CHAPTER II

THE CONCEPT OF GODLY MAN
may have different moral standards, which may be opposed to one another. If that is so, then, does the concept of righteousness also differ from tradition to tradition? As an answer to this, I would say that even if there are certain differences of moral laws in different traditions they are different only in degree but not in kind. It may also be noted here that moral laws are imposed by every society primarily, because, it is very helpful in maintaining peace and harmony in the society.

Basically, in every society, a good man or a righteous man is the one who is sociable, good natured, humane, merciful, grateful, friendly, generous, beneficent, or their equivalents. These qualities are describable in all languages, and universally express the highest merit which human nature is capable of attaining. There is also a circumstance which never fails to be insisted upon, namely, the happiness and satisfaction the society derives from the good man's intercourse and good offices. To his people, he endears himself by his pious attachments and dutious care. No one feels his authority, but with him, the ties of love are consolidated by beneficence and friendship. It seems undeniable, that nothing can bestow more merit on any human creature than the sentiment of the good man, which makes one promote the interest of mankind, and bestow happiness on human society. The happiness of mankind, the order of society, the harmony of families, the mutual support of fellow human beings, are the goal of life of a good man or a righteous man.
As pointed out earlier though the moral prescriptions may differ from tradition to tradition the primary objective of morality is more or less same everywhere. It follows from this that the concept of good man or righteous man must be also universal. Because wherever he may be, his primary objective is to lead a good life by rendering service for the welfare of his fellow beings. As an adage says, "Charity begins at home", the best place to start with any good work is one's own family or community. Therefore in order to have a clear picture of a righteous man or a good man it would be appropriate if we refer to a particular moral tradition and find out for ourselves whether the basic core of morality is universal or not. For this purpose, I would like to quote some important moral prescriptions of the Liangmai Naga tribe, and also give a brief reference to their conception of good life. Some moral prescriptions are given below:

1. One should give respect not only to one's own parents but also to all elders, even to those people who are older by a day or so.
2. One should not sit idle while others are in trouble.
3. One should always be benevolent towards his fellow beings especially towards those who are poor and helpless.
4. One should not kill or torture innocent and helpless people. If someone does so he/she will have to meet the same fate of his/her victim.
5. One must not be guilty of incest. Anyone found guilty of this crime shall be ostracized for life.

6. All hunter must share the meat of their 'game' with their villagers.

7. If any family of the village is found unable to finish their work-load in time, all villagers should come forward and give a helping hand, which is called 'chaku kubo'.

8. The whole village should live like a big joint family by sharing happiness, sorrows, trials and tribulations of all the members.

9. One should always be hospitable to strangers and must not let them go hungry.

10. No one should treat fellow human beings as slaves; it is a crime even to use prisoners of war for slavery.

11. Any person who seeks refuge, whether he be a friend or an enemy one must extend hospitality to him to the extent of even risking one's life for them.

12. One should not accuse anybody without having any concrete evidence of crime and if anybody accuses an innocent person he/she must pay a fine (Liyusi lubo) a big pig to the village council and also must apologize publicly.

13. One should not take what does not belong to oneself. One must not desire, not even be tempted by anything which belongs to others.

14. All individuals should sacrifice their happiness for the welfare of their fellow beings.
An individual desirous of a good life must live a moral life. He should work for the welfare of his fellow human beings within the framework of the existing moral laws of the society. Therefore, whatever may be the case, no individual should violate the given laws and disturb the peace of the society. Those who violate the moral laws of the society for their own selfish motive can never enjoy a good life. A good man is a lover of justice who always strives for peace and harmony of the society with the spirit of love and affection towards his fellow men without any discrimination. The demands of morality are such that no one should violate the moral laws.

The Upanisads also broadly give a similar view to that of the Liangmai Nagas' concept of the righteous or the good man. For the upanisads, the ideal of ethics is self-realisation and moral conduct is self-realised conduct. The moral life is one of understanding and reason, and not of mere sense and instinct. If we do not recognize the ideal prescribed by reason and do not accept the higher moral law, our life would be worthless. A life of reason is a life of unselfish devotion to the world. It is reason that tells us that the individual ought not to have any interest of his own except the interest of the whole of which he is a part. He will be delivered from the bondage to worldly things and caprice. He is a good man if he subordinates personal
ends to social ends in his life, and he is a bad man if he does the contrary. If we want to escape from sin we must escape from selfishness. The Upanisads demand the individual to renounce selfish endeavor, but not all interests. In this regard the Isa Upanisad clearly points out that the righteous or the good man is not the one who leaves the world and retires to a cloister but he who lives in the world and loves the objects of the world.

(b). The Reader Digest's Universal dictionary defines the word, 'religious' as 1. of or pertaining to, or teaching religion; 2. adhering to or manifesting religion; pious, godly, 3. extremely scrupulous or conscientious, 4. pertaining to or belonging to an order taking vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, 5. A person belonging to a religious order; especially a monk or nun. The Collins English dictionary defines the word, 'religious' as 1. relating to or concerned with religion, 2. pious, devout, godly, 3. appropriate to or in accordance with the principles of a religion, 4. scrupulous, exact or conscientious, 5. of or relating to a way of life dedicated to religion and defined by a monastic rule. The explanation given by both the dictionaries clearly indicates that to be religious (here I am referring to God-oriented religions only) one has to be a devotee of a particular deity or God, and follow strictly the principles or the way of life dictated by a particular religious tradition of which one is an adherant. It is also clearly pointed out that to be a religious person one must be
also righteous. Because, the religiosity of a person should be reflected in his good deeds. One may pointed out here that, even if we are discussing the concept of 'religiousness' only in terms of God-oriented religions we may still find it difficult to explicate this concept satisfactorily. Because even within the God-oriented religions the criteria of religiosity may differ from one religion to another. Moreover, different religions have different religious norms and beliefs which may conflict with one another. For instance, Orphism and Vedic tradition consider the practice of asceticism as one of the most important factors in determining the religiosity of a person. But the same may not be applicable to many other God-oriented religions. As an answer to this query I would safely say that, in this matter, for all religious traditions whether God-oriented or not, the basic criteria of religiosity would be more or less same even if they differ in degree. Of course, different religions may have different ways of looking at it (religiosity) but we must consider only the end result, that is, whether it satisfies the basic criteria given above or not. Anyway, this problem would become clearer when we come to discuss the concept of asceticism vis-a-vis the concept of religiosity in different religious traditions. The word, 'ascetic' is derived from Greek 'asketikas', meaning a hermit (asketes) who exercises self discipline. The Reader Digest's Universal dictionary defines the word, 'ascetic' as the one who renounces ma-
terial comforts and leads a life of self-discipline, especially as an act of religious devotion. The Chamber's 20th Century dictionary defines 'ascetic' as the one who rigidly denies himself ordinary bodily gratifications for conscience sake, aiming to compass holiness through mortification of the flesh strictly following a life of austerity. Thus asceticism is a doctrine or theory which holds that the ascetic life releases the soul from the bondage to the body and permits union with the divine. To understand the concept of asceticism fully let me highlight two ancient religious traditions namely, Orphism (ancient Greeks) and Vedic tradition (ancient Indian). I will be also highlighting the concept of religious man in the Liangmai Naga religious tradition in the light of these two traditions.

To explicate the significance and importance of asceticism in Orphism, it is necessary to highlight the historical development in some section of ancient Greek society. This I have attempted to do with the help of A.H. Armstrong's survey of early Greek philosophy. The decline of Ionia began with its conquest by the Persians in 546 B.C., and culminated in the destruction of Meletus in 494 B.C. During the later part of the 6th century B.C. the centre of the intellectual life of Greece moved to the splendid and powerful city states of 'Great Greece', south Italy and Sicily. These colonies, however, retained their religious ties
with the parent states of the mainland Greece. Here Pythagoras emigrated from Samos, and there about 530 B.C., he founded the Pythagorean Brotherhood, at Croton in south Italy. This new philosophical school which Pythagoras inaugurated, was very different from Milesean cosmogony, and had a very different spiritual background. In place of the unenthusiastic state religion of Ionia and the normal poetic mythology of the type familiar to us in Hesiod there lies behind Pythagorean philosophy, the strange religious movement known as Orphism. The Orphic movement appeared in Greece in the 6th century B.C. In our scanty evidence about it we hear of purification rituals, of small groups of devotees living an ascetic life, and of a voluminous literature circulating under the name of Orphius, the legendary singer whom the Orphics took for their prophet, and another legendary singer Musaeus. Orphism had a widespread influence, whose precise bounds are not easy to determine, and lasted to the end of classical paganism, and it is difficult to be at all positive about the content of the earliest literatures and the beliefs of the earliest groups of devotees. But it appears that the Orphic books contained cosmogonies like Hesiod's, but more fantastic and with some unusual features (notably the world egg), and some of them at least a sacred story of much more religious importance and profound implications, the myth of the generation of man from the an-
hes of the Titans who had devoured Dionysus Zagreus, the god whom the Orphics worshipped. Thus man is a blend of divine and early nature and the purification and release of the divine element is the end to which the Orphic way of life was directed. The soul, it seems, to the Orphics was an immortal god imprisoned in the body and doomed unless released by following the Orphic way of life, to go round the wheel of reincarnation in the endless succession of lives, animal and human (so that all living things are akin, and to kill an animal is to murder one's own family member). By ritual purifications, by an ascetic life of which the most important feature was abstinence from animal flesh, and by knowledge of the correct magic formulae to use on the journey after death, the Orphics hoped to win release from body and return to the company of the gods. The next world was to them more real and important than this, a place of joy for the blessed initiates and of torment for those who are not of one company of the elect or gods. This other worldliness and the ascetic life which went with it were very different from normal Greek beliefs and religious practices and had on effect of the greatest importance on later Greek philosophy and religion.

Turning to asceticism in the ancient Indo-Aryan culture we find that in the Rgveda both 'munis' and 'Yatis' are referred to. The word, 'muni' which occurs many times, regularly means some kind of ascetics. In the later times 'muni' to be derived as a name for
ascetics because of meditation (mananat). In one passage of Rgveda (X,136,2), these munis are described as vatarasana, Kesin (long haired) and as wearing yellow and soiled garments.

Asceticism is a complex of a number of traits. The principal ones may be distinguished as celebacy, austerity, concentration and ecstasy. Asceticism, in general has expected and even insisted that its aspirants should take celebacy before they settled down as married men and women. The second element of ascetic complex is austerity or 'tapas'. Tapas etymologically means heat and significantly its practice is described in Sanskrit in terms of root 'tap', to get heated. In Vedic cosmogony 'tapas' plays an important role and in Rgvedic passage it figures in connection with the creative activity of Prajapati as well as power by itself. Though 'tapas', asserts a Rgvedic verse, a poet can behold the old creations of the fathers. In the Atharvaveda (XV:1.3;3,1) Ekavratya as Mahadeva and Isana is connected with 'tapas', and one of the varieties of his tapas is specified in his description that he stood erect for a whole year. In the Chandoya upanisad (II,23) three factors of Dharma are specified. Yajna or sacrifice is the first of them. Yajna is here identifies with 'tapas', austerity, as in the endeavour of Brahma-realisation, the latter has greater pertinence than the former. In the same upanisad (VII-I,5), in another context where Brahmacarya, life-long celebacy is
propounded, at least two kinds of practices of austerity are specified and identified with Brahmacharya. It is asserted that what is known as 'mauna', silence, is Brahmacharya itself. Keeping silence is well-known to be one kind of austerity. Brahmacharya is further identified with 'anasakayana', practice of non-eating. Fasting is thus another kind of austerity. In the Brahadaranyaka upanisad (IV: 4.22) it is stated that Brahmans desired to know the Brahman in accordance with the Vedic injunctions through sacrifice, through alms and gifts, and through the austerity of fasting. Knowing him one becomes a 'muni'. In the Katha upanisad (I, 3.1) Brahmavides, knowers of Brahma, are qualified as 'pancagnayah' and 'Trinaciketah'. Pancagnayah are well known as those who practise the austerity of keeping round them five fires; and Trinaciketah means those who keep a particular Yajurvedic vow.

The Prasna upanisad (I, 1, 2, 4, 9) informs that Prajapati desiring to have progeny practised austerity and thus produced a couple. When some half a dozen sages approached the great Pipalada with a desire to know Brahma, he asked them to stay with him for a year having faith, keeping celibate and practising austerity. Self realisation is achieved, the same upanisad declares, through austerity, celibacy, faith and knowledge. The Mundaka upanisad (I, 1, 8-9) states that Brahma is nurtured by austerity and yet asserts that for the real knower knowledge alone is austerity. This upanisad (1, 2, 11; 1, 7) already recognizes the four Asrama, without
naming it as such and there is no wonder that though knowledge is most important for Brahma-realization, yet not only the moral qualities of truth and faith, but even the physical attributes of celibacy and austerity, accompanied by living in a forest and by alms-begging, one applauded, and almost prescribed as the way to final salvation in immortality. The practitioners of this regimen are naturally described as wise and calm men. Further (III, 1.5) self-realization is declared as experience through correct knowledge. In the Taittiriya Upanisad (III, 1-5) is stated that when Bhrigu, the Varuna, approached his father Varuna for the knowledge of Brahma, the latter asked him over and over again to practise austerity. And it was through the practice of austerity that Bhrigu finally came to realize that Brahma was ecstatic bliss (ananda). In the Sveta-svatara Upanisad (VI, 21), in which perhaps for the first time personal God figures, it is declared that Sveta-svatara came to know Brahma through the power of his austerities and the grace of God. In the Maitri Upanisad (IV, 3), the practice of austerity is given a fixed and definite place as a stage in the upward spiritual march of the individual mind. Through austerities mind acquires the right attitude (astva) which enables it later to realize the self.

However strong the claim of 'tapas' or austerity was in the technique of self-realization, in the active pondering about permanence and impermanence and moral questionings which characterized the Upanisadic age, it would have been surprising if doubts about
the efficacy of austerity, that is, of the test of physical endurance and bodily mortification, were not expressed. The Brhadaranyaka upanisad (III,8,10) proclaims disbelief in austerity and its futility for Brahma-realisation through the most authoritative person of the age, Yajnavalkya himself. He tells Gargi Vacaknavi that, a person practises penance for many thousand of years without knowing the Immutable (Brahma), he would have achieved not the infinite but only something that is finite and ephemeral. Even the Mundaka upanisad, in which not only tapas but Brahmacarya and Satya as well, and even the performance of prescribed activity, are considered as competent and effective techniques for Brahma-realisation, subordinates austerity as a method of realizing Brahma and declares 'jnana', knowledge to be superior.

Yoga/concentration, the third requirement for the ascetic is one component emphasized maximally in the Indian tradition. In the Katha upanisad (I.3,3-6) control of senses is not only exhorted but insisted on and it is laid down that the senses can be kept control only through a mind which is 'Yukta', applied, or yoga-conditioned. If the Chandogya upanisad identifies Brahma as Dhyana and gives up this identification in favour of Vijñana, knowledge, the katha (II.6,10-11) speaks of the steady and the controlled state of the senses, mind and intellect as highest condition, and appropriately describes it as indriyadharana. In the complete yoga-system, dharana or continued concentration is the final state.
Yoga was considered to be so important that the whole system discovered in the Katha (II.6.13) is finally summarised as both knowledge and 'yogavidhi'. Svetasvatara (II,3-14) the later of the early upanisads, gives almost detailed instructions for the practice of yoga and clearly defines and describes the miraculous physical powers as well as the spiritual effulgence that result from its practice.

Ecstasy, another component of the ascetic life is arrived by the inclusion of the feeling of bliss experienced as part of the muni's concentration. During its continuance the muni is described as having attained the fellowship of the deities of the air and as being able to travel with them in their course because of his miraculous powers. They regard this state of being uplifted above the world as something that only came under consideration for themselves because they possessed the capacity of attaining to community with the gods.

Asceticism thus plays a pivotal role in ancient Indian's (Vedic tradition) religious life. The ancient Indians especially Vedic people strongly believed that the practice of asceticism not only helps a person to acquire mystical power but also more importantly, it helps to liberate one's soul from the cycle of birth and rebirth. In Indian puranas we find that asceticism is practised by not only men but also gods and even the Asuras. Basically, although all ascetics were those who renounce the worldly
pleasure, comfort and responsibilities in order to achieve their desired goal; their objectives or ultimate goal for opting for an ascetic life may differ from person to person. There are some individuals who practise asceticism just to acquire mystical power for self interest while some undertake asceticism until they achieve liberation of their souls. Broadly speaking there are four types of ascetics in ancient Indian tradition, namely, 1. Muni, 2. Rishi, 3. Sannyasi and 4. Sadhu. As a matter of fact, muni is an initial stage of Rishi. Normally, muni is a thinker, who reflects upon the truth and meaning of life. Rishi, is a sage or a man of great wisdom, the seer of the truth and the exalted person of divine insight. Rishis are those who wrote the Hindus' sacred shatras and the leading instructors of the Hindu religious faith. Usually the Rishis would set up an Ashram and impart the knowledge to those willing to be disciples. Sannyasins are the wanderers, who lives on mendicancy. Normally they are those who follow the four stages of life. Sadhu is a holy man who should be pious, honest, straight and always walk on the path of righteousness. He is a good person who always strives for good and righteousness. One way or other all the ascetics mentioned above have pass through a life of a hermit. Among them some may opt for the life of hermit or a recluse to devote the rest of his life to meditation.

It may not be wrong to say that, there are three approaches of undertaking asceticism in Hinduism. They are as follow: 1. Those
individuals who undertake an ascetic life strictly within the framework of four stages of life as prescribed in holy shastra.2. Those persons who have a desire to find out the right path and meaning of life in order to achieve salvation or moksa through asceticism. And 3. those persons who opted for asceticism as a means to acquire mystical powers through an ascetic life.

Those who fall under the first category are basically the sannyasins. They strictly follow the four stages of life as prescribed in the sacred Hindu shastra. For Hindus, the ideal life (for superior castes) begins with mendicancy and ends with asceticism. According to the following scheme, which divides the ordinary span of a man's existence into four well marked period,

(a). Early youth which should be passed as a brahmachari or religious students living on alms. (b). Manhood, during which period the twice born man should as a grihasta, devote himself to household duties and the rearing of a family. (c). Middle age which should be spent as a Banorustha or forest recluse, with or without one's wife. In regard to food, the hermit should restrict himself to the spontaneous products of the earth obtained by himself, and should abstain under all circumstances, from partaking anything grown in town or the produce of any man's labour. (d). The closing period of life, during which final stage the good Hindu should become a sannyasi, abandoning all sensual desires and living by mendicancy on the charity of others.
Second type of ascetics were those who realised the emptiness of life through either internal or external force, and try to seek the truth and meaning in life. Eventually, they not only liberate themselves from the bondage of birth and rebirth but also became a man of great wisdom or a sage.

Those ascetics who fall under the third category of asceticism were persons who used asceticism as a means to obtain fame and mystical powers for some purpose. There are stories and legends about this kind of ascetics in the puranas. Most of the ancient Indian martial heroes and demigods are credited with ascetic practices; not only this, even gods themselves have undergone self-inflicted tortures for the attainment of the objectives of their desires. Referring to this point the late Prof' Monier William wrote as follows: "According to Hindu theory, the performance of penances was like making deposits in the bank of heaven. By degrees an enormous credit was accumulated which enabled the depositor to draw the amount of his saving, without fear of his draft being refused payment. The power gained in this way by weak mortals were so enormous, that gods as well as men were equally at the mercy of these all but omnipotent ascetics, and it is remarkable that even the gods are described as engaging in penance and austerities, in order, it may presumed not to be outdone by human beings ..."¹

¹. Indian Epic Poetry, note to page, 4.
In the Mahabharata it is related how two brothers daityas of the race of the great Asura, undertook a course of severe austerities with the momentous object 'of subjugating the three worlds'. Nothing can forsake the constancy of the ascetics to their vows, and Brahma was at last obliged to grant them very extensive powers and privileges, including complete immunity from danger except at each other's hands. There is also another myth which talks about one rishi, the muni Aurva of Brighu race, who influenced by a fierce craving for vengeance on account of some wrongs suffered by his ancestors, subjected himself to the direct penance for 'the destruction of every creature in the world', and was only persuaded to desist him from his terrible purpose by the intercession of the Pitris or souls of his forefathers. In Vishnu purana we also find another story where king Viswamitra had a fight with a hermit named Vasishta over a magical cow and king Viswamitra was defeated by the hermit. Defeated, and humiliated by a Brahman, the king turned to the only resource open to him, and resolved to acquire supernatural power by ascetic practices, solely with a view to an eventual triumph over the Brahman hermit, Vasishta. In the process he not only acquired the title of Maharishi but also most coveted title of 'Brahman-ris'. The kshatriya king thus, by thousands of years of intense mortification and stern-discipline, attained the exalted rank of Brahmanhood. Yet curiously enough his spe-

1. Mahabharata, Adi Parva, Section CCXI, Babu Pratap Chandra Roy's translation.
2. Mahabharata, Adi Parva Section CCXII.
cial and final hope of triumphing over Vasishtha could not materi-
alized and was eventually reconciled to his still unvanquished foe.

The ascetics who fall under the first and the second categories we find although they entered into ascetic way of life in different ways their ultimate goals are more or less the same, that is, to find meaning in life and to liberate their souls. However those ascetics who fall under the third category are different from the first two — their ultimate goal of undertaking austerity is to acquire a mystical or supernatural power. A person who undergoes austerity just for the sake of acquiring mystical power with a selfish motive, then, he is not a religious person in the present scheme of things. After acquiring the mystical power he may use it for the good of mankind and in this case, he could be considered as a good man but never a religious person. As a matter of fact, if one is not bound by any religious doctrine, there is no criterion to judge the religiosity of the person. One may wonder, what would be the condition of these ascetics (recluse) who does not follow any laws whether moral or religious standard and who acquire a mystical power by means of which they help people but only when approached. There is also a possibility that an ascetic may not follow any particular religion or moral standards while he enter into an ascetic life but after acquiring mystical
power he may be either opt for any particular existing religion* or he may even establish altogether a new religion. And in this case, his religiosity would be definitely judged by the criterion of the particular religion he adheres to now. In that case, in ancient Indian religious context, one can safely say that the practice of asceticism is not the only criterion of judging a person's religiosity. A glance at the Vedic tradition would point out many others.

Now let us consider the concept of a religious man in Liangmai Naga religious tradition. Like many other tribals religions we also find some overlapping between religious obligations and moral obligations in Liangmai Naga tradition. In certain cases it appears that the religious laws of the tribe seem sanctioned just for the sake of strengthening or implementing the moral laws. For instance, moral law of the tribe asks the individuals not to ill-treat helpless people because it is not right to do so. The moral laws of course, hint that if one ill-treated helpless people especially the aged parents, he may suffer from 'Aduan shabo' or bad consequences in future. But it gets a definite religious sanction over those who do not treat the aged parents well and as a result, if they die unhappily, then, the responsible person and his offspring would have to suffer from a curse called 'tingthi-shabo' (a curse by family members). If one suffers from this curse...
then, misfortune and unnatural death would frequently occur in
the family. If one does not repent for his misdeed and perform a
religious ritual called 'niw-thiu-luanbo' (a ritual of appeasemen-
to those souls who suffered from injustice we had caused) imme-
diately this curse may germinate even to the extent of annihi-
ating the whole family. However, these instances do not imply that
there is no clear distinction between the concept of good/righte-
ous man and the concept of religious man in the Liangmai Naga
religious tradition. The Liangmai Naga religious tradition empha-
sizes that to be a religious or 'Charah cheng tadmai', one has to
be good man or mai-wi-mai as well. If one person strictly follows
all religious laws (especially a ritualistic sense) he would be k-
nown as 'taniya-rih-kamawi-mai'. However, this title is not enou-
gh to be consider as a religious man or Charah-cheng-tadmai. Be-
cause in order to be a religious person or charah-cheng-tadmai one
has to be not only taniya-rih-kamawi-mai but also mai-wi-mai or
a righteous man as well. The Liangmai Naga strongly believe that,
if one only followed moral laws without being supported by any
religious obligations one may pursue good actions to please others
or for some rewards. Likewise, there is a possibility also for
those who follow the ritualistic practice of religion without ha-
vying any moral obligations from the fear of the supernatural san-
ction against them. However, if one is charah-cheng-tadmai or a
religious man who fulfills both the religious and moral obligati-
ons not because of fear of any sanction either moral or religious but he is fully convinced that it is the right thing to do so. Thus, for the Liangmai Naga religious tradition, the religiosity of a person is determined by one's conviction and sincere commitment to both the moral and religious laws. I said in the beginning that a Godly man apart from being righteous and religious he must also possess certain extra ordinary quality and power (in a good sense) which other common people are devoid of.

(c). The Reader Digest's Universal dictionary defines the word, 'extra ordinary' as 1. beyond what is ordinary, usual or common place, and 2. exceeding the ordinary degree, amount, or extent, exceptional, remarkable. The Chamber's 20th Century dictionary also defines the same word as beyond ordinary, not usual or regular; remarkable, wonderful, special or supernumerary. The above dictionary explanation clearly indicates that the term, 'extra ordinary quality' refers to a certain individuals who have much more than average intelligence, ability, or skill etc., and especially in a good sense. Thus when we say, certain individuals possesses 'an extra ordinary power' it refers to some unnatural or mystical or supernatural power which can intervene in the course of nature either for good or bad. Although, both are attributed to a Godly man, this distinction is essential as different religions may have different ways of looking at this divine quality of Godly man. Thus,
the former is a special inborn or innate quality and the latter is not necessarily inborn but can be also acquired by some means.

The term 'extra ordinary' though generally taken in the good sense has also a negative connotation. In other words, the term 'extra ordinary' has both positive and negative connotation. As it is also possible that one can abuse this extra ordinary power for selfish ends and this power itself may become an instrument of chaos and destruction. For instance, different traditions talk of witch-craft or black magic where the practitioners possess certain extra ordinary power which inflicts pain, misery and even death on their enemies. However these negative aspects of the extra ordinary power cannot be attributed to the concept of Godly man. Because by definition the Godly man must be always good and magnanimous and not otherwise.

In the book of Exodus (The Old Testament of the holy Bible) we find the patriarch of the Jews named Moses using his supernatural power against the Pharaoh of Egypt many times in order to set the Israelites free from the bondage of slavery (Exodus, Chapter: 8-10). He also used his supernatural power in order to take the Israelites across the Red Sea. It is recorded (Biblical account) that 'when Moses held out his hand over the Red Sea, the sea drove back with a strong east-wind. It blow all night and turned the sea dry land. The water was divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with wall of water on
both sides"(Exodus:14:21-23). Again in the book of Joshua, we find that Joshua, the successor of Moses, applied or used his supernatural power against his enemies — He destroyed the city of Jerico without even a fight(Joshua:6:15-17). Using his supernatural power he also defeated the Amorites(an ancient tribe of present Palestine). He made the Sun stand still in the middle of the sky and the moon did not move until the Isrealites had conquered their enemies(Joshua:10:12-14). For a person belonging to another group whose interests are opposed to the Godly man's group for instance here that of the Jews it might appears that the Godly man is also a violent, destructive person. This creates a problem for me for I am committed to the conclusion that a Godly person only uses his supernatural power for a peaceful purpose.

Turning to the Liangmai Naga religious tradition I find not one but two types of Godly man namely, 'Tingwang kumbo mai' or Godlike person and 'charah kumbo mai' also meaning godlike. For the Liangmai Naga tradition, these two concepts do not differ in degree but in kind. A person who is like God the Almighty or 'Tingwang kumbo mai' is generally known as 'phanmyu kakungh' meaning, an exalted person with Divine insight or the messenger of Tingwang, God the Almighty, but small letter godly man is known as 'phanmyu'only. The term 'phanmyu' connotes four different things namely,1. a priest or a prophet,2. a sage or a wise man,3. a medicine man and 4. a magician. And the term 'kakungh' connotes three
qualities: 1. precious, 2. dear or rare, and 3. the loving and the affectionate one. The term, 'phanmyu-kakungh' is therefore a combination of two different concepts. The term, 'Tingwang kumbo mai' is hardly used by the tribe and instead of which they say 'phanmyu kakungh'. When a person is called 'phanmyu kakungh' it is certainly implied that he/she is a messenger of Tingwang, God the Almighty (refer to chapter III). But when a person is known by the term, 'phanmyu' it refers to a person who is guided by any of regional gods and godheads.

Traditionally, in every Liangmai Naga villages there will be at least one or two Phanmyu, and their main function in the village was to conduct religious rites and rituals. The phanmyu is a person who knows not only religious incantations and the formulae of religious words for rites and rituals but also he is an expert on herbal medicine. Basically, all 'phanmyu' are expected to be religious, pious, simple minded, beneficent, and all other similar virtues. They also work for peace and harmony in the society. But in reality, it may not be so, because the people sometimes consider anyone who knows religious incantations as 'phanmyu'. Generally, this type of phanmyu does not possess extra ordinary power. Most phanmyu would however be chosen by different deities like, 'Charahwang' (king of gods), and his rebellious brother 'Puichamvu' (refer to chapter III), and many other smaller gods and goddesses. Those phanmyu who are chosen and guided by Charahwang and his brother Puichamvu would be more powerful than any
phanmyu who were guided and chosen by different gods. It is worth noting here that, different phanmyu chosen by different deities would have different roles and functions to play in the society. For example, if a phanmyu is chosen and guided by Charahwang or king of gods he would be more peaceful in nature and know more about religious and moral aspect of life and also men's destiny beyond death. If one is chosen by Puichamvyu, he would be more independent in nature, more militant, and more concerned with religious and political freedom. Lastly, if one is chosen by Chamiyu zanbo rah or gods of paddy or wealth, he would be beneficent and generous in nature. He knows more about the productivity and fertility of land changing of seasons, drought, flood, etc. He also would know in advance which area or villages would get a bumper harvest and which area or villages may face famine and so on. All these different types of phanmyu usually possess mystical powers which enables them not only to communicate with different gods and goddesses but also gives them the power to visit even the land of the dead in their dreams. They may also have the supernatural power to protect themselves from evil spirits. People usually consider these types of phanmyu as 'charah kumbo mai' or a person who is like a regional or mountain gods. The Liangmai Nagas believe

1. A phanmyu named Tajinnang Pamai from Ritiang village was said to be chosen and guided by Charahwang.

2. A phanmyu called 'Malek mai pow' from Malek village was said to be chosen and guided by 'Chamiyu zanbo rah'.

3. Jaduannang, Chenkhammang and Gaidinliu were said to be guided by Puichamvyu, the rebellious brother of Charahwang.
that supernatural power specially for good purpose cannot be acquired by one’s own effort. However, if one so desires, black magic can be acquired from Rahsha\(^1\) or the evil spirit at the cost of his dear and near one’s lives. It is said that if one acquires the mystical power for destructive purpose (black magic) from Rahsha or evil spirit in his young age he would never have an offspring, and if in old age then his three generations would suffer for it.

The Liangmai Naga religious tradition thus emphasizes that even if a phanmyu is considered as 'charah kumbo mai' or 'godlike' person he cannot be considered as 'Godly man' in the real sense of the term. Because these so-called regional gods and goddesses themselves are none other than those godheads and extra ordinary persons of olden days. Therefore, to some extent they are still subject to mistakes, errors and many other human weaknesses and shortcomings.

If we look for word to word corresponding meaning of the term, 'Godly man' in Liangmai Naga religious tradition it should be 'Tingwang kumbo mai' even though they may use the term, 'phanmyu'kakungh' in place of 'Tingwang kumbo mai'. This is because the tribe believes that no creature on earth (including regional gods and goddesses) is fit to be equated with Tingwang, God the Almighty. Therefore, they would always consider this kind of person as phanmyu kakungh. The tribe also considers the phanmyu kakungh to

\(^1\) 'Rahsha' is a short form of the phrase 'charah kashabo' meaning evil spirit or a harmful god.
be not only good, pious, religious but also the one who possesses supernatural powers.

According to the Liangmai Naga religious tradition, no one can acquire the title, 'phanmyu kakungh' like that of 'Liangluang' (refer to chapter I). The phanmyu kakungh is chosen by Tingwang with a specific purpose. He is the messenger of Tingwang. No one can, therefore, question his authority, not even Charahwang, the king of gods. If a person is phanmyu kakungh no introduction is needed because, from his actions he would be immediately recognized by all. No power on earth can harm him. He is not only a religious teacher who gives spiritual guidance but also the one who spends his entire life for the welfare of all creatures on earth. His goal of life is to win back the human heart to the path of righteousness, which has opted for the path of evil.

The Liangmai Nagas believe that man is the victim of his own foolish and irresponsible actions. These irresponsible actions not only result in their own downfall but also bring forth untold miseries and sufferings to other creatures on earth (refer to chapter III). These irresponsible actions of mankind also pave the way for the emergence of regional gods and godheads. However, if men do overcome their selfish and destructive nature they can still regain the grace of Tingwang, and bring about lasting peace and harmony on earth. The mission of 'phanmyu kakungh' is therefore to curb the evil power by establishing the right relationship be-
tween man and his creator through good will. Unlike Liangtuang he
would never use physical force or supernatural power to accompli­
sh his mission. He would always respect men's freedom of will.Th­
erefore, he will never force anyone against his will even if he
fails in his mission miserably.*

* It may be mention here that there were only two 'phanmyu kakungh'
throughout the Liangmai (Zeliangruang) Naga religious history. The
first one was named Tintelbahou and the second and the last was a
lady named Juruipe. (refer to Appendix)