CHAPTER II
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Religion is an all-pervading universal phenomenon, which forms an essential part of human life. It can be considered as a cultural system in which all the elements of life are closely linked with one another and as such, it must be understood in the cultural context. As beliefs have a positive value for the believers and guide their life, the function of religion is the same. Whether it is Hinduism, Christianity, tribal religion, etc. it does not matter, it pervades the entire life of the believer. It has a binding capability and identifies a group.

Religion is also considered as a set of sacred symbols which synthesize people's ideas, ethos and world view. Symbols provide moral and aesthetic values.

Religion can be classified into three categories based on the transmission of knowledge -

(a) **Oral** - This form of religion is a-historical and has no explanation or philosophical interpretation. In
this case, the knowledge of belief and ritual is transmitted orally by word of mouth, from one generation to the next. The foundation of this type of religion lies in the human memory. Example of this form of religion can be observed among the various tribal groups.

(b) **Textual** - This form of religion is historical and the knowledge of belief and ritual is textualised and codified. It possesses a body of doctrine and is sectarian. Example - Buddhism, Islam and Christianity.

(c) **Transcendental** - This is neither oral nor textual. In this form, the knowledge is beyond the human spoken language. It is a mystic. In this, knowledge is acquired transcendentally, through experience.

Based on the above classification, all cultures can be grouped into three types, which B.N. Saraswati has rightly termed as Laukik (oral), Sastriya (textual) and Naivritik (transcendental) using Sanskrit terminology (1970; 46). He has further made some basic distinctions between the oral and textual modes of transmission which are quoted below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral</th>
<th>Textual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2) Direct, personal (The producer and the receiver are face to face).</td>
<td>2) Indirect, impersonal (The producer is absent or distant).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Creative.</td>
<td>3) Repetitive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Effective in realizing power (Power of mantra lies in its recitation).</td>
<td>4) Text (of the mantra) in itself important (without gurumukh no knowledge).</td>
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<tr>
<td>5) Mother of paravidya.</td>
<td>5) Custodian of aparavidya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Knowledge complete and authentic.</td>
<td>6) Book-knowledge incomplete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Unbounded, immeasurable (The flow of thought maintained uninterruptedly).</td>
<td>7) Bounded, measurable. (Thoughts once codified, or put to writing become structurally fixed).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8) Collective reliance
(Collective memory, anonymous authors, unity of expression).

8) Ultimate reliance on the other (Individual memory, named authors, uniqueness of expression). (ibid;)

The traditional religion of the tribal populations of Arunachal Pradesh is characterised as oral religious tradition which lack explanation or philosophical interpretation, and the knowledge of belief is transmitted orally from one generation to the next mainly through myths and in the process of growing up in the society.

The religion of the tribal people of Arunachal Pradesh consists of belief in a high-god, supernatural being and also a number of benevolent and malevolent spirits and deities. It is believed by the people that the benevolent spirits do not cause any harm to living beings. It is either the malevolent spirits who cause harm or the Supreme Deity, who inflicts punishment on the people and in order to appease these spirits and deities the people adopt various means and ways at the time of crises and sufferings.

Again, on the basis of socio-religious affinities,
the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh can be broadly divided into three cultural groups. The first group comprises of the tribes who have taken up Buddhism. The Monpas and Sherdukpons of Tawang and West Kameng districts and the Membas and Khambas of West Siang districts are Buddhists of Mahayana sect and these communities have their Buddhist temples called 'Gompa' situated in the village itself. While the Khamtis and Singphos of Lohit are Buddhists of Hinayana Sect and they use ancient scripts which were derived from their original homeland, Thailand and Burma. These Buddhist tribes have definite places of worship. For example - the main centre of the Mahayana Sect of Buddhism is the oldest monastery which is at Tawang and is said to be some 370 years old, while the main centre of the Hinayana Sect of Buddhism lies at Chowkham.

The second group comprises of the Adis, Apatanis, Nishis, Mishmis, etc. Most of these tribes are the worshippers of Donyi-Polo or the Sun and the Moon and Abotani, who is believed to be the original ancestor or father of mankind. They do not have any fixed place of worship, and they do not have any written text. Their religious thought and practices are transmitted by word of mouth from generation to generation. Recently a Donyi-Polo Mission is established at Itanagar, the capital of Arunachal Pradesh. These people also worship numerous deities related to their agricultural
activities and perform animal sacrifices, unlike the other two groups.

The third group of people are the Noctes and the Wanchos. Vaishnavism is practised by the Noctes of Tirap and some other tribes of East Kameng and Subansiri districts.

Besides the above, Christianity has also been accepted by some of the tribes of Subansiri, Siang, Dibang Valley and Tirap districts.

The people of Arunachal Pradesh celebrate various festivals in order to propitiate the spirits and deities and also to keep up the traditional beliefs and customs of the society. A calendar of the important festivals celebrated by the people of Arunachal Pradesh throughout the year is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Sacred Calendar of the Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl No</th>
<th>Tribes</th>
<th>Names of festival</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Adi (Gallong)</td>
<td>Mopin</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>4-6 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Adi (Padam-Minyong) Aran</td>
<td>March-April</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Adi (Padam-Minyong) Solung</td>
<td>August-September</td>
<td>5-7 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Khamba &amp; Memba</td>
<td>i)Losar(UBI)</td>
<td>Jan-Feb</td>
<td>7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ii)Losar(Sonam)</td>
<td>Dec.-Jan</td>
<td>3 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Apatani                      Dree                          July          3 days
6. Aka                         Sarak                         Feb           4 days
7. Digaru and Miju Mishmis    Tamladu                        Feb           1 day
8. Hill Miri                   Bori Boot                      Feb           4 days
9. Idu Mishmi                  Reh                           Feb
10. Khawa                      Kshyat Sowai                  Jan           4 days
11. Khamti & Singpho           Sangken                        April          1 day
12. Miji                       Khan                          March         5-10 days
13. Monpa                      Losar                         Feb           7 days
14. Mishing                    Ali-Aa Ligang                 Feb           3-5 days
15. Nishing                    Nyokum Yalo                   Feb           5 days
16. Nishing Bangni             Myokum Yalo                   Feb           12 days
17. Nocte                      Loku                          Nov           3-4 days
18. Sherdukpen                 Losar                         Feb           7 days
19. Tagin                      Si. Donyi                     Jan           3 days
20. Tangsa                     Moh                           May           3-6 days
21. Wancho                     Ojiyele                       Feb           5-6 days

The present religious intellectuals or elites are trying to textualise their oral religious tradition. This is being done mainly for two reasons -

(1) For establishing a political solidarity.

This can be achieved through the consolidation of the diverse groups. The elites are trying to unite the
different groups in the midst of diversities, thus bringing
them together, and establishing a standardized form. This is
being done by the religious intellectuals for creating
awareness among the group.

By textualisation, the religious intellectuals are
making attempts to revitalise their beliefs and customs. The
covert philosophy of the belief and customs are highlighted
and put in a textual form. Religion, on one side is
intricately woven into the structure of the society, but is
not delineated into a distinct organized form. On the other
hand, there is a number of organized religions which have
permeated into their society and which have been viewed by
them as a threat. These reasons have instigated the elites to
organize their beliefs and customs in a text form. On
textualizing, there arises a world of meanings which brings
about concrete conceptualization of the symbolic forms and
existence of supernatural powers.

(2) Self-conscious dignity.

The moral ethics and philosophies are within the
tribesmen, and are intricately woven with their religious and
social structure of the society. The religious intellectuals
are trying to textualise their moral ethics and philosophies
to provide themselves with a concrete religious identity which will become the referring point for other people when talking about the ethnic group.

Objectives and Scope

In this study, an attempt has been made to discuss the emerging trends in the organisation of the Donyi-Polo faith. The study is of special interest because only a few tribes or the Tani group of tribes of Arunachal Pradesh follow the indigenous Donyi-Polo belief or faith. The Tani group comprises of Adis, Apatanis, Nishis, Tagins and Mishings (Miris) and these tribes are now trying to re-affirm the indigenous tribal faith to form a distinct identity of their own and to provide respectability to their cultural tradition. In particular, the researcher has tried to find out: (a) the strategies adopted for organisation of the tribal oral religion, and (b) the extent to which the new venture in writing tribal theology follows the indigenous tribal faith.

Though such an examination is not an easy task at all, as people are in the process of systematising their thought and giving shape to something which was mainly in the realm of experience and living through that experience. Now
they are constructing a textual form out of that experience. As can be expected there are differences of opinion and differences in emphasis.

The theoretical orientation that guided the study was as expounded by Clifford Geertz. For him, religion is a cultural system. It is a system of meaning embodied in the symbols which make up the religion, oral and textual, and their relations with society and culture-analysis and interpretation.

According to Geertz, culture concept denotes an historical transmitted pattern of meanings incorporated in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life. Symbols are tangible formulations of notions, abstractions from experience fixed in perceptible forms, concrete embodiments of ideas, attitudes, judgements, longings or beliefs.

Religion, on one side, anchors the power of expressing symbolic resources for formulating analytic ideas in an authoritative conception of the overall shape of
reality, and on the other side, it anchors the power of symbolic resources for expressing emotions—moods, sentiments, passions, affections, feelings—in a similar conception of its pervasive tenor, its inherent tone and temper.

Key-Questions

The key-questions for the present study are as follows:

i) How and why are the tribesmen of Donyi-Polo faith eager to textualise their oral indigenous religion?

and

ii) How does the concept of Donvi-Polo faith get reflected and integrated in the behaviour and social relations of the tribal people?

Research Technique

Since long, the researcher was very much keen to know about the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh and whenever she had an opportunity or came across any book on Arunachal Pradesh, she would try not to miss the same. As such, she was slightly aware of the Donyi Polo faith.

In the year 1988, the researcher had gone on a
short trip to Itanagar. At that time she heard about the belief of the tribal people on "Donyi Polo" and became interested to know all about it. With this aim in mind, she enquired about it from a number of people and learnt that "Donyi" means "sun" and "Polo" means "moon", and only a few tribes of Arunachal Pradesh like the Adis, Apatanis, Nishis, etc., were the worshippers of Donyi Polo. The believers of Donyi Polo had no written text about it and only very recently some leaders of Donyi Polo are trying to textualise their belief about the Donyi Polo. She realised that there was a lot to know about it. Her understanding was if she pursues a study on the Donvi Polo she would also know more about the people who practice the belief.

As such, secondary data through pamphlets, journals, newspaper reports and books were collected. At times she felt frustrated because not much information regarding Donyi Polo were available in these sources. But on the otherhand, her interest and admiration for the tribal people continuously provided a source of inspiration to carry on with the work. After reading a number of books on Arunachal Pradesh and religion as well, decision was taken to collect first hand data from the people. The researcher worked out a plan for collecting data and decided that she should collect myths.
about Donyi Polo, observe the various rituals associated with it and interview the people as well as the specialists who believe in it.

The researcher carried out the field work in two phases. She went to Itanagar in 1987 and stayed there till 1990. During her stay there, she made friends with a number of people who later helped her to collect information from various sources, both primary and secondary. One of the best informant was Shri Oshong Ering from whom she collected a lot of information. He is a very interesting person and knows a lot of information. Another person who helped a lot was Shri T. Rukbo.

In the second phase, from Itanagar she went to Pasighat which is the headquarter of East Siang district. Her field-work was confined to the Adi villages in and around Pasighat where she stayed from Feb-Apr'89 and again from Dec-Feb'92.

In all these villages she tried to meet the village elder or Gaon Burah or village headman. Besides the above, she made contacts with several old people of the village. She also talked to a number of present day youths, but most of them could hardly say anything about Donyi Polo. Instead their answer was that since time immemorial, their ancestors have been believing in Donyi-Polo. So they also do so.
Table 2: List of Villages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of village</th>
<th>No. of Houses</th>
<th>Population (approx)</th>
<th>Tribe inhabited</th>
<th>Distance from Pasighat (approx)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Boving</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Miniong</td>
<td>4 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Balek</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>Passi</td>
<td>5 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mirbuk</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Miniong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Runne</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>Miniong</td>
<td>7 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Tekang</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>Miniong</td>
<td>9 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Taki Lalung</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>Miniong</td>
<td>9 Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sibut</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>Miniong</td>
<td>5 1/2Km.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Monqku</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Miniong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Mirbu</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Bamin Bilat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the field-work, the researcher was all the time looking for those people who appeared to be knowledgeable and articulate about their community, especially those who could give some ideas about their beliefs and interpretations. Quite often, she was amazed at the depth of their knowledge and also detached thinking about how the life came into existence, how it is maintained and so on. Milton Singer has called such people as cultural specialists. With such people, she tried to have as much discussions as possible. Each time
she had some discussions with them; she felt there were more questions and which needed clarifications. Such repeated discussions and their interpretations allowed her to get some understanding of the complex concept of Donyi-Polo.

The tools that have been utilised in collecting data for the above study are:

1. **Collection of myths:**

   Myths form the base of most religious institutions. Myths relate how one state of affairs became another; how an unpeopled world became populated; how the unity of mankind became a plurality of tribes. It is an instrument of knowing fundamental reality through transcendental method. For example, Malinowski (1925) described how myth "as it exists in a savage community" is "not merely a story told but a reality lived". It is a hard-worked active force and not just an idle tale. Though it relates to events of primordial time or no-time, it has a purpose, a deep message. It has a special significance because it conveys message indirectly or symbolically, ideas which is transmitted from generation to generation and also from one group to another. Thus we can say that myths play an important role in the cultural system of the people, on the basis of which ideas can be constructed,
and social relations between different groups of people can be reconstructed.

Myths form an indispensable ingredient of all cultures. It is therefore neither a mere narration. It is also not a form of science nor a branch of art or history, but it has the ability or function of strengthening traditions which it endows with a greater value by tracing it back to a better, higher, and more supernatural reality of initial events.

Verrier Elwin (1960; 212) had worked for most part of his later life on the areas of myth and religion among the tribal people of Arunachal Pradesh. According to him, tribal religion is built up from mythology, which generally represents a world picture and insight into life. He had collected a wide varieties of myths from the tribes selected for the present study. Some myths of the tribes under study have been collected by the researcher which are currently used by the leaders of the Donyi-Polo faith as text for new interpretation of the indigenous belief.

2) Interview:

Interview is an important research tool for collecting data in a fieldwork. It is a process of interaction between the interviewer and the respondent where the
interviewer meets and asks questions to the latter. In other words, this a direct method, in which the respondent is very much 'aware' of the presence of the interviewer.

This method has certain advantages -

i) The purpose of the questions can be better explained and clarifications can be sought;

ii) the insight of the respondents can be judged through cross-questioning;

iii) Myths can be collected by means of this method because in case of oral religions, there are no other source. The foundation of oral religion lies in the human memory - the mind. That has to be explored.

iv) it helps when dealing with old people and also the illiterate group;

v) this method provides exchange of ideas and experiences in which the respondent may recollect and rehearse about the past. He may also define the present and wish to express his ideas about the future.

There are certain limitations of interview method as well:-

1. One of the major weakness of the interview is the
involvement of the individual in the data he is reporting and the consequent likelihood of bias. The interviewers tend to obtain data that agree with their own personal convictions. If an individual is assumed to be in possession of certain facts, he may withhold or distort them because to communicate them may be threatening or destructive to his ego.

2. The respondent suffers from certain limitations; i.e.,
   a) his experience as an interviewee,
   b) his judgment about himself,
   c) his ability to express himself clearly.

3. A busy person may prefer to fill out a questionnaire at leisure rather than submit to a long interview.

4. Memory bias is another factor which renders the respondent unable to provide accurate informations.

5. Tape-recording of the entire interview is likely to be expensive of time and money. Moreover the use of tape-recorder may make the interviewee cautious and scare him away from divulging any secrets.

The interviews that were conducted were mostly
non-directive interview. A non-directive interview or unguided or unstructured interview is an appropriate method for obtaining insights into hidden or underlying motivations; unacknowledged attitudes, personal hopes, fears, conflicts and the dynamic inter-relatedness of responses. In these types of interviews, the interviewers do not follow a system or list of predetermined questions. The interviewer permits the interviewee to talk freely. Interviewees are encouraged to relate their concrete experiences with no or little direction, to dwell on whatever events seem significant to them, to provide their own definitions of their social situations, report their own foci of attention, reveal their attitudes and opinions. The investigator, therefore, gets a natural and representative picture of the subject's behavior and gains an insight into the nature and intensity of his attitudes, motives, feelings and beliefs.

3) Observations

Observation is another important tool of research. It deals with the external behaviour of persons in appropriate situations. The data is collected on the basis of observing the respondent in situ.

Observation may be defined as systematic viewing,
coupled with consideration of the seen phenomena.

The researcher interviewed the important personali-
ties who are involved in textualising the oral religious
tradition of Donyi-Polo faith, and this included mostly the
religious intellectuals belonging to the Adi tribe.

The Adis are the major tribes occupying the Siang
district of Arunachal Pradesh. Siang is located roughly
between $93^\circ 11' \text{ to } 95^\circ 35'E$ longitudes and $27^\circ 22' \text{ to } 29^\circ 20'N$
lattitudes. It is bounded by Subansiri in the west and Lohit in
the east. The boundary of the district touches Tibet in the
north and the Assam plains in the south. Siang district
occupies an area of 23,723 Sq.km. (District Census Handbook,
Siang district, 1971). Previously they were known as Abors,
but now they call themselves Adi meaning 'hillman', and of all
the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, they are the most advanced
tribe. They are divided into two broad categories - one
comprising of Padams, Minyongs, Pasis, Panggis, Shimongs,
Boris, Ashings and Tangams, and the other comprising of the
Gallongs, Ramos, Bokars and Pailibos. Of all these tribes, the
Padams, Minyongs and Shimongs are more in number.

Generally, the Adis are short statured with traces
of Mongoloid fold in both men and women. They have dark brown
eyes, and the nose is neither too short nor flat and majority of them possess dark brown coloured skin, and clear black hair. But the hair style may vary from tribe to time, for example the Padams, Minyongs and Shimongs have their hair cropped while the Ashings, Tangams, and Boris prefer to keep it long.

The Adi society have a highly organised political institution or village council called Kebang. The functions of the Kebang as summed up by Dr. Elwin are as under: The Kebang still settles administrative matters, such as when and where to clear the forests and sow the seed, when to go on hunting or fishing expeditions, when and in what manner a festival will be performed and sacrifices offered. They have judicial powers and offenders of all kinds are brought before them and sentenced to various types of punishment.

Besides this, the Adis have a dormitory club called Moshup for boys and men, which plays an important role in the social organisation of the Adis. In the dormitory, boys of the village from the age of ten until they get married are allowed to sleep and this forms a very important place in moulding their personality and character. Here they are given lessons in concerted action for the good of the entire community and
they develop a sense of cooperation. The Moshup is also used as a meeting place for Kebang, specially in making decisions with regard to war and communal hunting. In some villages there are separate clubs for young, unmarried girls of the village, called Rasheng, the functions of which are more or less similar to the Moshup.

The Adis are a patrilineal society, and descent and inheritance of property are traced through the father. The older sons usually set up separate households but they have equal shares of the parental house, and it is the youngest son who takes responsibility of his parents. The widowed mother is considered a responsibility of the eldest son but in reality, she prefers to stay with the youngest son.

Besides the Adis, I made attempts to carry out my studies among the Apatani tribe of Arunachal Pradesh, but in this case my study has been very much limited. This is because the common people of the different villages were not of very much help. It is the Adis who came forward to textualise the oral religious tradition. Anyway, it is better to give a short description of the Apatanis too. The Apatanis occupy the central region of Subansiri District of Arunachal Pradesh and their villages are congested and closely knit. The houses are
raised on high wooden piles and are not very long.

The Apatanis are marked by regular features. They are tall and slender having large and deepset eyes. They possess brown coloured skin, long delicate hands, a narrow nose, and their face is long. There are certain distinctive features of the Apa Tanis. For instance, previously, the tail formed an important part of the male dress of the Apa Tanis and this has been described by E.T. Dalton (1845) as follows: "The men do not rejoice in much drapery; they wear a girdle of canework painted red, which hangs down behind in a long, bushy tail". On the otherhand, the women wear black wooden round nose-plugs on each side of the nose.

Both Apa Tani men and women used to tatooe their face, and this provided a distinguishing mark. The men tatooeed their face below the mouth; a line was drawn from below the lower lip upto the chin, while the women were tatooeed with broad blue lines from the top of the forehead to the tip of the nose and from the lower lip to the chin. But now-a-days, tatooeing has been given up by the Apa Tanis.

The Apa Tanis do not have, any formal village council, but still their society is highly stable. However, they have an informal village council consisting of clan
representatives called Bulianq which guides village affairs. The society is divided into two broad endogamous classes, namely, the higher class Mite and the lower class Mura, and social relations are regulated by usage and tradition.

In an Apa Tani village, the social life moves round two focal points - Nago and Lapang. The Nago serves as a shrine where ritual meetings of the class of the village are held. The Lapangs are open platforms where clan members meet on social and ritual occasions.

Clan-exogamy or class-endogamy is the usual form of marriage, and in very rare cases polygamy is permissible, for example, in cases of marriage where the couple are childless, a man can marry a second time. Nuclear family, consisting of parents and unmarried sons and daughters, form the basic social unit of the Apa Tani society, and the father is the head of the family. Descent and inheritance is also traced through the male line.

Though the researcher can speak in broken Assamese language which she used mostly because the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh speak in the same, she faced language problem. In some cases, language caused a barrier because though interpreters
were availed, no tradition can be interpreted fully, and no member of the society can *ipso facto* present the insider's view of their tradition.

But the fieldwork was not an easy task. This is because the researcher really had to face certain unpleasant situations at times. First of all, it was difficult to make some of the people understand why she, being an outsider was interested to know about their religion. In a few cases, some people were also very suspicious and felt that she would use the information conveyed by them to do some harm to them. In these cases, she had to convince them that it was only a study and that no harm would come to them. In this regard, an incident occurred while she was in the field, work of which gives some idea as to the kind of fear, they perceive and this is worth recalling. For data collection, she went to see an old man of Mirbuk village (of Siang district) along with a friend who knew him very well. After her friend introduced her and talked to him about their purpose of visiting him, the first thing that he asked the researcher was if she had any connection with the Christian missionaries. Not only she, but her friend also tried to make him understand that she was a Hindu and was in no way connected with Christians. Hearing this, he seemed to be very much relieved and revealed to the secret of his fear. He said that many of the present-day
youths were taking up Christianity, in the name of modernisation, forgetting their age-old traditions.

In the course of fieldwork, the researcher had to spend several hours with a respondent listening to what he was interested to tell her which often were not related to what she was interested in. In the beginning she felt, that may be she has not been able to convey to him what she actually wanted from him. For instance - sometimes when he was not in a good mood, he would tell her about his various problems, or at other times when he was in a joyous mood he would sing songs related to the creation of this world, agriculture, etc. in his own language irrespective of whether she was understanding the same or not. Later it was found out that he did this because he had confidence in her. It also helped her though not always, unknowingly when he would relate a myth or a story which he heard may be from his grandmother or mother, related to the worship of sun and moon in some way.

Though difficulties were faced, but on the whole, it is the friendly attitude of the people which sustained and encouraged her to go on. They tried to help her in whatever way they could when they learnt about her interest on Donyi-Polo. For times, they were some people who knew the term
Donyi-Polo and on being asked they just replied that since the very beginning their ancestors had been believing in Donyi-Polo and following their footsteps they too do so. But these people tried their best to give the researcher the names of religious leaders and personalities who could provide her information on her study. Some of the tribal elders whom she met were very happy that she was making a study on Donyi-Polo. This is because the youths of the society lack interest to learn about their age-long traditions, beliefs and customs, or may be they are busy with their own professions that they are not able to spend much time with their elders to learn about the same.

Limitations

So far the conscious attempts towards textualization of the 'oral-tradition' have been made by the Adi group in the state. Therefore, attitudes of other groups towards such attempts could not be collected for two reasons - (i) There was a visible lack of awareness among such group, (ii) The relative isolation of other tribes due to geographical orientation.