Wokha village proposed a marriage to a girl whose parents’ status was higher than his. Hence, the girl’s parents did not allow their daughter to marry Abemo. But as both of them have decided to stay together, Abemo has no other option except to elope the girl and stay away from the village. This situation shows that the kind of consideration which did not exist in the traditional society have cropped up in Wokha village these days.

Formerly, expenditure at marriage was small and manageable. It was only the close relatives who were fed on such occasions—a pig and a fowl was just enough. The distribution of marriage meat, which is also considered as bride’s price, was done among the close relatives of the family. The amount of meat required as Hanka (bride’s meat) was about 16 kgs of meat which is distributed among the heads of the family and the close relatives only. Though theoretically still maintained the traditional system of distribution of the bride’s meat, practically people no longer follow it. Now, the bride’s meat is distributed among all the clansmen and friends within the village. In Wokha village out of 206 households it was found that 83.49 per cent are practicing the system of distributing the bride’s meat to all the clansmen and friends in the village and 16.50 per cent distributed the meat to the close relatives only. In Phiro village, out of 123 households, 73.17 per cent distributed the
bride’s meat to all the clansmen and friends and 26.82 per cent distributed to the close relatives only in the village. This observation indicates that the traditional practice of distribution of bride’s meat still exists but in practical majority of the people do not follow it in a traditional way.

The cross expenditure during the marriage has been rising and became a great concern of the people today. The following table shows the percentage frequency of households according to different levels of marriage expenditure.

**Table III – Percentage frequency of households according to different levels of marriage expenditure.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cross expenditure during marriage</th>
<th>Wokha village</th>
<th>Phiro village</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Household</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.5000-Rs.10000/-</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.11000-Rs.20000/-</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>27.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.21000-Rs.30000/-</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>23.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.31000-Rs.40000/-</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.41000-Rs.50000/-</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.50000 and above</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>99.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Table III shows that out of 206 households in Wokha village 17.00% could afford to spend between Rs. 5,000/- to Rs. 10,000/- at marriage while 27.66% and 23.30% could manage to spend between Rs. 11,000/- to Rs. 20,000/- and Rs. 21,000/- to Rs. 30,000/- respectively. Also 14.07% and 13.10% could spend between Rs. 31,000/- to Rs. 40,000/- and Rs. 41,000/- to Rs. 50,000/- respectively, but only 4.85% could afford to spend Rs. 50,000/- and above during marriage time.
In Phiro village, out of 123 households 21.95% shows total expenditure incurred at marriage as between Rs. 5,000/- to Rs. 10,000/-. As far 28.45% and 27.64% the total expenditure was between Rs. 11,000/- to Rs. 20,000/- and Rs. 21,000/- to Rs. 30,000/- respectively. 17.88% also shows the marriage expenditure as Rs. 31,000/- to Rs. 40,000/- while only 1.62% could afford to spend between the range of Rs. 40,000/- to Rs. 50,000/-. Only very few people, 2.43% could spend Rs. 50,000/- and above. As a whole, in both the village, the total marriage expenditure has been remarkably increased during the last few years.

Such increase of expenditure incurred during the marriage was mainly due to the introduction of economic developmental facilities in various fields and job opportunities in the district which was further affected by the trends of present market price index. This indicates that the emphasis on economic factors in marriage has increased while significance of rituals in marriage appears to have gone down.

Prior the advent of Christianity traditional system of marriage was strictly observed. Marriage ceremonies vary from village to village. The Lotha traditional system of marriage seems to have been governed by a number of formalities which are necessary to be followed strictly.

Marriage by negotiation is an accepted rule among the Lothas. During the first visit of negotiation, a go-between, often the mother or any women, goes to intimate the proposal to the girl’s house. When she goes for a second time, she presents rice beer to the members of the girl’s family which, if it is sipped, means that the boy’s proposal has been accepted, and after that the boy and girl keep in contact.
The acceptance of the proposal is followed by the preparation of rice beer. The boy is accompanied by one elderly man and a young friend. Every member would drink the brew except the couple. The elderly man sits with the couple and offers prayer on behalf of the couple. This toasting symbolizes the real engagement between the boy and the girl after which the boy is obliged to work in his father-in-law’s house for one complete year or he is bound to fulfill other obligations in lieu of it. On completion of one year’s time the groom presents five bundles of firewood to his bride to display on both of the bride’s door and it signifies that the girl is engaged. The most important part of the engagement is the groom’s slave-like work, lo-nyaka, which literally means bride’s engagement, in his father-in-law’s house for one complete year. This is a kind of marriage price as well as to judge his ability to work hard to maintain a wife.

Then construction of a new house follows for the would be couple. The new house is opened by a pig killing ceremony where appropriate portion is presented by the groom to his father-in-law. Meanwhile the bride receives gifts of cotton thread and rice beer from her clan’s women. Marriage takes place in the day time in the house of the bride’s father and is followed by feast there. Later, at night the marriage party sets off in a procession for their new house. A customary practice, the groom before leaving for the new house, waves his spear three times round the fire. They leave the house in an absolute silence, the bride taking her thread, while the groom holds a spear. On reaching the new house, water is poured into the hands of the couple. The rest of the night is passed by them in company with two boy attendants from the side of the groom.
During the second day, it is genna and so the newly married couple are not allowed to visit either of their parent's house. The new couple may visit the wife's house on the third day.

Some sort of magic-like religious practice follows during the following days. This practice is preceded by ceremonial bringing of leaves by the couple. Then divination is conducted for seeing the fate of the couple on two cocks. Also a traditional prayer is offered by an old woman for the welfare of the couple. After that, another divination is conducted again on two hens and egg. Thus ends the ritual formalities of marriage among the Lothas.

Some instalments of marriage price use to be cleared at the time of marriage itself by the relatives of the boy and the rest are kept to be paid by instalments later on. The last instalment of marriage price is to be paid later on for that is required as the by-tie between the relatives of the couple. Marriage customs are seen vary from village to village in the district especially in giving marriage price.

Prior the advent of Christianity traditional system of marriage was strictly observed. But now with the coming of Christianity giving of bride price to the girl’s family became a decadence among the Lothas. Now in place of it the parents of both the parties simply discuss their mutual demands for the welfare of the newly married couple’s future and try to refrain from demanding for the bride price and for the presentation to be brought by the bride to the groom’s house at the time of marriage. But the matter is left to the capacity and economic condition of the family.
Concerned. Therefore, today, bride price and bride’s presentation or dowry have no place in Lotha’s marriage (Ruivah, 1993).

Christian marriages are different. Today church pastors, elders, and deacons are invited to the engagement party as a witness in the name of God and the engagement ceremony is conducted by these church officials. In this party, no exchange of gifts is made. After this date is fixed for solemnization of marriage. The wedding ceremony is held in the church or elsewhere. On this occasion the couple receives blessing from the priest as well as from all the participants by swearing in the name of God that they will remain as husband and wife and never will be parted till death makes them separate. The priest then offers them special blessing and issue a marriage certificate.

Like any other agrarian society, traditionally the Lothas also have a specified season during which a new couples are allowed to perform marriage. Usually it is done towards the end of the year, which is after the annual festival (toklu-emung), the most suitable season to celebrate the marriage ceremony. During this off time season for agricultural activities people can relax and enjoy their lives to the fullest extent. Performance of marriage ceremony means an extra source of merrymaking and enjoyment for the relatives, friends and to the entire village community.

Christian marriage have no specific time to perform marriage ceremony, one can perform marriage at any season according to the conveniences of both the parties.
DIVORCE

Among the Lothas divorce is less common. Divorce may be on any ground, such as infidelity, barrenness, disharmony, quarrel or simply incompatibility. What may be the cause of divorce, it is intimately connected with refund of the bride price depending on the merit of the case.

If the wife goes away for no fault of the husband, she will have to repay the cost of marriage to her erstwhile husband. If the wife goes back to her parents, they will have to make the payment. But if she goes with her paramour, naturally will have to pay it.

If the wife leaves her husband due to his infidelity or incompatibility or in any way, not of her fault, she will get back her personal properties such as clothes, ornaments, weaving apparatus, agricultural implements etc, but not any other property.

If the husband drives away his wife because of her infidelity, then she will get only rupees ten from her husband as divorce cost, but the husband will get back a part of his marriage expenses which is generally paid by her paramour.

Since marriage is a difficult and costly affair for a man, generally a husband does not desert his wife. And since re-marriage of a wife is not very easy, the wife generally does not take initiative for separation.

Most people are Christian now, they do not go in for divorce so easily. Re-marriage on the part of the divorce, husband or wife, is more
difficult, because in that case he or she will be excommunicated from the church if the divorce is on the ground of infidelity.

Re-marriage is permissible in the Lotha society. There is no social discrimination in the matter of re-marriage between man and woman. He or she is free to marry again with a virgin one. But only after the death of his wife or her husband.

After death of his wife the prevailing custom permit a man to marry his dead wife’s sister. In such case it is expected that the sister of the wife may be married only when the latter has died. But it should be also noted here that the deceased wife’s sister is not regarded as a substitute and also not compulsory. But to look after the fate of the motherless children and to extend their love and sympathy, both the members of the families persuade the concerned person to fill the vacant position.

Christian has a great impact on the traditional marriage system. It concerned more on spiritual aspect than material or physical well being of the people. With the coming of Christianity in the land most of the traditional marriage formalities had disappeared. People are no more observing the traditional system of marriage. But no matter how much it has affected the traditional form of marriage, still the inner core of the Lotha’s traditional marriage system remained unchanged. The present practice of negotiation for marriage, marriage engagement, divination conducted on slaughtered animal (though it is done in a casual way these days) and the system of giving and distribution of marriage price are some of the elements of modified form of traditional marriage system.
Education

Formerly there used to be a *Chümpho* (bachelor’s dormitory) in each *Yankho* (sector) of the village. Generally, the *morung* or the bachelor’s dormitory was the fortress of the village where the young unmarried men used to sleep and guard the village. It was, in fact, a training and learning place for the young unmarried people in every aspect of life. Therefore, there used to be one *morung* for each sector in the village. In the olden days when head hunting was prominent the *morung* was the centre of all the village activities.

However, owing to the spread of Christianity and other modernizing factors like education *Chümpho* or *Morung* has almost become disfunction. *Chümpho* is nowhere to be found in any village these days except in some villages where it is built for memory’s sake only. Nowadays *Chümpho* has been substituted by organizations like Christian Youth Fellowship, Youth Club, Town Club and various students’ organizations in the district, ranges, areas and villages. In both Wokha and Phiro villages such organization exists.

Education as one of the most powerful agents of British colonialism began with the Christian missionaries. It may be noted here that from the very beginning of their contact with the Nagas, the British officers perceived the necessity of introducing Christianity and education among the Naga tribes, for they considered education as the best agency for modernizing the Nagas. With this viewpoint, the colonial education policy was mainly directed to the extension of grants-in-aid to the missions in Naga Hills. In Naga Hills District, although government
largely depended on missions' schools for the education of the Naga people, it was also opened school on its own. For example, on 31st March 1904, the district had six Lower Primary Schools maintained by the Government and sixteen mission schools were receiving grants-in-aid from the government (Sema, Piketo., 1992). However, by 1930's the general policy of the government was to take over the responsibility of education from the missions as early as possible. In 1937, the government stated its view on mission school:

While acknowledgement must be made of the debt owed to the missions for their works as pioneers in the field of education it must be also recognized that the missions have interested themselves in education fully with object of Christianizing the children. Portion of some of the hill tribes have refused education because it brought about Christianity with it, and it is unfair that they should be deprived of education because they are unwilling to abandon their tribal custom.12

Meanwhile, during 1930's, Government schools had significantly increased.

In Wokha district, for the first time, an informal education was started by Rev. W. E. Witter and his wife in 1885 (Witter, W.E., 1886). It was Rev. Witter who first reduced the Lotha language into writing in English script. In 1887, there were 9 (nine) boys in the Wokha station school. However, Witter encountered difficulties and the Mission dropped the scheme of educating the Lothas for time being. Later, in

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1905, it was started again at Wokha. It was only in 1941 one Government Middle English Schools was opened at Wokha Town (Ghosh, B.B., 1979).

Prior to Colonial administration and introduction of Christian mission in the district, there was no written form of any script among the Lotha Nagas. They solely depended on oral tradition only. Every household in itself was a teaching institution for educating the children in the way they should grow up to be a good and successful housewives and warriors. Home schooling was mostly supplemented by their dormitory experience where both boys and girls learnt social norms and customs of their own. Such traditional learning process was simple 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. With the increasing acceptance of colonial education, indigenous system learning was gradually diminished. Thus modern education had substantial influence on the socio-cultural life of the Nagas (Verrier, Elwin., 1961). The education which the British rulers largely entrusted to the American Baptist Mission had a revolutionizing impact on the Lotha society. It affected their religion, customs and traditions. The British Colonial education not only revolutionized the culture ethos of the Lothas but also led them to a new dimension of value system of life. Such 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 Lotha society witness gradual tendency of social cohesion the characteristic of which was conspicuously leaking among them in pre-colonial period as observed by Piketo, a Naga scholar, "It was the educated Nagas who spearheaded the formation of Naga Club, Tribal Council and Naga National Council."\(^\text{13}\)

The standard of living of the people have changed notably as a result of the effect of modern educational system. The impact of education on the socio-cultural life of the Lothas was in fact the impact of Christianity, for it permeate their culture through the agency of colonial education. They are passing through a period of transition of their history and culture, and in the process of which they are faced with a problem of readjustment to the new situation. In fact, the present problems are caused by a distortion of modernization or western culture by the younger generation who are the products of the in-between cultures, that is, those who are born in a time of transient society who explain their behaviour as a modern wave.

It is now significant that the Lothas are changing fast towards a better society. In this regard, Elwin observes:

In some ways, however, the last few years have witnessed a revival of Naga culture. Even the Christian Nagas are showing a new interest in their traditional dances, they want to build up their own literature in their own language, to record their epics and stories.... They are in fast beginning

\(^{13}\) Sema, Piketo., \textit{op.cit.}, p. 92.
to feel that there is less conflict between yesterday and tomorrow than they had once feared. Their innate essence of beauty (sic) their good taste, their own self-reliance will probably maintain ... but with new motives and a new direction. 14

These days, mass education has provide a culture revival for the younger generation. This has been emphasized at conferences, seminars, churches, student's meeting and public gathering where the good things of the land and beautiful cultural heritage are discussed and means sought for its preservation.