CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE.

Nefamese has no written literature. So far as the review of literature is concerned a few selected books on the customs, cultures, traditions, history etc. on different tribes of Arunachal Pradesh are reviewed. Reviews of some of those books are as follows:

H.G. Joshi (2005) in “Arunachal Pradesh-Past and Present” has given a vivid description about the socio-economic condition of Arunachal Pradesh. It is described that due to the lack of industrialization the economic condition of the people is not up to the mark and due to the lack of adequate medical facilities the rate of mortality among the children is very high. However in recent time effort has been made to upgrade medical aid and opening of industries.

H.K. Barpujari (1981) in “Problem of the Hill Tribes: North East Frontier (1873-1962) vol. III, Inner line to Macmohan Line” describes about the introduction of the inner line in order to avoid exploitation of the unsophisticated tribesmen by outsiders. The tribesmen are described not as shadowy being, but living personalities, firm in dealing with evil doers as well as conciliatory and easily accessible to all who brings their troubles to their doors. The writer writes about the heroic defence of the tribesmen in the Indo-China war in 1962.

In “History, Religion and Culture of North East India”, T. Raatn (2006), beautifully describes about the history, culture, religion, custom, tradition, festivals
and crafts of all North East States including Arunachal Pradesh. It is said that in Arunachal Pradesh society has caste system and is patriarchal, governed by the chief. It is said that the slave system is prevailed in the societies of some of the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh like Aka society, Apatani Society etc.

Dr. N.N. Osik’s (1996) “A Brief History of Arunachal Pradesh (From earliest time to 1823 A.D)” is a vivid account of the natural beauty, climate, geography of Arunachal Pradesh as well as the culture, history etc. of the people of Arunachal Pradesh. It is said that most of the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh are the descendants of a common ancestor “Abo Tani” and same mother “Pedong Nanc.” It is described that the wild life of Arunachal Pradesh is quite rich and varied. The Leopards, Jungle Cats and Elephants are quite common in the territory. So far as the individual status in the society is concerned according to the writer it is determined by the possession of land and by the possession of “Mithun” (Bos Frontalis), a semi domesticated animal.

“Arunachal Pradesh—the Monpas of Tawang in Transition” by Bibhas Dhar (2005) is an authentic account of the Monpa Tribe. The writer describes about the socio cultural life of Monpas in the past and examines the changes in their life style. Monpas live in the high altitude areas of Tawang and west Kameng. They differ from other tribes in their religion (they believe in Tibetan Lamaist type of Buddhism since time immemorial) and in the technique of building stone house. The Monpas are acclaimed as mountain agriculturist. The Monpas are at the present on a phase of transition after the China-Indian boarder conflict of 1962 as a result of development of road communication along with other facilities brought in by modernization.

Jagadish Lal Dawer (2003), in “Cultural Identity of the Tribes of North East India (Movement for cultural identity of the Adis of Arunachal Pradesh), writes about the effort made by the Adi intellectuals to develop Adi language and literature and a
suitable script for it in order to protect their culture. The writer has recognized that the formation of association specially cultural and literally is important to protect the tribal cultural identity.

M.M. Dhasmana (1979) in “The Ramos of Arunachal – A socio-cultural Study” deals extensively with the origin, the pattern of settlement, social institutions, economic pursuits, law, justice and religious rituals of Ramos as the author had unique experience of living among those people. The writer states that there is no example in Ramos where child is adopted as according to custom the property is automatically inherited by the nearest patrilineal relation. It is also described that the Ramos had no liking for songs, music, dance, etc. The only musical song or lyric known to the Ramos is the Jajin (a narration of the creation of the universe and its history).

SH.M Rizvi and Shibani Roy (2006) in “Adi Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh” describes how Adi tribes maintain the trade relation across the international trade due to the proximity of Adi area of neighboring Tibet. The Adi tribe exchanges raw hides, chillies with rock salt, woolen cloth, raw wool, Tibetan swords, Tibetan vessels, ear rings and brass bangles. The writer states that this trade links within various sub groups of Adi and neighboring country accelerates the process of cultural infusion besides breaking the cultural barrier imposed due to topographical constraints.

“Marriage System of the Idu Mishmis which is published by R.K. Deuri (1986) is an vivid account of the Idu Mishmis. In Idu society marriage is an accepted form of union between a boy and a girl. Monogamy is the socially approved and recognized type of marriage. Polygamy is often practiced. Marriage by negotiation is the most common and regular form. Marriage by elopement is also in practice in Idu society. In olden days love marriage was not so popular. But at present in Idu society it is preferred. Marriage in Idu society is primarily based on the payment of bride price
and the same is paid in cash or kind. Marriage gift or dowry is prevalent. Divorce
takes place due to adultery and some other reasons. Inter tribe marriage is rarely seen
in the society.

“Food Habits of the Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh” published by Dr. D.K.
Duarah (1981) is an account of the food habits of the people of Arunachal Pradesh.
The tribes of Arunachal Pradesh are scattered over rugged mountains terrain. Rice is
the staple food of most of the tribes. Next to this is maize, millet and other cereals.
Boiling is the most common method of all the tribes. Again the most smoked items are
meat and fish. Hunting is a source of taking meat. Different techniques are employed
to catch fish in the rivers. The meat or fish, which is stored, is at first dried or smoked
with fire. The roasted items give a peculiar taste. Consumption of food in the form of
paste is also common among the tribes. Except Monpas and Sherdukpen other tribes
do not take milk. There is no age limit in taking the drinks. Different drinks are
prepared by the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Generally at the end of each major
festival a community feast is arranged. The salt prepared by indigenous method or
market salt is used by all the tribes. Taking of oil is not found by the tribes of
Arunachal Pradesh. But at present the young generation favours use of oil. The
Buddhists do not take beef, pork, fowl or goat meat. There is no restriction in taking
fish by the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh.

Lakshmi Devi (1968) in “Ahom Tribal Relation (A Political Study) describes
about the advent of Ahom in Assam and its relation with the different tribes residing
in the North East part of India. It is said that the Ahoms had to deal with two kinds of
tribes in Assam—the plain tribes and the hill tribes. During Ahom rule most of the hill
tribes lived in isolation and consequently they retained much of the primitive instinct
intact. Lakshmi Devi states that in dealing with these tribes Ahom rulers experienced
great difficulty as they often flouted their agreements with the Ahom Government and raided Ahom territories, sometimes for economic reasons and sometimes for mere passing time. In order to avoid this kind of problem, it is written down in the book that Ahom King Pratap Singha introduced a scheme called “posa system”.

I.M. Simon (1972) in “An introduction to Apatani” has given a good knowledge of Apatani language when different Apatani words have been translated into English and Hindi for those people who do not have knowledge about the Apatani language. On the whole the book is an excellent attempt to give knowledge about the Apatani Language.

“Among the Wanchos” by L.R.N. Shrivastava (1973) gives an account of the geographical and ecological setting of the Wanchos area, the economic condition, the social system, political institutions and religious beliefs. The writer comes to know about the Wanchos as a result of his long stay in NEFA. The writer states that since there is no customary way of greeting visitors or outsiders in the Wanchos society the people greet their visitors by asking about the health. A bamboo tube of bear is brought and served in a brass pot.

“The Legends of Pensam” by Mamang Dai(2006) is a lyrical and moving tribute to the human spirit. With a poet’s sense for incident and languages, Mamang Dai points a memorable portrait of a land, i.e. the land of the Adi tribe. In the language of Adi the writer states that the word ‘pensam’ means “in between.” On the whole the writer writes about the faith, belief and living style, i.e. co-existence with the natural world.

Obang Tayeng (2003) in “Folk Tales of the Adis” describes about memorable tales prevalent in the society some of which are parables in nature and while many others are illustrations of their cultural heroes. For the convenience of all types of
leaders and easier grasp of themes, most of the stories have been made brief and simple. Some of the folk tales which are mentioned in the book by the writer are Keyum Kero, Birth of Mithun, The Origin Paddy, The Foolish Python, The Triumph of Truth, How the Rate Began to Live in the House etc.

One of the notable books on the culture and customs of different tribes of Arunachal Pradesh is “Aspects of culture and customs of Arunachal Pradesh” (1990). This book is published by the Director of Research; Arunachal Pradesh is a compiled volume of 32 valuable articles by different persons from different walks of life. Some of those articles are reviewed as below.

R.N. Bagchi in his article “Socio Cultural Profile of the Monpas of Kalaktang Areas” (1983), describes about the language, social organizations, religious beliefs and practices, priest hood, death and disposal of death, house and household goods, dress and ornaments, food and drink, festivals as well as political organization of the Monpas of Kalaktang circle of West Kameng District.

It is said that there is no class and caste system among the Kalaktang Monpas which is also known as Rangnampa Monpa. The Monpas are Buddhist by religion and the priest employed for worship is known as Bonpa. Traditionally the Rongnampa Monpa society is patrilineal, patriarchal and patrilocal. Another traditional feature of the Monpas is that the dead body is disposed of by burring or by cremation and both the systems are in vogue. The Monpas of the circle have their distinct set of dress and ornaments which they wear in various modes and patterns. Both male and female wear a cap known as ‘Jamuk’ made by the black hair of yaks (local cows). The women in this area do not wear anything in their ear and nose.

Another article published as “Customary Laws of Adoption and Property Inheritance of the Adis” by N. Mitkong (1985) refers to the practice of adoption
A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF NEFAMESE

among the tribal people belonging to Adi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh. It is described that a heirless couple of the tribe adopts a son because of three reasons, i.e. (1) to continue the male line of that particular man (2) to maintain the couple at their old age and (3) to inherit the properties. Because of these grounds a heirless couple possesses the right to adopt a son of any age even they have daughters. Such adopted one becomes the legal son and inherits the properties of the adopter.

However an heirless man is not given the full right to adopt a son from someone according to his will. He has to follow the customary procedures of adoption prevailed in the society. According to the custom he must first approach to his brother and then to other relatives for a son. If his brother and his relatives failed to provide a son the heirless man can adopt a son from anywhere, even he has the right to adopt an orphan or an abandoned child. This practice of adoption is unchanged till modern days.

R.K. Deuri (1986) in his article “Customary Land Tenure System of the Khamptis” points out that the Khampti community selects one person as their chief in that community and he is the de facto owner of that area. The office of the Khampti chief is hereditary in the law but not in the family. The chief continues to hold his office till either he dies or is incapacitated by old age. Moreover the Khamptis have a council and the members of this council are drawn from various social statuses in the community.

However the Khampti chief is the head of the community as well as the chairman of the Khampti Council. He has the privilege to allot land either to Khampti or to non Khampti after consulting with the members of the Khampti Council. However now a days the system of allowing land to Non-Khampti is abandoned. One of the interesting features of Khampti tribe is that the land in and around a monastery
in a particular village is the common property of the village and the villagers never try to occupy such land.

It is said that the Khampti can transfer land by way of sale. There is no limit in occupation of land for the Khamptis as one can occupy land as much land as he can after cutting jungle. But the land must be within the boundary of his village. However the Khampti chief has the authority to withdraw the right of occupation of land of a Khampti person after consultation with the members of the Khampti Council and respective village headman if that man is found to be anti social.

K. Kumar (1986) in the article “Traditional Beverage of the Gallongs of Arunachal Pradesh” describes about the varieties of local drinks available among the Gallongs, a sub group of the Adis of Arunachal Pradesh. “Opo” is the word for all varieties of local drinks. Men are forbidden from preparing “Opo” and that is why it is prepared by woman only. Two persons are employed in preparation of the indigenous drinks, i.e. (1) fermenting material and (2) distillation. To prepare the ferment a little water is added to the rice, millet or maize, whatever is available and the thick pasty mixture is allowed to lie in open area for 7 to 8 days by which time it is ready for distilling Opo. For distillation a decanter resting on a suitable platform is required. The size of the decanter and the height of the platform depend upon the quantity of Opo to be prepared. The decanter is a conical basket made from a single stout bamboo when the decanter is filled with the ferment, hot water is poured from the above and the Opo comes down through the hole made at the bottom of the container and it is received in another container of bamboo or in any other utensil. Opo is used by the Gallongs in all occasions.

S.K. Barua (1979) in his article “Role of Dormitories in the Social and Political Life of the Wanchos” describes that dormitories are integral part of the Wanchos. The
institution of dormitory is well organized and well developed in Wancho society. Pa or Pau is the common word for man’s house in Wancho dialect. However Assamese word ‘morung’ is used for the same. In Wancho society there is no separate morung for the girls. They stay together in the chief’s house, in one of the village elder’s house or in any other house in the village where they are permitted to sleep together and the place where the girls congregate for sleeping and other social activities is called Nausa - Jup – Ham. Each morung is represented by an official called Wangsam – Pa. In some morung there are two such officials. This is hereditary and is handed down from father to son. The dormitories are decorated with buffalo or other animal heads killed on various occasions. After marriage a man stops sleeping in the morung, builds a house for himself. But he does not cease to be a member of the morung. On the whole in Wancho society a man feels much stronger as a member of a morung than an isolated individual.

Alexander Mackenzie’s (2004) “The North East frontier of India” is an important chronicle relating to various events with reference to policy formulations at various level of administration, Mackenzie has provided material which no historian interested in this region can afford to ignore. Mackenzie has mentioned in the book that the tribe Aka was formerly of two class – (1) Hazarikhawas and (2) Kapachors. While Hazarikhawas had the right to share the produce cultivated by the Assamese people. The Kapachors had no such right. Anything which was received by the Kapachors from the cultivators was an extorted one. While Hazarikhawas with right and Kapachors without right descended upon the cultivated land for collecting produces was very soon felt by the British Govt. to be unbearable as quarrels and outrage were the natural consequences of such custom. As a result of it the British Govt. formulated a policy where by this tribe was asked to surrender their right of
direct collection in place of an annual lump sump payment. Even after this policy there was some problem created by this tribe for some time. However after the surrender of the chief of the Kapachor class the Akas did not create any problem later on.

So far as the Duphla tribe was concerned, they gave much trouble to the local affairs and though many efforts were made to induce the Duphas to resign the right of collecting posa directly from the ryots all were fruitless. The different class of Duphas did not interfere with each other on the plains as each knew the village to which it had to look for posa. They demanded full dues whether the ryot could pay or not. Although the Govt. could not pacify the Duphals at the beginning ultimately they agreed to resign the right of collecting direct from the ryots and consented to receive the articles of posa from the Malguzar or Revenue Officer of the villages according to the revised tariff. In 1852 posa was finally commuted for a money payment.

After this policy the tribe remained quiet and gave no cause of anxiety up to 1870. In 1870 there was an outrage committed for private reason by one hill Duphla upon another which led to some complicacy for some time. But ultimately it was brought under control by sending military force in 1874. Since that year the Duphas did, as a class, not give any trouble.

Mackenzie has pointed out that like Duphas and Akas, the Abors, though much more powerful than these tribes, had no right to posa. This was because of their remote dwelling which was cut off by the great river Dibong from the cultivated place along the Brahmaputra valley. However they claimed a different kind of right, i.e. an absolute sovereignty over Miris of the plains and are inalienable right to all the fish and gold found in the streams that flowed from their hills. This Demand of the Abors led to some complicacy before the local Govt. and the Abors as a result of which Abors continued to attack the down stream areas. Consequently the British Govt. sent
one troop against the Abor tribe. But as the relation between the civil official and the Military officer was not cordial so the military troop had to return back. On the other hand the Abors continued to attack the downstream areas as a result of which the British Govt. had to formulate new policy to guard the downstream areas. The policy included the construction of a road and establishment of a fortified post along the face of the Abor tract. All these preparation became successful and led to reconciliation between the British Govt. and the chief of eight communities of Abor tribe. The reconciliation treaty provided for payment in kind of articles in stead of money stipend to the chief which could be distributed among the whole community. In this way the British Govt. could pacify the Abors to an extent.

Dr. Tai Nyori (1993) in his book “History and Culture of the Adis” describes about the socio-economic life of the Adis, who were formerly known as Abors. The traditional economy of the Adis was primarily based in food gathering, hunting, fishing, and them or shifting cultivation and a small amount of trade by barter. Now a day however they have adopted other means of economy such as wet rice cultivation, horticulture, trade and business, Govt. employment, industries and other professions.

Hunting was one of the earliest occupations of the Adis before taking up agriculture as a permanent means of livelihood. Even with the settlement of tribes as a agricultural community, hunting remained as a necessity in their society. But with the change of society and with the progress of the domestication of animals, hunting gradually changed from a means of livelihood into a form of entertainment and pastime.

Fishing has also its importance in the economic life of the Adis for the reason that fish form an important item of their dish.
A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF NEFAMESE

Besides this weaving as occupation by many. As far as crafts is concerned Adi make all articles required for their daily use in their traditional society. Most of these are made of bamboo and cane.

The family, called "Rutum" or "Rumtum" by the Adis, is the smallest unit in the structure of their society. The normal size of a Adi family is composed of a man with his wife or wives and children. The society is patriarchal, so the senior most man in the Adi family is its head or master. However actual management of the family affairs may be delegated sometimes to any capable junior. The position of the mother is not subordinate in a Adi family. Majority of domestic affairs are in her hands. In Adi society the houses are constructed with bamboos, woods, canes, leaves etc. and no metal or nail is used in the construction.

"The Tangsa of the Namchik and Tirap Valley" (1969) published by the Directorate of Information and Public Relation of N.E.F.A. consist of the socio economic life of the tribe called Tangsa. Tangsa means hill people – Tang (hill), Sa (people). The Tangsa live in a joint family. A common house is shared by the whole family, consisting of parents, married sons and daughters. Even after the death of the father, the family does not break up but continues to live in the same house. The Tangsas have a well constituted council of elders variously called Khaphua, Khapong, khapo and so on which consisted of a leader and a few members chosen by the villagers. The leader is selected from a particular clan, on the basis of wealth and intelligence, while the member represents the various clans. The council adjudicates all disputes and maintains law and order in the village. Its leader is considered very powerful and his verdict is considered to be final. One of the interesting features of this tribe that is found from this book a thief is regarded as a stupid rather than a criminal person by the people.
The consumption of Tobacco among the Wanchos is very high. A more sophisticated taste keeps betel leaves and nuts also. It is found from the book that among the Wanchos as and when the sons of a family get married they ceased from the family and formed their own family and homesteads by making separate houses which are created with the help of the village people. The family land is divided and the sons start their separate cultivation. Thus with every succeeding generation the family holding is progressively reduced. To avoid such a situation they brought about certain changes and family only allows its eldest son to marry. The younger sons are to remain in the same house with his brother and the land is owned and cultivated jointly.

The outlook on N.E.F.A. (1958) which was edited by Parag Chaliha and published by Assam Sahitya Sabha consist of the first hand experiences by different well known personalities. The book is a compilation of number of articles contributed by some of the intellectuals.

In one of the article published as “The language of N.E.F.A. and National Unity” written by Sri Birendra Kumar Bhattacharjee describes about the tug of war between Assamese and Hindi. While some of the nationalist leaders at that time thought that the moment the people of NEFA were taught Hindi they would then turn Indians. But the fact was that the bulk of the people of NEFA used Assamese as their own language and used Assamese as a medium of oral communication while talking with outsiders. Though the learning of Hindi was a necessity as a national language but it should not be allowed at the cost of Assamese language.

Another article “The position of the Assamese Language in the North East Frontier Agency” was published by some famous Assamese scholars on behalf of the Assam Sahitya Sabha. In this article the scholars state as to the development of Assamese language during the Ahom rule. The Ahom migrated to Assam in the 13th
century A.D. and ruled Assam for about six hundred years. During that time the people of the plains and hills of Assam welded together as a single Assamese speaking nation. This was a period when the people of the plains and hills with their united effort developed a friendly relationship towards all aspects of the society. There are over fifty different principal tribes having its own dialect. The different tribal groups used Assamese as their lingua franca since time immemorial because the different tribal dialects are a closed book to each other. In 1873 a British officer wrote “Assamese knowing men are very helpful”. In regard to their commercial, social, political and other contract with the people of the plains the various tribal people used Assamese as their lingua franca. The tribal chiefs paid frequent visit to the Ahom Court and they made treaties of amity and friendship with the Ahom Kings. There is history that the tribal people helped the Ahom rulers with men and materials when the Ahom had to fight with outsiders. In the Ahom army, people from the hills were appointed. This shows that how in ancient time in Assam the people of the hills and plains defended the outsiders attack. In this article it is found that many tribal people of the hills used Assamese dresses since time immemorial. After the independence of India Assamese was made the medium of instruction in the schools of NEFA.

The scholars herein state that how with the advent of British the happy relationship that grew between the people of the plains and hills of Assam received a set back due to the introduction of Inner Line Regulation 1873 and Frontier Track Regulation 1880.

Now Assamese is not regarded as the medium of instruction in NEFA and Hindi and English have been the medium of instruction. Being aggrieved at the situation the scholars who have written this article had submitted a memorandum to
the Govt. of Assam and Home Minister of India to retain Assamese as the medium of instruction in NEFA.

Another article titled as “A Peep into the Religious Songs and Dances of the NEFA People” written by Mrs Hemlata Borah describes about the religion and culture of the people of Arunachal Pradesh. So far as the religion of the NEFA people are concerned a good number of tribes like Adi, Nishi, Apatani, Tagin, Galos, Akas, Mishmis etc. have their own faith and belief in religion. The basis of their religion is payer to God. The whole universe is ruled by Great Almighty. In addition to their prayer their religion is associated with sincere hospitality, truth, honesty. Without these virtues life is a disgrace. From their religion they derive the true realism of life. They believe in rebirth. After death in the next world a similar life is expected. A loving home is waited provided a right path is followed. The practice of sacrifice of human beings and other animals in the name of religion is common. The practice of ‘Tantricism’ and worship of ‘Trees’ were in practice. Though it is believed that the world is ruled by Almighty yet there is influence of spirits and ghosts on human life. So they worship the ghosts and spirits by sacrificing animals in the name of religion. More over most of the tribal people worship sun and moon and they consider them as the most powerful of all gods. The alter where payer is offered is called “Gangging” in Adi and “Nyedar Numlo” in Nishi. According to Abors the sun and moon are the light givers to the sky and earth and lead man in the right path. Thus “Donni-Pollo” i.e. sun and the moon are the supreme god. On the other hand the Monpas and the sherdukpens of Tawang and West Kameng district follow the lamaistic tradition of Mahayana Buddhism and Khampti and Singphow living the eastern part of the state follow the tradition of Hinayana Buddhism.
Another group consisting of Noctes, Wanchoo, Tangsha, Tutsa etc. of Changlang and Triap districts are nature worshipper. A god called Rango is worshipped by the Nocte tribe. Again the Tangsha tribe worship a god called Rangfraa. However some of the tribal people have adopted Christianity as religion. The Noctes who have adopted and elementary from of vashnavism are found in more contact with outside world than others.

The tribal life is not rich in song and dances. It is true that tribal life is lacking in modern musical instruments. Their songs and dances are associated with indigenous nationalistic mind. Most of the dances of this frontier people describe a picture of war and heroism. The Sherdukpen and Monpas dance with ferocious marks on their faces. The main implements of dances are spears, swords, bows and arrows etc. The people of Subanshiri Division are not so expert in dancing. The Tagins, Abors, Hill Miris dance with symphony. The Mishmis and Monpas possess small drums and brass plates. The festival dance of Mishmis are attractive. The dances of Mikirs living in NEFA resemble the Assamese Bihu. People of the Siang on the other hand sing lovely songs.

Another interesting article published as “Re-introduction of Assamese Language Demanded” consists of Tribal leaders’ memorandum to the Governor of Assam. The memorandum submitted to the Governor on behalf of the people belonging to Abor, Mishmis, and Khampti races. The tribal people complained that they could not approach their proper authority as the later did not know the local dialect. They always required some agencies to convey their grievances and they were not sure whether their grievances were exactly conveyed to the authority or not. So they demanded that the Government should provide such authority who could understand the people through the medium of Assamese as their lingua-franca.
A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF NEFAMESE

From all the above mentioned articles as well as the other articles published in the book called the "Out look on NEFA" show the attitude as well as the feeling of the people of NEFA towards Assamese as a lingua-franca.

"Reminiscence – Lest we forget" is a collection or compilation of the first hand experiences of the officers who served in Arunachal Pradesh over the years, several of them who started their carrier long before the state was known by its present name.

One of the article titled as “My years in NEFA” was written by Padmashree Miss Silverine Swer. The writer states that she joined as a social education officer in the community project at Pasighat in 1953 and she retired in 1968 after rendering 15 years of service in the territory.

On the very day of her arrival at evening she was taken to a village called Yagrung where she witnessed a traditional dance of the Adis for the first time. It was an exciting event as all people, young and old joined in. The girls draped in bright red skirts, black blouses and conical caps on their heads formed a ring around a blazing bonfire. The girls danced sometimes swaying their body to and fro and sometimes moving along a circle. There was a never ending flow of apong (millet beer) served in bamboo tubes.

The writer states that about 25 km to the south west of Pasighat there was a village i.e. a projected model village. In the village there was provision of smoke outlets, more inter house space and location of houses on straight lines and broad pathways.

The writer states that the Adi people were very much helpful. One day one jeep fell in the marsh. The news was given to the nearest village. Immediately a large number of Adi people waving bamboo torches came there to help to pull out the jeep.
In Miren a big fire was lit up to help the people in the jeep to keep warm. Further the people were served with hot tea. The Adi people were very much hospitable.

The writer states that the Adi people cultivated the land in primitive method. The wet rice cultivation system was not known to them although the land was fertile. But when the villagers came to know about the method of wet rice cultivation, which was more beneficial than the primitive method, they started to cultivate the land by using the wet rice cultivation system. Since then more and more areas came to be covered by wet rice cultivation.

The writer states about the community life of the people. The community hall in the village was attractive. All the unmarried young man of the village spent their nights together to protect the village from any harm. In the community hall the people discussed all matters relating to their community. Kabang – a social institution of the Adis makes decision on all matters concerning social duties of the community. Every house hold was to send one male representative to the Kabang session and had to pay a fine for absence without reason. Everyone is free to express his opinion. No one interrupts a speaker and there was an atmosphere of silence. Kabang is a democratic institution.

In another article titled as “My years in a community project” written by Rajani Kanta Patir, the writer has stated how the Adi people in Arunachal Pradesh transformed their old method of cultivation of land i.e. their old method of jhum cultivation to a new method of wet rice cultivation. Further how the Adi people came to know about the growing of various kinds of vegetables and sugar cane cultivation etc. Further the Adi people also came to know about the animal husbandry scheme also.
The writer states that the Government at that time in Arunachal Pradesh started an Agricultural Farm. In the farm wet rice cultivation of paddy, growing of various kind of vegetables, sugar cane etc. were carried on. The farm yielded much produce and the articles were sold in the Pasighat Bazar. The appearance of abundant vegetables, sugar cane etc. in Pasighat Bazar caught the Adi people by surprise. Then they came to know about the method of wet rice cultivation of paddy, growing of vegetables, sugar cane, etc. The Adi people also started the practice of cultivation following the method adopted in the Government Farm. Meetings were held in the community hall where villagers were taught by the Government side to follow the new method of cultivation in place of old method. Soon village after village started to change their old method of cultivation. Besides they started to grow vegetables, mastered, sugar cane, etc. They also learnt about the water supply scheme for their cultivation. Channels were dug for irrigation purpose. The villagers also came to know about animal husbandry scheme. This way the people started to grow enough produce which in turn besides fulfilling their own consumption made them able to sale produce in the market. Thus the villagers became self sufficient and arrived at a good economy and the village people got impetus for various other social activities.

Again the article under the name and style of “Arunachal Reminiscences” written by I.M. Simon, in which the writer describes about the social conditions of some people of Arunachal Pradesh. He has stated that in the Apatani village, rows of houses were put up closely together with the narrow public path in between. These houses were made of bamboo and thatch with wooden floor. For the fear of risk of fire the people put up their granaries away from any house. In Apatani village tall tree trunks were joined by unbroken length of cane on which at important festivals the young people perform dance.
A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF NEFAMESE

The writers states that the Apatani were highly advanced in agriculture. They were self sufficient in production of rice etc. Besides fulfilling their own needs of consumption they sold the surplus in the market. The Apatani practiced the irrigation system for cultivating the land. The ridges separating the paddy plots were considerably wider. The Apatani also cultivated crops like mastered and spicy herbs. The cultivation field were out side the villages. In the morning the head of each family went in front to the field followed by the women and children. The writer has described that the males were dressed almost in the same way as their counter part of neighboring tribes. Their hair-dos were slightly different, the ends of the tresses being plaited before being curled up above the fore head and held in place with metal skewers. The women, on the other hand, were easily distinguishable from their sisters of other tribes more particularly by their dress of thick dyed woolen that recalled the kimonos of the Japanese. Their hear style also look strangely Japanese.

One of the article in this book is “The Age-Old Amity of the Hills and the Plains” written by the Lila Gogoi. According to the writer there was no separate identity between the people of the plains and the hills. The great edifice of culture, history and heritage of Assam was erected by the joint efforts of the people of the hills and plains. Before the advent of the British there was no difference whatsoever in the social and cultural field between the people of the plains and the hills. There was an unbreakable friendship between the people of the plains and the hills surrounding boundaries of Assam i.e. the plains people had friendship with the Abors, Mishmis, Chingphows, Akas, Dafla etc. Apart from political treaties there was marital relationship and that brought a happy natural environment.

The Ahoms ruled Assam for about six hundred years. During this period the political and cultural condition of Assam attained the glory of highest peak. History
bears ample examples of tribal people being brought into the Ahom fold and makes to enjoy high privileges during the Ahom rule.

Marriages of Ahoms with the people of the hill tribes were a common feature. It is not that Ahom married the daughter of the hill people but Ahom daughters were also given in marriage to the hill tribes.

Due to the abhorrence of the Ahoms to the caste system, the Ahoms were fore runners in unifying the hills and the plains and thus forming a strong and healthy society.

The Ahoms had trade relation with the hill people like Miris, Mishmis, the Abors, Chingphows, the Daflas etc. Passes were open for the hills people to the plains. Tanks and Beels were thrown open for fishing by the tribal people. There were occasional wars with the hill people but treaties of friendship were established immediately.

In the effort to drive away the British when Gondhar Konwar in 1828 and Piyali Phukan on 1830 waged war against the British, the neighboring hill people rendered active support to the rebels with men and material. So it is clear that not only at the time of glory but also at the time of distress as well the people of the plains and the hill had cordial relation.

In another article titled as “Trip to Bomdila” (Tourist’s Dairy) by justice H. Deka describes that in his tour to NEFA he met with various persons of NEFA belonging to the tribes of Monpas, Sherdupqens, Khowas, Akas etc. They spoke him in Assamese just as any of the hill neighbors would do. He stated that possibly the encouragement to learn Assam would be greater assistance to the local people than having their secondary education in Hindi as it would be easier to pick up Assamese
A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF NEFAMESE

language by the people. In shall be easier for them to realize oneness to merge into a bigger nation.

Mr H. Deka stated that the people had a love for jewellary, mostly silver. The people used ornaments made of silver. Many among the tribal’s used caps. The earthen work had not made much progress. The people used mostly wooden and bamboo articles and some of them were painted. The Daflas were expert in cane works. The writer states that in some social meet the guest were offered a cup of local beer.

The book “Traditional Systems of the Tangsa and Tusta” published by Vivekananda Kendra Institute of Culture contains 30 papers presented in the seminar at Changlang of Arunachal Pradesh on the tropic “Traditional Systems: change and continuity” among the Tangsa and Tusta communities of Arunachal Pradesh has throws much light on the social, cultural, political, religious etc. conditions of the Tangsa and Tusta communities of Arunachal Pradesh.

“Marriage system of the Tusta” is an article published in the aforesaid book which has been written by Nokchang Songching. The Tusta is one of the major tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. The writer has beautifully described about the various aspects of the social life of the Tusta tribe in this article. The isolated location of this tribal society has helped to develop a culture, tradition and a way of life. This is very much useful for understanding the history of human civilization.

Each Tusta village has a village council and the village is controlled by the chief like other tribe of Arunachal Pradesh. They live in joint family with patriarchal system and the father is the head of the family. At old age the father hands over the charge of the household with eldest son with consent of the family members.

Marriage is regarded as a holy institution in Tusta society. Marriage in Tusta society is a kind of ‘love marriage’. The willingness of the boy and the girl would be
intimated to their respective parents. There is no force from the either side. Marriage by negotiation is called kakhet and is the accepted form. The boy’s parents make necessary arrangement. When negotiation is initiated rice beer, kham and Sali (tea leaves and tobacco leaves) are taken to the girl’s house by the boy’s parents and relatives. After the rice beer and Sali are accepted the negotiation is completed. After the agreement is reached there is no so much necessity to perform ceremony. But the rich family may arrange marriage ceremony. Expenditure in such a situation is mostly borne by the boy’s side. On the day of ceremony buffalo, cow, pig and chicken are slaughtered. ‘Coo’ or kou leaves are used mostly on all occasions as dishes. In the community feast villagers of all ages are invited. The youth of the village help in performing the ceremony.

Bride price is called Janlathang and varies from village to village. The girls parents also offer some household articles like traditional dress, ornaments, seeds of paddy, cane basket etc. to the girl. After the girl is settled in her husband’s house she offer a ‘Endi’ cloth to the maternal uncle in order to strengthen this relationship.

Cross cousin marriage is mostly preferred. For instance marriage with the daughter of the mother’s brother is the most favoured type. There is freedom from the boys and the girls to choose their mates in the basis of character, capacity and beauty etc. Marriage within the same clan is a social crime. There is no fixed rule that a boy must marry a girl younger in age. Monogamy is in generally practice. Of course some people may have two wives under special condition. Elopement is not common. But boys and girls elope if their love is not recognized by their parents. In case of elopement the boys is to pay fine to the girls parents before the village council.

Free sex, adultery within the clan is social crime. If adultery is committed divorce may also occur as it is considered a sin to god. Divorce is allowed in some
A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF NEFAMESE

other causes also and it varies from village to village. Decision for divorce is taken by the village council elders.

Change: At present with the progress of time and modern education some changes have taken place in the socio cultural life of the Tusta society. Formerly marriage with another tribe was strictly prohibited. But now such marriage is taking place. This is no doubt a healthy step towards emotional integration. Inter tribe marriage would lead to better understanding and strengthening the indigenous communities of the state. This step will certainly help in the development of the social life of the people.

"Marriage System of the Tangsa" is another article published in the aforesaid book and written by Renu Mungray. The Tangsa tribe inhabits in the easternmost part of Arunachal Pradesh along the Indo-Myanmar border. The Tangsas are mild in nature. They are eager to know new things and they are peace loving and God fearing people. The marriage system of the Tangsas reflects their respect for culture, custom and tradition. The Tangsas are constituted of many sub-tribes.

Marriage for Tangsas is not merely sanction for two opposite sexes to live together but a union of a life time partner. It is a relationship and responsibility for life. The Tangsas practice monogamy.

Muklom is a sub tribe of the Tangsas. Like other sub tribe of the Tangsa the Muklom society is also patriarchal and patrilineal. The father is the head of the family. But women also play an important role in the family. There are many rituals and pujas when without women these are incomplete. There are many types of marriage in the Muklom community. But most of these are not in practice at present. Now a days the most preferred marriages is love marriage. The boy and the girl choose each other and inform their respective parents for fixing a date of marriage. Arranged marriage is also
quite frequent. The arrange marriage is performed with the knowledge of the boy and the girl. Marriage by elopement has become irrelevant as marriage by love is accepted by all.

In Muklom society marriage can take place within the community but not within the same clan members. Marriage outside the community is also accepted today. Once the boy choose a girl or both of them fall in love then the boy will inform his parents. According to custom, the father of the boy, paternal uncle and other relatives go to the girls house and ask for her hand. Some times in place of parents they may send relatives and from among the relatives one negotiator is chosen. The negotiator plays in important role in the marriage. The bride price is also settled at that time.

Women go to the field and feed her family. Thus in the past birth of a girl child was found more helping to the family. When she gets married the family loses a helping hand. So the bride price was fixed to compensate the loss of the family. At present bride price is not mandatory. Just to observe the ritual, the parents of the boy pay one bottle of rice beer and amount of Rs.75.00. The girls parents accepts this as bride price. In olden days bride price was very high. Sometime the parent of the bride demanded bride price according to the economic status of the bride groom. Now those who can not afford observe only a simple ceremony within the family and clan members.

According to Muklom custom the girl does not straight away move from the parents house. She remains in the paternal uncle house for the day. From there she along with her friends and relatives go to the bride groom house. Then she is asked to scoop the rice paddy thrice and place it in the bowl. A pig is sacrificed and the head of the pig is taken for ritual chanting by the boys father. He chants for his daughter in
law. On this occasion the bride has to choose one of her friends as bride’s maid. The bride and her friends along with the guest are fed with rice and meat. There is also plenty of rice beer for all. The next day she comes back to her parents house. Next day depending on the economic condition of the brides parents guests are invited. Rice, meat and rice beer are provided to the guest. The girl may go to her husband’s house in the next day. But in the past the bride could not go to her husband’s house immediately. When the girl goes to her husband house permanently her parents send with her rice, live chicken and piglets. Her maternal uncle and parental uncle also present her with gift. Now many of the rituals are not observed as due to love marriage both the couples are eager to live immediately.

In Moklum society divorce is rare. Both the spouses are expected to be sincere and faithful to each other. Divorce may take place in presence of village council. It may take place if there happens illicit affair by either of the spouses or for ill treatment and quarrels or barreness etc. If divorce takes place due to the fault of the girl then the parent of the girl are to return the bride price. If the boy is found guilty then he is to pay fine to the girl.

With the progress of the time there is change in the society. The society is very much flexible by nature. Now the bride price is not mandatory. Now in place of bride price the parents have started to give gifts to their married daughter.

“Rituals” is another article published in aforesaid book and written by Molem Ronrang. In the article the writer has given a description of the various forms of rituals observed by the tribes of Tusta and Tangsa of Arunachal Pradesh.

It is the popular belief that the God is supreme and life is handled by God. But Chang, the evil spirit, harms human beings and causes disease. When a child is born, he/ she is named and a pig is killed for the feast. A new string, a rope called Riha with
A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF NEFAMESE

a pigtail, is tied in the left hand of the child by parents for the protection and health of the child.

In the ritual concerning marriage ceremony, the marriage party is led by a relative’s sister called Rolamshanti. The next person is the bride herself and the rest. A new ladder is made for the bride to step into the groom’s house. The father or the elder brother of the groom takes a cup of water and puts rice and waits at the entrance of the house for receiving the bride. Then he pours out the water on the bride’s feet and blesses her. The bride then steps up the new ladder and enters the house. A separate new fire is lit to cook food for the couple. All the food items should be fresh and no dry fish or chilly shall be used for cooking. For the duration of the year, the couple shall not take food and drinks from other marriage feast. If the couple does not follow the restrictions, they are likely to be divorced.

Death and burial: Natural death is considered the action of God. The dead body is placed in coffin and buried under the house. The articles used by the deceased are given as goods and hung on a bamboo pole over the grave, while clothes, utensils money etc. are put in the coffin. Death caused by accident, murder, animal, drowning in water, falling from tree, death at delivery are attributed to the action of evil spirits. No coffin is used and the dead body is buried in the jungle. After death, the soul of men is supposed to fly to an unknown place. It is believed that the soul of good people go to heaven and those of bad people to hell.

The patient or his family shall pay something in cash or kind to the healer. Rice, meat and money shall be placed in a plate.

For the rituals concerning the preparation of medicine, the medicinal plant is shown in dream. The man takes a cup of water, puts rice in it and pours out the water in the name of the deity of the region. Then he goes to find out plants and collects
A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF NEFAMESE

them. He does not disclose the where about of the plants. It is boiled and the dosage is prescribed to the patient.

The diviner consults omen before going out to a new field, or fishing, hunting or for trade. Before going to warfare, consultation of omen is necessary. A pig will be killed; the position of the liver and the spleen will be studied and checked. They also take some plants and study the omen.

Forms of ritual: No regular prayer is offered. When situation or need arises, prayer is offered.

i) There are two types of sacrifices related offerings performed one to evil spirits for healing the diseases, and another to benevolent spirits for prosperity and welfare of the family.

ii) After sacrifice and offering are made, the priest asks or scolds the spirits to immediately leave the sick person. The spirits reside in thick forest or isolated places where man is scared of going.

iii) There are no bodily gestures used to express the feelings of rituals.

Ritual experts: The experts are recognized and respected in the society.

i) The position of expert is not hereditary but depends on one’s gift received from the spirit. Experts derive power from the spirit.

ii) Both man and woman are capable of becoming experts. Generally, only man becomes priest. But a woman can be diviner also. In the olden days, many women were diviners.

iii) Diviners are prohibited from eating the meat/ flesh of wild cat, eagle, crow, tiger, wolf etc. and the animals killed by tiger, wolf and fox.

Sacred places and shrine: In olden days there was a stone called Longlang in human shape. People used to offer food and drink to him. When an enemy was killed
or a slave was sacrificed, the flesh used to be offered to Longlang. People would eat and drink and dance around Longlang and pray to him to protect them. Sacrifices and offerings were made to appease Longlang and for seeking his protection from enemy.

Ritual language: Ritual languages are common and understandable. Experts have good memory and they are well versed with the language. Cash or kind was involved in ritual performance. Today people have forgotten the old ritual practices. There is lack of interest to promote the old rituals. And moreover there are no more ritual experts today.