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Editorial

Social Science Research is generally regarded for providing important benefits not only to individuals but to local, regional, national, and international communities. Social Science includes many disciplines and sub-disciplines such as Anthropology, Economics, History, Political Science, Geography, Psychology, and Sociology. It is clearly understood that Social Sciences directly involve people. Today, the kind of attention and importance that Social Science Research manages to draw is never-ending and is ever expanding. There is much significance and relevance that research in Social Sciences gives added value to knowledge. The people directly undergo some of the social problems and it is through Social Science Research that offers solutions to such problems and improves the conditions of the people at large. Social research provides the methodology to deal with the social issues and it also contributes to community or societal development.

Social Research engages with the conceptualization of new theories and re-evaluation of theories which was previously accepted. The theories help in designing appropriate packages for societal behavioral upliftment. Social research assists in designing appropriate models of social planning, prediction and control. It also contributes to social welfare. To estimate the change, research is required and such research helps in dynamically responding to social institutions and its associated phenomena.

In sum, Social Science Research can play a very important role by raising voices in defense of social science and by participating through writing in Social Science.

I hope the papers in this issue will enhance critical research and thinking towards the promotion of social science research.

Resenmenla Longchar

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Naga Traditional Approaches to Peace Building and Social Harmony

MEYINGANGLA

Abstract

Traditional leaders play a vital role in settling community disputes among the Nagas. They are regarded as custodians of traditional law and receive the bulk of the cases dealing with violence which might be political, domestic or antisocial behaviour. These indigenous traditions on building peace can teach us about forgiveness, reconciliation and restoration. These traditional approaches to peace building can create the basis for re-establishing social solidarity which can incorporate into ongoing peace building process. Hence the study is to find a way to combine the lessons that is offered through the indigenous approaches in the standards of modern norms for the protection of human rights. The main thrust of this paper is to explore the traditional approaches to peace building and social harmony in the Naga society.

Keywords: *Peace Building; Social Harmony; Reconciliation; Builder*

Indigenous Approaches to Peace building and Social Harmony

Progressive cultural principles promote human dignity and the well-being of the individual and society. The Naga ongoing peace process can be reconstructed with the indigenous value-systems which emphasizes on social solidarity and communal harmony. Social cohesion makes sense by ensuring the security, safety and well-being of other people. We find that each Naga tribe has the indigenous traditions on peace building which can teach us a lot about healing and reconciliation, and create the common platform for re-establishing social harmony.

Promoting social harmony includes; “confronting corruption, democratic governance, power sharing, and the equitable distribution of resources among all the members of the society.” Cultural groups may share race, ethnicity, or nationality, but they also arise from cleavages of generation,

socio-economic class, political and religious affiliation and language (Ralph D. Winter & Steven C. Hawthorne, 1999, p. 483). Learning about one another requires opening up to the possibility of differences. Only then can we move towards a true understanding and appreciation of how cultures are unique. In order to re-establish social solidarity in war-affected communities, a key step need to find for members of these communities to inform and to share equitable resources like; “community meal” which is a common practiced in the Naga society till today. Through incorporating and sharing these cultural attitudes and values with the fellow community, and by handing them down to future generations, the Naga societies can re-construct themselves on the basis of a cultural image and social harmony.

Peace building and social harmony vary from tribe to tribe. While, some tribes had an appointed mediator, many other tribes worked through the collective leadership of the village council members. Examples, the Angami, Ao, Tangkhul, Mao, Zeliangrong, Rengma, Lotha as well as others relied primarily on the collective efforts on building peace normally through their respective village councilor. A few tribes such as the Konyaks, the Chakhesangs, and the Sumis had their appointed mediators.

The Ao Naga Indigenous Approaches to Peace building

Aksu: There are several approaches to building peace or treaties according to the Ao traditions. *Aksu* is a customary practice, a kind of building peace, treaty and reconciliation. They observe such practices with great honour and dignity. It may vary from village to village but the meaning and application is identical in nature. In its most broad use *Aksu* signifies the breaking down of distrust, hatred, and hostility while affirming acceptance, forgiveness, peace and harmony. It also served to re-new and re-affirms their commitments for peaceful co-existence between or among villages and the frequent exchange of gifts symbolized these enduring relationships (Takatemjen, 1998, p. 118). According to Takatemjen, the spirit of *Aksu* is comprised of the following:

The spirit of *Aksu* means friendship, sharing, forgiveness, healing, peace, harmony, recognition, brotherhood, neighborliness, unity, acceptance, co-existence, reconciliation relationships (Takatemjen, 1998, p. 121).

Aksu is the most customary bound practice in the Ao society which can be seen as creating external diplomatic relations. The main objectives are: (a) To develop friendly relationships and peace between villages, clans and individuals: (b) To protect the tributary village by the principal village (a

larger village extends “fatherly care” to a smaller village). (c) To extend help and give refuge during wartime (S. Alemrenba, 1998, p. 63).

Types of *Aksu*

1. ***Putisu***: It is a major treaty. It is considered to be the highest and greatest treaty in the Ao Naga society. It is normally observed only once. It can be held between villages or between tribes. This is a treaty generally made by the defeated group or village after the feud is over. *Putisu* is a kind of socio-political sacrament, offering reconciliation with the warring groups or village. It signifies the end of head hunting and war (N. Talitemjen & A. Lanunungsang, 2005, p. 67).
2. ***Akangjungshi***: means re-binding or re-strengthening of socio-political relationship between the villages. Through this friendship (*Akangjungshi*), the inter-village feuds were often averted, and deepened their relationship with each other (L. Imti Aier, 1967, p. 38).
3. ***Nokyin tinu Aksu***: The literal meaning of *nokyin tinu aksu* means saved from head-hunting. This treaty is made if any village is saved or given protection by a certain village. *Nokyin tinu Aksu* is offered to the saving village by the saved village (N. Talitemjen & A. Lanunungsang, 2005, p. 69). Peace building methods such as negotiation, oath taking, paying war indemnity, sitting together, eating together, mediation, negotiation, reconciliation, are reflected in most Naga tribal traditions which offers universal principles (Yangkhau Vashum & Woba James, 2012, p. 135).

The lesson for peace building from this tradition is that by adopting and incorporating the principles of *Aksu*, we can contribute towards creating healthy relationships based on the recognition that within the web of humanity everyone is connected to all. These mechanisms were practiced even before the British colonialism and are continued to exist and function till today. The Ao Nagas place a high value on communal life and social harmony in relation to socio-economic and political dimensions. Maintaining positive relations within the society is a collective task in which everyone is involved. The principles of forgiveness and reconciliation, which the *Aksu* tradition advocates, provide us with strategies for peace building.

Tangkhul Naga tribes: Building peace Through Pukrila

Tangkhul Long, is a rank given to socio-political organization of the tribe, who usually monitored the event (Yangkahao Vashum, 2011, p. 1). The involvement of Pukrila in building peace as articulated by Yangkhao Vashium is that:

When the defeated camp retreats or surrenders, the victorious group must not pursue and attack them from behind. In the event that none of the parties could command a victory, *Pukreila* had the right to intervene and neutralize the fight. Holding the *Zeithing*, a traditional iron staff, she would step in between the two enemies and shout “Enough”! “Enough”! The intervention of *Pukreila* ultimately led to the end of the war and the dispute was settled. Under customary law *Pukreila* enjoyed special protection from both the villages. The provision of the law said, “You shall not harm a *Pukreilal*” Consequently, no one dared harm her; indeed, to harm *Pukreila* was to dig one’s own grave (Yangkahao Vashum, 2011, 4).

In Tangkhul tradition, a woman married to a man from another village was bestowed with the title, ‘*Pukreila*.’ This woman was given a specific role to serve in the community as peacemaker.¹ Interestingly enough we find that in Tangkhul society *Pukrila* played a great role which creates the basis for re-establishing social harmony. *Pukrila* is a position or an authority that is given to women to execute on peace mission with the warring group.²

Athium Tangkhul said, *Pukrila* means peace builder, negotiator, and mediator. She expresses that the Tangkhul women were given the authority to intervene between the warring groups. Even to this day, the Tangkhul women can go to the Village Council in the name of *Pukrila* and are allowed to give suggestions on building peace and treaty with the warring villages or enemy. Whenever, conflict arises within the relatives and in-laws, the Tangkhul women would form the group and approach the conflict family in the name of *Pukrila*. They would listen from both the parties, and negotiate and make peace and settle the issues. Nobody should deny the justice given by the *Pukrila*. This is the highest authority given to womenfolk to exercise the role on building peace among the Tangkhul Tribes. The role of *Pukrila* is still applicable to this modern society for social solidarity and building peace.³

The idea behind this world-view of *Pukrila* is that we are human because we live through others, we belong to each other, we participate and we share. A person with *Pukrila* is open and available to others and does not

feel threatened and she recognizes that they all belong to a greater whole. However, majority of the indigenous traditions are not gender inclusive in the primary structures of decision making. In such society, we need to create a framework that is a hybrid between indigenous Naga traditions and modern principles to ensure the human dignity and inclusion of all members of society both men and women.

Angami: Role of Elders on Building peace and Social Harmony

For the Angami Nagas when there is war or disputes between the two villages, an elderly man in the village would take the initiative to pursue peace. The Angami had great reverence for the elder of the village who was called as *Phichii* (elder). He was also the high priest through whom all the rituals for propitiation were conducted.⁴ About the role of building peace through elders J.H. Hutton says, “In deciding disputes questions of customs would be, and still are, referred naturally enough to the old men of the clan, and, as even the Angami has some respect for his elders, the decision of old men in regard to matters of custom is more or less final (J.H. Hutton, 1969, p. 143).

The account of Angami Nagas written by J. H. Hutton, is enthralling as he describes; war might occur occasionally for various reasons, it could be through a private feud, a land dispute, in fact from a rude remark to the taking of a head. It would ordinarily be ended by heavily losing the one side or the other. Perhaps both sides desire to cultivate peace and safety end. In that case, “the cessation of hostilities would be symbolized by the blunting of a dao, hammered upon a stone till the edge was destroyed.” In many cases one side would agree to pay annual tribute to the other, the tribute could be either a substantial payment of Mithun or salt (J.H. Hutton, 1969, pp.156-157).

Process of Building Peace and Social Harmony among the Angami Nagas

When war breaks out between the two villages the elders from both the warring villages would take the initiative for peace and reconciliation. The reconciliation process as expressed by Kezhalezo Angami that the elders of the two warring villages would meet and discussed to put an end their “differences and be reconciled for the sake of “younger generation” so both would agree to have “*Mhotsou Kekru*,” (eating and drinking together from the same cup and plate) and fixed a day. On the appointed day the two elders would come together and sit on the *Tehouba*” Both the elders hold

the bamboo mug with Zuto sitting with face to face and exchanged their cups and drinks and say to each other, from now onward “we have to leave our differences and feast together.” Again both would exchange their spears and say from now on “we shall not kill each other anymore.” After the ritual since they made peace both the villagers will eat together. “Once they have made peace through reconciliation, hostilities of war and killing of each other would cease (Razoulie Lasetso, 2008, pp. 114-115).

Chakhesang: Inter-marriage and Elders Goodwill Mission

A woman married to another village was responsible to make peace and reconciliation when war develops between the two villages. She was assigned for peace mission to her native village and make peace (Zunecho Thingo, 2008, pp. 134-135). **Elders on goodwill mission;** When villagers wanted to make peace and reconciliation with enemy village, elders were sent on good will mission for negotiation, and when they could come into terms, they exchanged spear and Naga dao. Then they agree never to shed blood or war against each other. As the symbol of peace treaty, they both invite and have feast and maintained friendship (p. 135). While making peace and reconciliation both the warring villages host for feast (*kuchenye*) and pledged not to wage war against one another and exchanged spear and shield (p. 138).

Lotha Naga: Building Peace and Social Harmony

When war arises between the two villages, messengers are sent to fix a day, and if both sides agree, the elders of the two villages meet on the path half way between the villages and settled the matters and exchange the drinks *Soko Zutsu* and eat together. In case of border disputes after justified by the elders the defeated village paid the ransomed in terms of Mithun and ornaments and make peace. Occasionally elders of the village go to the protector village which is called the father village with the gifts of pigs and have feast and reaffirm their friendship and build peace. *Senjumda*, which means reconciliation, is done between the warring villages by having feast meal this practice continues till today.⁵

The Lotha tribe has several mechanisms on building peace and social solidarity such as; *Exchange of vegetables and fruits;* by the women with the warring village. *Intermarriage:* woman who married to another village she plays the role of negotiation between the villages for peace. *Friendships:* this is done by man to man individually, making friends through one by one with the enemy’s village, and both will encourage others to make more

friends. *Free of labour*: the men folk go to warring village's fields and worked for them voluntarily. They share their food and rice beer to them and make peace. *Submissive*: when Lothas are defeated by the enemy village, they submit to that village which has defeated them and make peace.⁶

The Sumis: Peace building and Reconciliation

A place is fixed between the two villages at which the opposing hosts were to meet and make a formal peace. Each side prepares food and drinks in addition everyone has to prepare like chicken according to his capacity. They killed several pigs and prepare plenty of rice beer for the ceremony. On that peacemaking day, the cooked meat and rice are taken to the spot and the elders of the community would bring several gourds of liquor. Women were not allowed to attend the ceremony and even not to go to the fields on that peacemaking day (J.H.Hutton, 1968, pp. 179-182).

When the two parties met at the appointed place, a small group led by the chief from both the villages formed at a distance from the main body of the villagers. Both the villagers would bring the new fire sticks to make the fire. While in the presence of the villagers the select group from the rebels proceeds to make fire, using their new fire sticks and the single thong. When they start to make fire each rebel would say to each other (J.H.Hutton, 1968, pp. 179-182), "*Alhokesa kizhe a la wosala shipini*," which means, all the evils that had shall not be upon your head. After that both the parties collect the fire sticks and make the fire. Then they exchange the food and drinks and lay down their daos on the ground and stand upon the daos and start to eat and drink. The remaining food and drinks were eaten by the elders in the evening and everyone take bath and washed their clothes before they enter the village, because they observed that, all must remained clean that night (J.H.Hutton, 1968, pp. 179-182).

Strategies on Building Peace and Social Harmony

Indigenous approaches to building peace and social solidarity contribute positive aspect of peace and justice and contribute to modern judicial system, however, this oral tradition need to be preserved in written document. Because the wisdom of elderly Nagas is in the process of dying out who are familiar with the traditional approaches to building peace. Therefore, research and documentation which have been done in the past and present need to be developed and introduce with innovative ways and disseminate the knowledge to younger generations. We need to prepare training materials and develop curriculum on how indigenous approaches

will be transmitted in educational programmes. Trainers are needed with the wisdom of indigenous approaches on peace building to facilitate the learners. Networking among the educational institutions, professional teachers and non-governmental organizations for peace education should be encouraged. Thus the future generation will have opportunity to learn through the documentation and research work done on traditional approaches through different institutions.

Conclusion

The mechanisms of traditional approaches to peace building are ideally to encourage young Nagas for further investigation and research for future peaceful security and social cohesion. The Naga society which has been divided by different ideologies can be brought together through the indigenous approaches to building peace and social harmony. Thus, revitalizing the traditional approaches to peace building would help create forgiveness and reconciliation among the conflict ridden society. At present, there is an urgent need to disseminate this knowledge on indigenous approaches to building peace and social solidarity. Different methods of indigenous approaches to peace building provide many lessons which can incorporate into ongoing peace building process. Perhaps gender inclusive approaches must be encouraged in peace building. The best practice is to find a way to incorporate lessons that indigenous tradition has with progressive modern norms and standards for social cohesion, which constitute through the village Council and the participation of the Elders.

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Endnotes

¹ Interview with, Athium Tangkhul, Dimapur, September 2015

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Interview with Dietho o Pfukha, Dimapur, February 2016.

⁵ Interview with, Renathung Ezung, Council Chairman, Lotha Colony, Dimapur, 28th February 2016.

⁶ Interview with, Rev. Dr. P.C. Lotha, (Okotsu Village) Pastor, Mount Calvary Church, Bangalore, Feb. 2014. Negotiations between the warring villages of Longkhum and Okotsu. J. P. Mills, noted that these two villages were in a constant state of war. While, occasionally both the villages encroached each other's territories for cultivations. This made the harvest impossible for each other, unless negotiation is made between the two villages. Owing to this war, elders of both the villages called for feast on their boundary and made an agreement to remain in force till the harvest was over. The negotiation has made possible between the warring villages through the initiative of the elders from both the villages.

Analyzing the Views of the 14th Dalai Lama on Development

LIMAKUMLA

Abstract

The 14th Dalai Lama's ideas of development are the result of an evolutionary process conditioned by living circumstances along with the influence from the religion of Buddhism. His main objective is to achieve peace and happiness at both individual and community level. There are some important characteristics that the 14th Dalai Lama focuses upon to which he conveys the same that every human being should ponder on it in order to bring the development of peace to this world. It includes his views on gender where he emphasizes about the role of women in building peace both in family and society. He also looks on current issues like industrialization, sustainable development and environment with which he wants to convey the message to every dimension of the human society about the negativity of these aspects towards humanity. Furthermore, he analyses on the remedies that these issues can offer for the well being of all the sentient beings.

Keyword: *Development; Gender; Industrialization; Environment*

The 14th Dalai Lama born in the Amdo region of Tibet in 1935 took over the office of Dalai Lama as the Monk king of Tibet in his early age and not without reasons. It was the time when the Tibet was going through under chaos and uncertainties with the invasion of Chinese and their intention to liberalized Tibet from the age-old practice of feudal system. In 1959, after the defeat of the Tibetan uprising by the Chinese, 14th Dalai Lama got no option but to leave Tibet in order to serve the country from exile which he and his ministers thought was the best decision. After he settled in India, he established democratic form of government in exile for the operation of both internal and external issues of Tibet.

Initially like his predecessors, the 14th Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso's main aim was to educate his people with the Buddhist philosophy and religion but gradually his ideas and knowledge were widened and goes beyond

preaching religious principles to his people. Apart from acquiring extensive knowledge in Buddhist studies and practice, the 14th Dalai Lama studied subatomic physics, cosmology, biology and psychology. His contacts with the westerners broadened his interest beyond Buddhism and changes started taking place in various dimensions. His contribution towards development of peace in global level receives great appreciation from the world community and his popularity spread tremendously after he received the noble peace prize in 1989.

The 14th Dalai Lama holds a unique way in defining the concept of development. His views towards development differ from the mainstream approaches which mainly deal with economic development, although he never disagrees with its contribution for the wellbeing of the people. His ideas on development did not simply evolve out from a fixed time. It developed along with the influence from the Buddhist philosophy, Chinese invasion of Tibet and his contact with the west. The 14th Dalai Lama broadly divided his views on development into two themes- individual development and community or world development keeping peace and happiness as its goal. In terms of individual development, the 14th Dalai Lama always emphasizes that in order to develop inner peace it is necessary to acquire human values like compassion, forgiveness, mindfulness, tolerance and altruism. While for community or world development, every individual should have the universal responsibility for world peace and should be aware of interdependency. Both the individual and community development are interconnected and both have the responsibility to bring harmony to this world. The 14th Dalai Lama's approach to development cannot be easily achieved as it needs constant realization of how we can keep oneself happy by not harming the people and sentient being around us. Some of the most important developmental aspects in which he writes are on gender, industrialization, sustainable development and environment.

The 14th Dalai Lama's views on gender

Basically, men are considered as the superior and the dominant member in the society. However, this statement is subjected to debate in the present context with the development of knowledge and economy where physical strength is least applicable to judge the superiority, giving a new hope for women to fight for their rights. In this context, for the development of peace in both family and society it has become an urgent need to promote gender equality in various aspects. On this cause, in many occasions the 14th Dalai Lama talks about the promotion of gender equalities as it has become a

major issue for the maintenance of harmony in the society.

Many a time, the 14th Dalai Lama is biased when it comes to the issue of feminists, but, for a genuine cause. He considers himself as a feminist and wishes that if the Tibetan community need a future Dalai Lama he will be happy to reincarnate in the form of female. He gives great credit to his mother for sowing the seed of compassion in his early years. His base argument is that the seed of compassion comes from mother. He believes that the foundation of human inner or ethical values evolved out from mother or woman who cares her son or daughter during their childhood. If a child receives proper physical and mental care during the early age, the whole life that person will remain more kind-hearted. He further expressed that women are more sensitive biologically and time has come for woman to take active part for promoting awareness to widen the human values at the global community level. In this regard, Mairead Corrigan Maquire a Nobel Laureate commented that, “for the real change the woman of today’s generation should bring new agenda to the front by overcoming the war, nuclear weapons, and change the old policy, and initiate human security in a higher level.”¹ The 14th Dalai Lama believes that in this 21st Century if given a chance to woman to rule the world, the world will be in much better place to live in. Stressing on this, on one occasion the 14th Dalai Lama declared that he could be reincarnated in the form of a woman and to which it became a scoop for the media all over the world.

He further expresses that, “I feel that education alone cannot solve all our existing problems. More emphasis should be given on ‘compassion’ to which women are basically more sensitive and compassionate.... ‘female rule’ will be more suitable for today’s setup” (Claude, 2008). Jody Williams² argues that men are too afraid to connect their head to their heart so in this present context, men should learn to share the space that he dominates and women also should not only talk about women issues but more of human issues likewise and for the concern of our planet. For instance, diseases like AIDS, cancer, do not distinguish between genders. Likewise, if a nuclear bomb is dropped it will kill both men and women irrespective of differences on gender. Therefore it is right time for women to take initiative in setting a new agenda for human issues where every human being has a responsibility to bring peace for the humanity concern.

The 14th Dalai Lama’s view on industrialization

One definition of Industrialization is “the use of mechanical contrivances and inanimate energy (fossil fuels and water power) to replace or augment

human power in the extraction, processing, and distribution of natural resources or products derived there from” (k. Davis, 1955, p. 255). People started to invent new technologies which make life easier and advance in many aspects. In the olden days the life was very simple and people were self-sufficient and were contented with life and live an egalitarian society. But with the coming of industrialization things started to change which has brought significant impact in the life of the people. Initially, the coming of new development in the society was very welcoming and inviting to people as it made their life easier and comfortable. But gradually due to rapid industrialization and consumption of natural resources, it started affecting the ecosystem bringing destruction and problems not only to mankind but to all the sentient beings. Human beings are responsible for the degradation of natural resources, for creating the hierarchy between rich and poor and also for bringing the competitive nature of arm race among different nations for power. Today people are gradually accepting the consequences that are caused by rapid industrialization but still human beings so selfish to part with the easy way of life provided by the new technological development. In this scenario, the 14th Dalai Lama brings forth his argument through his peculiar way of approaching with a hope that in the near future people will start thinking seriously for the safety of the planet.

The 14th Dalai Lama articulated that thousands of years ago human beings put all their hopes on prayers. However, with the development of science and technology people shifted their hopes and attention on the production of scientific and technological development. When industrialization began in Europe and spread to other parts of the globe, people were possessed with limited knowledge about the complex interrelationships of the natural world. Therefore, in the name of progress, animals were hunted to extinction, forests were cut down, and waterways were polluted by factories and industrial plants. “Many of the earth’s habitats, animals, plants, insects and even micro-organisms that we know to be rare may not be known at all by future generations” (Tenzin Gyatso, 2010, p. 63). But as science has advanced and our understanding of the delicate balance of the natural world has grown, the excuse of ignorance is no longer applicable today.

The present state of Tibet is one of the best examples one can look upon in order to understand the consequences caused by rapid industrialization. Tibet which is known as the ‘roof of the world’ was a hub of natural resources that was safeguarded by the peace loving people who lived in harmony with nature for centuries. Unfortunately, with the Chinese invasion the Tibetan people and the land of Tibet came under the control of the Chinese

government. Gradually, the Chinese started exploiting the natural resources by implementing various economic developments in the fragile land of Tibet. Due to rapid industrialization, the de-glaciations has been observed and the temperature on the Tibetan plateau is increasing much more than the adjacent lowland areas. Many South Asian countries depend on Tibet for water as the rivers like the Yangtze and yellow rivers, the Mekong, the Salween, the Brahmaputra, and the Indus all originated from Tibet. The livelihood of not only the Tibetans and Chinese but the whole of south Asia are in the state of vulnerable if the consumption of natural resources is not controlled. It became an urgent need to understand that saving Tibet is not only important for Tibetan people but it will benefit millions of population who are depending on the resources of Tibet. Therefore, the 14th Dalai Lama always approaches the whole community to be sensitive with the issue of Tibet for a promising future.

The 14th Dalai Lama's view on sustainable development

The 14th Dalai Lama views sustainable development from two dimensions i.e. external and internal. It is a well known fact that with the establishment of modern science and technology over the centuries, our living standard has improved externally. But how long? People are realizing the mistakes of rapid industrial development and working towards a more sustainable way with an agenda to safeguard this planet for the future generation. The 14th Dalai Lama says that “it's not too late for us to have a more sustainable relationship with our planet” (Tenzin Gyatso, 2010, p. 65). He expresses that it is natural for people in the developing world to aspire the same level of comfort enjoyed by those in the developed world. But with the global population rising rapidly, it is clear that if we do not change the patterns of consumption of what we consider “advanced” today, humanity's thirst for natural resources will become unsustainable. It is very important therefore, that the nations which are pursuing such rapid economic growth do not blindly follow the models of development they see in the more affluent countries. Instead, countries such as China, India and Brazil should take the lead in finding new and more sustainable avenues of development. In this regard the 14th Dalai Lama considers the economic model of microfinance to be more environments friendly.

The 14th Dalai Lama argues that practically sustainable development can happen only when human mentality changes from inside. One needs to understand that unless we develop a sort of compassionate attitude

towards others wellbeing, it is not possible to bring changes in the society. He further expressed that if our inner self is educated with the medicine of love and compassion towards all sentient beings, automatically the external development will be sustained. The 14th Dalai Lama further says “although attempting to bring...internal transformation is difficult, it is the only way ...even if it is not achieved during my own lifetime that is all right” (Tenzin Gyatso, 2010, p. 75).

The 14th Dalai Lama’s view on environment as an urgent agenda

Being a Buddhist, the 14th Dalai Lama always reflect upon the Buddhist teachings while stressing on the issue of environment. He argues that the concern for the environment is a natural development of Buddhist teachings and he further put forwards the argument that traditionally, Tibetans maintained a sustainable approach towards natural resources. The 14th Dalai Lama’s concern towards the environmental issues is not a sudden outcome out of a fixed time, but it goes back to history where in Tibet, for centuries the rulers use to issue edicts for the preservation of environment. For instance, plundering of wild life was prohibited and people were kept in duty to look after the eggs of the migratory birds during their nestling season in Tibet. All these acts shows how the Buddhist belief is heavily endowed in the mind of the Tibetans who see all the sentient beings having the same feeling, desire and same right to live like human beings.

Moreover, the importance of environment in global level emerged only in mid-1980’s when the 14th Dalai Lama identified the interconnection of the entire world. Since then, there is an increasing concern in him with the environmental related issues and started his mission to save the environment of the planet earth. The 14th Dalai Lama begins with the environmental issue of Tibet which is degrading under the acts of the Chinese government by opening it to the international communities. Therefore one of his main agenda towards environment is to make Himalaya as the zone of peace in which there would be no armed forces or weapons of mass destruction. The 14th Dalai Lama’s vision for the awareness of environment is not limited only for this generation but for the future common wellbeing as well. The present century is very crucial in the history of mankind, as the present generation will decide whether or not there will be a future where all the sentient beings will have peaceful co-existence with the nature.

The 14th Dalai Lama emphasized that “if we have a genuine sense of

universal responsibility as our central motivation, then our relations with the environment and with all our neighbours will be well balanced” (Tenzin Gyatso, 2010, p. 68). Therefore, it is time to realize the importance of environment by every individual, society, state and nation to work collectively for the interest of the entire world. The developed countries should start co-operating with the developing countries and share the benefits in equal terms. Genuine cooperation cannot, however, be imposed by force but it can only emerge from mutual trust and respect for one another. The failure of the 2009 Copenhagen Summit on the global environment was, sadly, an example of how, when parties fail to look beyond their own narrow self-interest, cooperation becomes impossible.

Conclusion

The 14th Dalai Lama’s contribution of wisdom for the cause of developing happiness and peace for humanity is clearly seen through his life and work. His writings deepened along with the process of time giving both the individual and society a holistic approach to see the world as interdependent and a home for every sentient being. His writings have challenged mankind to take up universal responsibilities in order to build a world based on peace and harmony.

Today, his audience has increased to millions and his popularity got widespread to different parts of the world like different religious communities and secular institutions. The main reason for his recognition in the global level is because of his teachings, focus to develop a sense of common responsibility for promoting universally world peace. The 14th Dalai Lama often cites a favorite verse, found in the writings of the eighth century Buddhist saint Shantideva: “For as long as space endures, and for as long as living beings remain, until then may I too abide to dispel the misery of the world.”³ Therefore, with this understanding he conveys a message to the world that “the time has come to try a different approach..... difficult to achieve a worldwide movement of peace of mind, but it is the only alternative” (Tenzin Gyatso, 2010, p. 75).

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¹ The 14th Dalai Lama meets Nobel Laureates, 27th October, 2009.

² An American political activist known around the world for her work in banning anti-personnel landmines, her defense of human rights – especially those of women. She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997.

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Influence of Self-Concept Under Culture Setup of Chhattisgarh on Impulse Buying Behaviour of Consumer

SANJAY KUMAR YADAV

Abstract

Purchase of goods by every consumer is always unique, personal and emotional in nature. There are various differences in the characteristic of each and every consumer and he buys the goods and services based on his personal, self-concept and emotional wants. This study explores the self-concept of buying and effect of cultural setup on impulsive buying behaviour of consumers. The individual concept, family, friends and group of a people affect the impulse buying behaviour will be discussed. Researchers have highlighted that in impulsive buying, consumers are particularly influenced by other people who are standing at the store during shopping. Due to the innovation of debit cards, credit cards, e-shopping and television channels impulse buying has been made very easier.

Keywords: *Impulse Purchasing; Culture; Consumer Behaviour; Self-concept*

Introduction

In South Asian countries as well as in American countries impulse buying has become a recognised phenomenon. According to a survey by Mogelonsky (1998), in 1997 alone, it was estimated that consumers have spend 4.2 billion on candy and magazine. But the changing nature of economy, cultural changes specifically in India, backed with liberalization of economy and GDP growth rate have provided an opportunity to the consumers for impulse buying. Due to the fast growth of economy and industrialization, it has reached the small cities and states of India. Past researches have indicated the major factors which influence the impulse buying behaviour of consumers in the presence of family and friends (Leo, 2005). Changing scenario of traditional retailing has changed the buying activities, in which traditional retailers used various technologies like merchandising, store design and simple offers to increase impulse buying (Hoyer & MacInnis, 1997). In areas like Chhattisgarh, consumers followed traditional shopping and backwardness of the economy, buying behaviour was very simple.

In the present scenario, due to the fast changes of technology (internet, television channels and mobile phone) and economical changes, behaviour of consumers are changing rapidly for both products and services in this region.

Impulse Buying

The meaning of impulse buying is the purchasing is unplanned and was not anticipated by the shopper before entering the shop (Kollat & Willett, 1967; Prasad, 1975). In other words, purchasing occurs by rapid decision making of the consumer. Impulse purchasing take place spontaneously in which little bit of information is required, compare to nominal decision time lapse in similar case of non impulse purchase decision (D.Antoniee & Shenson, 1973). Women in groups can purchase more of the products impulsively in comparing to individuals because their buying behaviour (mood) can depends on the purchase of others, if there is no pre-plan. And the reason is because, they purchase the products with little information. To minimize the uncertainty associated with the product performance, they discusses with one another in the store (Lee & Kacen, 2008). The presence of family friends and others also impact brand choices. It is observed that consumer's preferences are changed in the presence of family/friends. Rook and Fisher (1995) developed a nine item measures of impulsiveness related to trait behaviour which was significantly correlated with impulse buying. They also found that consumer belief on impulse buying tendencies are based on social acceptance. If it is not acceptable in the society, then these tendencies can be thwarted.

Theoretical Background

Consumer's economical status, time, physical and mental effort influences the buying behaviour (Stern, 1962; Rook, 1987; Rook & Gardener, 1993) found that acting on impulse is socially appropriate and rational in nature. In impulse buying consumers' observe/ watch the behaviour of others and take it as visible indicators for social acceptance. Fishbein and Ajzens (1975) stated that consumers assume that intentions of behaviour are not only determined by attitude but also by the motivation to their company with social norms. According to psychologists and consumer researchers, there is no need of physical presence of social audience for impulse buying, their physical presence can be imagined (Aribarg, Arora & Bodur, 2002). Imagining the presence of other individual alone one can engage himself in different buying behaviour (Moreault & Folingstad, 1978; Taylor & Schneider, 1989; Tice et. al, 2001). Individual consumer's impulse buying

is influenced by his own motivation, preferences, needs and his right. He gives the priority of his individual goal and takes the rational decision of his relationship with others (Triandis, 1994). It is expected that social pattern along with self-concept influence the impulse purchasing behaviour through its effect on a person's self identity, his responsive to normative influences and his need. In a collectivist culture, the preferences of group and hormone leads to a capacity to repress personal attribute in certain setting. In collectivist culture, children are also socialised to control their behaviour on impulse buying (Ho, 1994). People also shift their buying behaviour according to what is right. In a collectivist culture, generally are people seen to be matured and put aside their personal feelings and act according to the society (Triandis, 1995). People also control their emotion in comparison to individualist culture (Pottor, 1998; Russel &Yik 1996; T Sai & Levenson, 1997) and harmony can be maintained within the group on the basis of ability of its members to manage their emotions. Collectivist communities promotes their common goal and for them social harmony are over individual interests.

In regions like Chhattisgarh, the community's bases are more collectivist in nature where self-concept is based on interdependence and have formed their groups as a community. Their purchasing behaviours are based on group behaviour.

Cultural setup

Culture is a shared beliefs, customs, behaviours, and attitudes of a society. Culture of a particular person prescribes the way in which he or she should live. This way of living has a huge effect on the things you purchase. Triandis (1995) stated that collectivism is a social pattern which consists of individuals who see themselves as an integral part of one or more collectives or in-groups; it may be family and co-workers. People who are followers of collectivist culture are often motivated by norms and duties imposed by the in-group. These types of people always give priority to the goals of the in-group, and they always try to emphasize their connectedness with the in-group. He also defined that just like collectivism, individualism is a social pattern which consists of individuals who see themselves as autonomous and independent. People who are more individualistic are motivated by their own preferences, needs, and rights, give priority to their personal goals, and emphasize on a rational analysis of their relationships with others (Triandis, 1994). It is expected that social patterns influence impulsive buying behaviour through their effect on a person's self-identity,

responsiveness to normative influences, and the need (or lack of need) to suppress internal beliefs in order to act appropriately.

In a collectivist culture, there is a tendency to focus on group preferences and group harmony which leads to an ability to repress internal (personal) attributes in certain settings. According to the right context situation, people in collectivist cultures often shift their behaviour. Triandis (1995) found that in a collectivist culture, a person is generally seen as more matured when he or she puts personal feelings aside and acts in a socially appropriate manner rather than in a way he/she behaves consistently with his or her personal attitudes and beliefs.

According to Potter (1988) Russell & Yik (1996) Tsai & Levenson (1997), collectivist cultures also emphasize the control and moderation of one's emotions more so than individualistic cultures. Culture influences both "feeling rules," on how an individual interprets the environment and "display rules" which emotions are expressed and how they are expressed (Ekman, 1972). According to Ho (1994), in a collectivist culture, people learn to control their impulsive tendencies more than that of individualistic cultures. In a collectivist culture, children are made to socialize to control their impulses at an early age. Rook (1987) has written that in an individualistic culture, people often ignore the potential negative consequences of their impulsive buying behaviour. Kashima (et al., 1992) in their research found that the attitude-behaviour relationship is weaker in collectivist than in individualist cultures (Jacqueline J. Kacen, 2002).

Consumer behaviour

Marketing professionals are always keen to know the answer of situational factors like why, how, where, etc., and they get the answers, they know that there are better chances to create and communicate products where people would want to buy. Such study is all about the study of consumer behaviour. Consumer behaviour consists of several factors such as—personal, situational, psychological, and social factors because people do not want to purchase the product but they want to purchase the bundle of satisfaction. People buy the products, use them, and dispose them. This behaviour of people is called consumerism or consumer behaviour. Marketing professionals want to find out, what consumer says about potentially new products and what they think about the difference in these products.¹

Purpose of research

The purpose of this study is to identify and gain understanding of the influence

of the self- concept of consumer under the cultural setup towards impulse buying consumption of Chhattisgarh. The research study will improve our understanding of influence on this concept of consumers' attitude towards impulse buying. This will help retailers by improving their decision making and marketing planning capabilities on the basis of consumer thinking and their self thinking. This study will also be helpful for consumers to understand their own buying behaviour under the cultural setup.

Rational and Significance of Study

Though the survey have been done to measure the cultural effect but this a research for Chhattisgarh region to evaluate the effect on impulse buying where consumerism in the region is going in the upward direction. Due to the fastest growth of industrialization there is good economic condition of the middle level consumer. This study is quite relevant to measure the changes of cultural effect of emerging consumer's preferences towards impulse purchasing which can be useful for the consumer to better understand the consumer buying and can make the strategy to the marketing program according to the behaviour of the consumer. After the literature review of various researchers, methodology and design has been finalised.

Literature review

The Literature review elaborates the facts related to present study which helped to find out the cultural effect on impulse purchasing behaviour. Kecen and Lee (2002) found that the relationship between the trait buying impulsiveness and impulse purchasing behaviour in the cultural comparison of individuals and collectivists. It was that individualist are more driven in comparison of collectivists on the trait purchasing impulsiveness by making an impulse buying.

Keeshima (et.al, 1992) found that in a collectivist culture the attitude and behaviour relationship is weaker in comparison to individualist cultures, and suggested that in impulse trait behaviour relationship, culture play a moderate role.

Triandiss (1995) defined the relationship of any individual on the basis of collectivism as a social pattern. He stated that any individual see himself as an integral part of groups like family, friends and co-workers. In a collectivist culture, people are motivated by norms and duties which is imposed by groups. Triandiss (1994) stated that in individualist culture people are always motivated by their own preferences, needs, rights and their personal goals.

Veplaniken and Herabad (2001) studied the relation of emotional attachment with impulse purchasing behaviour discovered that they are neither based on highly involvement of consumer nor on an analytic process but emotion is often associated with impulse buying.

Ramesh Chaturvedi (2013) found that in store, factors play a significance role to influencing the impulse buying behaviour of consumer but extent of influence is different because of different factors.

Shah Mital, Guha Sanjay and Shrivastava Urvashi (2012) said that the relation between consumer impulse purchase tendency and factors like window display floor merchandising and promotional signage are very strong in Chhattisgarh.

Kim Triandis, Agiy Cib Asi, Chai & Yoon (1994) have compared the western individual society and their culture with East Asian collectivist societies. They have highlighted differences of various activities between individualists and collectivists.

Stern (1962), argued that impulse buying largely depends on resources such as money, time, physical and mental effort. Person's moods could also influence their impulse buying.

Vohs and Baumeister (2013) stated that people have a finite amount of resources to regulate their impulsive behavior and these resources may be depleted by situational forces leading high to impulsiveness.

Hoch and Lowenstein (1991) studied that there is a tendency for consumers to buy impulsively when they are hedonistic and enjoy shopping. Impulse behavior is also positively related to lack of effort or self-control. These results are consistent with the statement of Rose (2007) that impulse behaviour is fundamentally a self-regulatory problem.

Vohs and Baumeister (2013) also suggested that impulse buying stems from an emotional response and involves temptation. It is distinct from compulsive buying and also given that in a negative mood, individuals may lapse in self-control to balance their moods.

Baumeister (2002) suggested that impulse buying and self-control personality are just two sides of the same coin. Impulsive buying is simply the loss of one's self-control or the surrender to temptation. Thus, individual-level analyses have dominated research on the nature and antecedents of impulsive buying.

Objective

1. To study the cultural effect on buying behaviour in Chhattisgarh.
2. To study the role of self-concept on impulse buying activities in Chhattisgarh.

Research Methodology

The Research Methodology adopted in this research paper are:

1. Literature review that is secondary data based research
2. An exploratory research that is primary data, participant observation in supermarkets and Big Bazar of Raigad, Bilaspur, Korba, Raipur, Bhilai and Durg.

Self-concept

Marketing professionals have had better luck linking ones self-concept to his or her buying behaviour. Self-concept indicates how a person sees himself, be it positive or negative.

Most of the marketing researchers believe that consumers buy products to enhance how they feel about themselves, after studies of various literature and researches under the cultural setup, it has been found that culture has influenced regional as well as the national level (Kim et al, 1994; Schwartz, 1994; Singlis & Brown, 1995; Trandis, 1994, 1995). Triandis (1994) has stated that each and every one of us posses (carry) both individualists and collectivists tendencies. The difference between both is their concepts. In collectivist culture, people are more likely to focus on interdependent self-concept, while people who belong to individualist culture should be likely focused on more independent self-concepts in the given environment. By observation of culture, it is found that in Chhattisgarh, the self-concepts are interdependent and impulse buying nature, is based on collectivist culture.

On the basis of nature self-concept can be categorise in two parts (Singlis, 1995).

1. Interdependent self-concept
2. Independent self-concept

Interdependent self-concept

1. The concept which is based on external influencing factors, public features like roles and relationship.

3. Belonging to collectivist culture and fitting in it.
4. Actionable and occupying its proper place.
5. Environment in indirect communication and reading the minds of others.

Independent self-concept

1. This concept is based on internal ability of a person is thoughts and feelings.
2. Unique nature and self expression.
3. Personal goal oriented and realization of internal attributes
4. Directly related in communication

At the regional level of Chhattisgarh, it is expected that the measurement of self-concept in this culture at individual level should be parallel to another region, but not identical in any analysis.

Although the self-concept of a person belonging to cultural reviles the part of that culture would be internalized by that person's individual nature and differences cannot be fully explained because the influence of social institution may be raised of this differences which influence the desire of a person hedonically in favour of a group and fulfil his goal. Thus in Chhattisgarh, across the society, expectation is to find a pattern of trait behaviour relationships apart from differential cultural effect of society which should be weaker than the regional and national level.

General discussion

As Rook stated, the nature of impulse buying is universal and if we apply it in a local level like Chhattisgarh, we find that a number of cultural factors influence the impulse purchasing. Journal of Consumer Psychology emphasized that cultural differences play an important role and needs to be considered in the theory of consumer behaviour. Betty and Ferrel (1998) suggested that the profile of shoppers. Who are highly impulsive should be identified so that the promotional activity of the individual can be targeted at the regional level. Jael Weline, J. Kacen Julie Anne Lee (2002) stated that in fact, profile may vary along with the change of culture. If Chhattisgarh, is considered in this case, there are some factors which encourage the impulsive buying is in need to be renewed attention and it is a matter of concern to investigate these factors. In detail how these factors support the impulse

purchasing? And among those factors which one strongly influences with changing the cultural context? Among all the factors, World Wide Web is also a factor which is playing an important role in impulse buying. Due to the increasing socio economy and fast growth of industrialisation, Consumers of some districts like Raigad, Bilaspur Korba, Raipur, Bhilai and Durg are frequently using shopping online the products impulsively.

Research study attempts to understand consumer impulse buying behaviour based solely on Chhattisgarh region on the point-of-view is incomplete. Buying culture of Chhattisgarh emphasis not on the self, individual needs and desires, but purchasing is based on collectivist notions of the self, which emphasize interdependent nature, emotional control and moderation, and needs are based on group desires. The culture of group desire discourages impulse buying behaviour. Rook (1987) correctly stated that impulse buying behaviour are presumed to be largely universal in nature, but particular culture of the region affects the local market conditions, systems of exchange and various cultural forces greatly impact how consumers operate on impulse. Donovan et al., (1994) Rook & Gardner, (1993) have explored the influence of mood and emotions. Rook & Fisher (1995) Weun et al., (1998) has given their view on trait impulsiveness. Dittmar (et al., 1995) emphasized on consumer impulse buying behaviour, and stated that none have looked at cultural influences such as collectivist and individualist tendencies; their main focus was concept of buying based on independent-interdependent self-concept.

Findings and Conclusion

There are huge effect of culture in this region and inter self-concept and group purchasing behaviour is the most effective factor of impulse purchasing. Consumer wants to minimize the risk factors associated with the products and services, so family, friends and others who are standing on the store affects the impulse buying.

In case of online shopping, for a moment, they take the suggestion from others for the reliability of the product. Interdependent self-concept influences the impulse purchasing where public factors, status, role and relationship play an influential role on impulse purchasing.

Managerial Implication

This study can help the business professionals, retailers and marketing professionals to frame strategies relevant to their merchandise. Furthermore, the present study is restricted to Chhattisgarh region. The results of this

study may provide different results in other metro and non-metro cities of India because other metro and non-metro cities may possibly enjoy certain cultural peculiarities.

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Rethinking Sustainability in the Context of Jhum Cultivation among the Ao-Nagas

RONGSENZULU JAMIR

Abstract

Natural resources play an indispensable and an important role in the livelihood of the people, be it in an urban setting or a rural one. Local communities have been utilizing and maintaining a sustainable way built through an in-built institutional mechanism. The traditional utilization on analysis not only reflects a 'diverse resource-use pattern but also a wise way of maintaining the biological diversities. To understand this utilization, one should at one point or the other ask- Who are the people using the natural resources more affluently? Who are paying the costs of overuse? What are the different environmental ideologies prevalent? Local knowledge or informal knowledge is the product of centuries of experiences acquired and developed in a spectrum of information, skills and technology on natural resources. The paper attempts to deploy the conservation and fertility management practices like soil trapping, crop rotation, in-situ manuring, construction of diversion ditches, etc. The paper argues that sustainability using indigenous production method is a consequence of practical knowledge that embodies sustainable principles; it furthermore, argues that we who have distanced ourselves from the nature considerably through technological advances must made an effort to relate to it once more.

Keywords: *Jhum cultivation; Indigenous knowledge; Ao-Nagas; Sustainability*

I. Introduction

The Ao tribe, under Mokokchung district, is one of the major tribe of the Naga family. Tradition says that the Aos sprung up from *Longtrok* which means six stones. They then founded the *Jungliyimti* village where they settled and stayed for a considerable period of time. In course of time, they crossed the *Dikhu* River by a cane bridge leaving other people behind. These people (the Aos) who went ahead leaving others behind came to be known as *Aor* or *Ao*, which means going or gone.

The Aos after crossing the river settled in Soyim which is known as Ungma village today, and then moved again to another place called Koridang. From Koridang, groups of people scattered to different directions and founded new villages. Gradually, as population grew they eventually spread over the six ranges of the land and founded as many new villages.¹ Among the Aos the villages are organized into units according to their proximity to the various ranges, namely: Asetkong, Changkikong, Japukong, Langpangkong, Ongpangkong, and Tsurangkong.

The soils found in Mokokchung district is mostly alluvial soil, non-laterite red soil and forest soil. The cultivated area of the district is 18,433 hectares and the irrigated area is 4,003 hectares.² Natural resources play an indispensable and an important role in the livelihood of the people, be it in an urban setting or a rural one. The rich and diverse natural resources which is a major tool that pivots and accelerate the economic and industrial growth of a country. With the rapidly increasing growth of agglomerated population and economic expansion it has led to an overall scenario of increased pressure on the natural resources way beyond the subsistence level. The inborn quality of ingenuity and the cleverness of man have led to an increased unsustainable pressure and impact on land, water, forests, air and other resources. This in turn, has given rise to a competition of both inter and intra species fatal competition; the former one being the most severe. The competition has trickled many sad scenes around us such as the competition among the individuals themselves, among groups and even among nations to control and command the available existing resources.

Traditionally, local communities have been utilizing and maintaining a sustainable way built through an in-built institutional mechanism (indigenous knowledge) and this conservation dictum is now adopted in policy making process for a sustainable development of resources and livelihoods. The traditional utilization, its analysis and study not only reflects a diverse resource-use pattern but also a wise way of maintaining the biological diversities. Sustainable development therefore have gained momentum for improving the livelihood conditions of the millions of tribal and rural poor through an optimum utilization also keeping in view of the further generations to follow. Development planning therefore have prioritized this importance and to proper management through different policies.

The Aos are predominantly dependent on agriculture and have been practicing Jhum cultivation (Slash and Burn) even before the gospel reached the region³; it is told according to oral tradition that the Aos have been

cultivating rice since the *Longterok* times. The annual area under shifting cultivation in Nagaland is 190 (Sq.Kms.)⁴ ‘The length of jhum cultivation says a lot about the village and its resources...a long jhum cycle indicates that a villages has a large land resources compared to its population’ (Toy cited in Cairns 2015, p. 471).

Among the Aos the customary body (*Putu Menden*) and kinship association play basic principles in controlling the land mass within the village territory. The operation and administration of the land therefore is determined by the same.

Jhum Cultivation among the Aos

George and Yhome (2008) state that “around 75% of village populace still practices the traditional system of agriculture i.e, Jhum or shifting cultivation and there is no terrace system of cultivation. Jhum is the chief form of agricultural practice of the villages and it involves complicated customary laws to regulate the practice of Jhum cultivation”. Among the Ao-Nagas, in most of the villages, the land pattern can be divided into- cultivable land, forest land, and inhabited land. Another pattern found in most of the villages again can be divided as: the village land or *Yim li* (*Yim-* village; *li-* land; managed by the village council), the clan and lineage land (owned and managed by the clan and lineage members) and the private owned land (managed and cultivated by the individual owner)

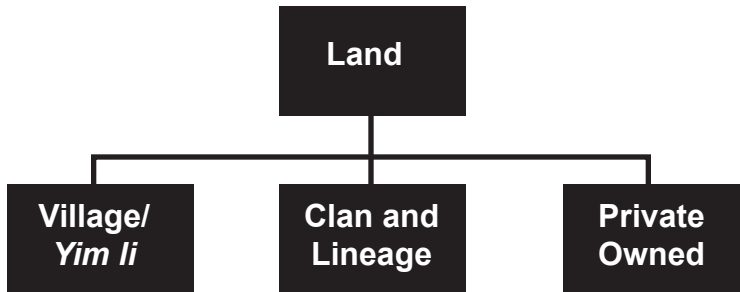


Diagram 1: Land Pattern among the Aos.

The Nagaland Village and Area Council Act was passed in 1978 by the State government. Through this the village council were/are given the administrative Power and Duties at the village or local level: and such bodies can be called as ‘Indigenous Cultural Institutions (ICIs)’ (George and Yhome, 2008). Among the Aos, they are village councils (*Putu Menden*), who are elected representatives of elders who regulate and see into the control of the natural resources.

Kinship and kin ties plays a major role in determining the land ownership and even to cultivate the land. Both consanguine as well as affine play their part in giving plot of land for cultivation or in establishing the right for the same; however, the kinship relationship established by the former is seen more in terms of accessibility and effectiveness; one reason explaining this may be because of the practice of patrilineality or patriarchy. For example, the first priority is always given to the consanguine owned lands for cultivation and if the elder brother(s) has already been allocated the best land/fertile land then the younger one(s) may consider the affinal owned land. Thus, the land allocation and its divisions among the clan group becomes a matter of allocation- a division among his subordinates by the oldest living man of the clan or lineage group (as he is regarded the head of the whole clan or lineage). Sometimes, certain lands are asked from the wealthy ones who have multiple fields on the same plot of land, this process is called *alumopo*. On other times, the wealthy parents bequeath off their fields even to their daughter child/children, this process is known as *aloso*.

The shifting cultivation among the hill tribes are characterized by the following procedural operations (Thangchungnungain Jha, 1997):

1. Selection of plot / Allotment of Jhum Plot

Among the AOs the *Putu Menden* or the village council decides the site or the plot for cultivation every year. This particular site is cultivated for two consecutive years. After the harvest in the new field another site for cultivation is selected; thus most of the cultivators cultivate two plots of field at the same year (*Lodi and Maipu*). The process is a cyclic one ranging from 8 to 15 years, depending on the availability and vastness of the villages' land mass. It is impossible for any individual to select and cultivate in a separate plot of land even in his/her individual owned land. This process maintains the ecological balance and subsistence in the villages.

2. The process of site preparation

This starts as early as November when the announcement is made by the village council (the head/*awla*), with most of the activities centred in December and continues till January. It is believed that the earlier the clearing of the forest and the trees, the better the burn and thus the more yield. The slashed forest is burnt in February last week or the first week of March, when the winds have picked and when the slashed trees have been well dried. The surrounding forests are detached from the slashed one by clearing the forest and making a clear line around removing any fallen trees,

plants, branches, leaves and twigs of approximately 15 to 20 feet to avoid burning the other forest land.

3. Planting and weeding

The planting starts as soon as the day of the mass burning of the slashed forest. Planting of the rice grains and other crops in the field happens in April.

The weeding among the Aos is called *tuabi*. This is usually a three time process, sometimes it extends upto even four; generally the first weeding starts as early as May, which is followed by the second one in either June or July which involves spraying salt mixed with water as a weedicide, with the help of a hand driven pump. The third weeding is called *rupra*, where the smaller rice crops are taken out along with the weeds; it is done in August.

4. Harvesting

Harvesting is mostly done in October. Harvesting is done by individual family or by socio-economic groups called *yangyu* or *pangpu*.⁵

Annual Calendar followed in olden times

It is important to look at the calendar followed earlier as it not only explains the activities done in each month but the calendar also point to how the activities are centered upon various agricultural activities. Given below are the meanings and activities done in each month:

Table 1: *Annual calendar followed in olden times*⁶

Sl. No.	Months/ <i>Ita</i>
1	<i>Anjet Ita</i>
2	<i>Jameja Ita</i>
3	<i>Lijaba Ita</i>
4	<i>Moatsü/MertsüngPangdok Ita</i>
5	<i>Tata Ita</i>
6	<i>Amla Ita</i>
7	<i>Jiben Ita</i>
8	<i>Mongko Nang Ita</i>
9	<i>Tsungremmong Ita</i>
10	<i>Atsütsü Ita</i>
11	<i>Anisüng Ita</i>
12	<i>Süngkolepden Ita</i>

- a) *Anjet Ita*: In this month, the people lease their labour (*ayang-iaoba*). This is done either towards the wealthy person's field activities or the people move to some other villages or may be moving towards rich lands and villages where they can find opportunities to lease their labour

in return for cash or kind like rice grains.

- b) *Jameja Ita*: Selects the new *Putu* members or the new *putupur*.
- c) *LijabaIta*: Worship of all the gods in much more or greater exaggerated rituals; with strict observations.
- d) *Moatsü/Mertsüng Pangdok Ita*: In this month *Moatsü* festival is celebrated.
- e) *Tata Ita*: It is the month when the grains in the granary are reduced to minimum capacity.
- f) *Amla Ita*: It is the month when new crops from the field like the corn and cucumber are harvested and brought for the children for consumption.
- g) *Jiben Ita*: *Ji* is the vernacular name of the grain-carrying basket. It is the month of harvest and also the collection of grains from the fields with the help of *ji* and storing it in the granary.
- h) *Mongko Nang Ita*: *Mangko* refers to the head and *nang or nangten* means to place it one over the other. This month refers to the placement of the harvested and pounded rice stalk and straw one over the other. It is called *mankonang* since it is believed that they have cut the head off the rice stalk.
- i) *Tsungremmong Ita*: Here the *Tsüngremong* festival is celebrated.
- j) *Atsütsü Ita*: In this month the village's gates at the two ends of the village is made or repaired with grasses called *kumbok and lepchi*. In this month also the people repair the fences that surround the village to save and protect themselves from outsiders and enemies.
- k) *Anisüng Ita*: *Anisung* means proposal, therefore this month is highlighted by marriage proposals, by giving *anisüngo* (jar of cooked fishes) to the bride's family; the acceptance of which is regarded as the acceptance of the proposal.
- l) *Süngkolepden Ita*: This month is highlighted by collection of firewood and other necessary woods and items for making and repairing houses. This month is also the time when new plot of forest is slashed and cleared for the next year's cultivation.

II. Sustainability and Jhum Cultivation

'Sustainability' is a word which has been very popular as well as controversial

not only in the academic domain but also in everyday practices and policies of human surrounding. Basically, the term ‘sustainability’ is understood in the context of ‘sustainability development’ which endures social, political and economic systems and processes. The concept of ‘sustainable development’ emerges when the globe was confronting severe environmental threats due to the consequences of human factors. This sustainable development is sought to address the problem of conflicts between environment and development (Harris 2003) thereby preserving and thinking for future needs. According to World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987 ‘Sustainable development’ is “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.⁷

In this context of sustainable future, the issues is not only at global levels but the local levels should be dealt with more seriously where local knowledge and indigenous practices plays vital role in sustainable development. Local knowledge which is often considered as informal knowledge “cover a wide range of its immediate environment and practices on every aspect of social, economic and cultural activities...it is the product of centuries of experiences acquired and developed in a spectrum of information, skills and technology” (Changkija cited in Sengupta, 2012). This knowledge plays important role in developing self-sufficiency and self-determination, and thereby, strengthening the people’s participation in sustainability. Sengupta further explained in terms of conservation and fertility management practices especially with regard to soil fertility and conservation with examples from hill tribes of North East India.

While looking at the sustainability of Jhum cultivation among the Ao-Nagas, it acts as a two - fold tool when; one in term of geo-ecological sustainable practices it adopts and the other in terms of strengthening various socio-cultural institutions.

Geo-ecological sustainable practices:

- a. Crop rotation: The staple food of the Ao-Nagas is rice, and its cultivation is accompanied by various other crops. These crops are rotated in between the two years of cultivation. For example, on the second year a smaller grain of rice is cultivated.
- b. Nitrogen Fixation: Use of leguminous plants not only helps in re-acclimatization of the soil but it helps in fixing the atmospheric nitrogen in the soil thus maintaining and enriching the soil fertility.
- c. In-situ manuring: The crop residues of the first year after harvest

are spread in the field and are burnt to extract the ash which acts as manure for the crops to be cultivated in the second year. Generally in most of the Ao villages salt is used as weedicide. This practice not only acts as a weedicide agent but it fertilizes the soil yielding more output.

- d. Construction of diversion ditches: Conversion ditches of water through the cultivated land helps in soil erosion. The tillage thus retains the soil and conservation is maintained.
- e. Construction of step- like structures: Constructions of step- like structures in the hilly cultivated land helps in retaining the soil from washing down towards the downhill of the field thus maintaining an equal amount of soil fertility throughout the cultivated land and thus soil conservation is again maintained.
- f. Tree-Green-Hedge cropping: A recent practice, where in the second year of the cultivation, certain trees are planted for various purposes, be it commercial or self-utilization purposes. This practice of tree plantation along with the crops maintains the soil from erosion and thus the newly planted trees are also given required nurturing required for its growth.
- g. Mixed cropping: Mixed cropping maintains the required equilibrium in the land and thus the required yield is achieved along with sustainability of the land.
- h. Retaining of crop diversity: Certain indigenous plants or crops species are sustained as a result of shifting cultivation; without which those species would be long forgotten. Thus maintaining and sustaining those endangered species in the plant/ species pool.

III. Strengthening of Socio-cultural/Economic institutions

Jhum cultivation requires a lot of labour, and thence, socio-economic group called *yangyu* or *pangpu* is formed. *Yangyu* or *pangpu* is a labour set formed by members of different age-set or by members of the same age-set system. It is generally formed by members of the society who trust each other (*mulungtok*) or those who have a similar outlook, with a similar consent and accord (*shisa-ajemer*). The members of which goes to each other's fields taking equal turns; these groups are mostly labour oriented (economic in motive); the members of the group help each other in terms of needs apart

from the relationships shared in the fields.

Traditionally, labourers (both sexes) belonging to the same age-set goes to the same field and return home together. But such a practice is seen declining today though not totally absent. Thus, Jhum cultivation strengthens various socio-cultural institutions like the labour set (*yangyu/pangpu*) and also the age-set system. Jhum cultivation also acts as a tool that reminds the people about the land ownership pattern among the kin members of each clan and lineage.

IV. Changing pattern

With advancement in technology and with a growing trend of attraction of the rural poor towards towns and cities, the practitioners of the Jhum cultivation shows a considerable curve downwards. This declining form is attributed because of the choices one is offered in today's world. Some of the changing practices in terms of livelihood dependency come from the farm cultivation alone or from the hand-to-hand cultivation of farm along with the Jhum cultivation. The table below shows this shift towards other occupational dependency in a village.

Table 2: Changing occupations (Longkong Village)

Occupation	Clan			Total (%)
	<i>Jamir</i>	<i>Longkumer</i>	<i>Imsong</i>	
Cattle-rearing	0	0	1	1 (0.58%)
Rubber Cultivation	11	7	6	24 (14.12%)
Orange Farm owners	6	4	4	14 (8.23%)
Shop-keeper	1	2	4	7 (4.11%)
Beekeeping	10	2	5	17 (10%)

Sources: Field Data

The table above (data collected from Longkong village, Jamir, 2013) shows that out of the total one hundred and seventy households (170) 37.04% of household is involved in secondary occupations. This analysis goes to prove that the situational analysis of a given village reflect a changing trend, a growing shift in the occupational pattern. Such patterns or such secondary occupations should be encouraged further and supported by the governing bodies like the village council and the government; and should be incorporated in the policy making processes thereby, addressing people's

need, and evolving better management systems; and promoting marketing initiatives.

V. Governmental aid

In Nagaland, 'where indigenous farmers are not under pressure from restrictive policies and still have sufficient land, some of them voluntarily abandoned rice cultivation and switched fully to cash-crop production... confronted with the same risks and uncertainties as those who were forced to make this transition, they are more flexible as they are at least in the position to resume subsistence oriented farming if market conditions for their products are not favorable'⁸. Joint monitoring and collaborative research between indigenous farmers and researchers and government agencies have been extended to various aids, one of which is; United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with Nagaland's Department of Soil and Water Conservation and with the US\$ 3,6000,000 contribution by Global Environment Facility (GEF) under Sustainable Land and Ecosystem Management in Shifting Cultivation Areas of Nagaland for Ecological and Livelihood Security (June 2009- December 2015) is helping farmers practicing jhum cultivation in 70 villages in Nagaland, helping the people to grow higher yielding crops and earn better income by introducing sustainable land management practices⁹. By slowing rates of soil erosion, these practices have also helped farmers improve soil fertility and cultivate the same land for three years instead of the normal span of two years.

VI. Conclusion

Is Jhum cultivation a practice of deforestation or a practice of sustainability? Jhum cultivation is considered a devastating practice and is considered as a disadvantageous cultivation because of its harm cause to the ecosystem and its negative exertion on the economy. On the other hand, many studies have concluded and shown that the practitioners themselves are part of the conservation. They have gone to prove that this is an ideal way, a technique for the utilization of available land for cultivation. Researchgate.net (2014) draws this question: "Is shifting cultivation a practice of deforestation or sustainable development?" and receives multiple answers and comments; Nitish Ranjan from KIIT University writes, "There is an old saying 'To gain something you have to lose something or you have to pay something'¹⁰. Same thing applies here. On one side, shifting cultivation cause deforestation but on the other hand it is prime food source for tribal people. Hanno Krieger also comments that "(the practitioners know) how to culture their living space with a lot of respect and careful treatment on

their resources”¹¹. However, when one talks about these debates and the pros and cons of such a delicate topic one should always be empirical and the talk should be narrowed down community based instead of talking in a global perspective as Paul George Munro, University of New South Wales, echoes “ shifting cultivation can promote good environmental outcomes or bad outcomes...(depending) on the local institutions and broader political economy in which it operates....the problem is that (it) has been treated as primitive, environmental destructive practice. It is a simplistic homogenous perspective that should be disregarded- more nuanced locality based studies are needed”.

Among the Ao-Nagas, the ‘living and dynamic tacit’ knowledge of Jhum cultivation possess a ‘spectrum of information, skills and technology’. The examination of the basic conceptual principles, the operational and administrative procedures centering the shifting cultivation among the Aos reflects certain conservation and fertility management practices; which themselves argues that sustainability using indigenous production method is a consequence of practical knowledge that embodies sustainable principles.

Ways Ahead

Jhum cultivation as it believed to be one of the integral sustainable land and ecosystem management strategy for Nagaland. Hence there is an immense need to protect jhum cultivation mainly through local practices and knowledge rather than global technological advancement. Several project has already been set up from the Government side such as “Sustainable Land and Ecosystem Management in Shifting Cultivation Areas of Nagaland for Ecological and Livelihood Security” under UNDP Agency, Department of Soil and Water Conservation, Govt. of Nagaland. But there is need for the local level institution building where local knowledge over indigenous technology should be integrated to improve Jhum cultivation areas in Nagaland. The government should adopt various strategies to improve Jhum cultivation and local people should benefit from the same rather than any global companies. Hence here are some of the strategies for benefiting the poor from Jhum sustainability which we as researchers found to be important in today’s world:

Firstly, as seen and observed in the villages among the Aos, the farm products like oranges and honey from the secondary occupations does not always meet a reliable and profitable outcome for the farmers because of two major facts, one of the unawareness of the people on the step ahead

once or after they have produced; and secondly of the unavailability of good market(s) around the villages for selling the products. Hence, the government should expand the market for indigenous products where local goods can not only be sold but where those products can be even frontier further into industrial products.

Secondly, the indigenous knowledge adopted in the cultivations should be promoted further by the government as most times the policies implemented do not account the ‘tacit’ or the ‘local’ knowledge which are (as seen) geo-ecological sustainable as well as markers of any given locality. Such knowledge can even be further taken up and can also be adapted by other community with some modifications.

Thus, Jhum cultivation which is an important facet of life among the Aos, is reflected not only in socio-economic and socio-cultural practices but even in folklore. Rethinking of sustainability therefore, with this aspect is very much the need of the hour and thus, to the question, “How can we stop to stand by?” our answer lies “over the grooves of trees” and maybe it is time for “turning over the trees” where we will find our answers.

Alu Nung
Noktembangkaamer, nütembangkaamer
Merangnungsang.....
Zonitowarodangko
Yongyimang ta kodameshani?...
Anoyümetembazheko
Züniyajongükütowa
Lakü mangashianga.

Translation:

In the field
Holding the dao, holding the spear
The hard working one...
Time of sun set,
How can we stop to stand by?...
Over the grooves of trees
Let sun wait,
Turning over the trees.

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⁴ http://planningmanipur.gov.in/pdf/MSDR/Chapter%206_Land.pdf. Accessed: 25/03/16.

⁵ Explained later in the paper in 'Strengthening of Socio-cultural/Economic institutions'.

⁶ The calendar differs from village to village. The calendar given is of Longkong village; the months of which corresponding the ones followed today.

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Tibet: Historicising the Real Time Resistance

ARNAV KEYUR ANJARIA

Abstract

This paper deliberates on two spatial realities and historicizes them in a certain context that determines their present attire. The core focus is on the Tibetan culture and the re-imagination of Tibet in the Cyberspace. The present nature of technology has led to the emergence of new forms of resistance, and essentially the paper argues to maintain cautious before valorizing solely the medium through a separation of the virtual from the physical attire.

Keywords: *Cyberspace; Internet; Diaspora; Activism; Culture Area; Virtual Reality; Tibet*

While cyberspace as a spatial unit may not necessarily be a distinct and altogether a separate entity from the physical space in terms of the intellectual capital that fills its attire, but its attire or architecture or cyberspace as a medium is certainly different from the physical space. Rather cyberspace cannot exist independently from the physical space (Michael Batty, 1997, pp.337–352) and thus they can be considered to be inter-related in nature and in existence, though the frontiers of imagination that cyberspace transcends, the constraining of time and space in this arena may endorse support for the argument that seeks to view cyberspace as being completely different and distinct from the physical space (Julie E Cohen, 2007, pp. 210–256).

Thus cyberspace as a phenomenon has meant to emerge as the new tipping point for the Tibetan movement in particular where it has meant to be a new avenue for reaching out to people separated by distances, when one refers to people separated by distances, and the coming together of them, in the context of Tibet, one is rather first referring to the Tibetan Diaspora which is spread across the globe and also to the large section of activists and campaigners of diverse nationalities who support the Tibetan cause in their own surroundings. Therefore, Cyberspace has facilitated greater inter connectedness of their activist zeal and articulations and this is what the Tibetan cyberspace has been all about. As MN Rajesh writes in his article

in the Hyderabad Journal of Human rights that Tibetans have embraced internet as vociferously as they embraced Buddhism a few centuries ago. Thus cyberspace has facilitated the manifestation of how organic the nature of Tibetan culture in Diaspora has been. Tibetan cyberspace is just not reflective of the old Tibet and the Shangri la image,¹ which still remains as the dominant view about Tibet amongst much of world's populace but rather Tibetan cyberspace is also reflective of the vision of the future Tibetan nation which is as a distinctive, spiritual, and authentically democratic nation, replete with those characteristics of old Tibet that stem from a worldwide view based on love, and yet ornamented by the positive aspects of modernity that do not contradict those compassionate principles.² Thus embracing of this modern phenomenon by the Tibetan Diaspora is part of that spatial imagination of the future, of embracing the needful of the modern innovation and adapting it into their traditional discourse, thus the cyber spatial convergence reflects the blend of the old and the new in terms of attire and ideas. One can say new attire, old ideas, in terms of their age. It is but a fact that the cultural, political and the geographical Tibet have had different boundaries across different points of time in history. Tibet as we see today under the Chinese occupation is the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR).³ And the major point of contention between the Dalai Lama's supporters, Tibet Support Groups and certain academics and the People's Republic Of China (PRC) has been that while the PRC limits Tibet to be merely the TAR other group argues that Tibet includes much broader territorial area and the area covered by TAR is very limited. One the other hand this paper adopts a culture area approach to study Tibet and does not merely confine itself to include those areas which lie under as Chinese occupation as part of TAR or not being a part of TAR yet being controlled by the PRC, but also seeks to include regions such as Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh which has historically been referred to as Southern Tibet. And thus another region also included in the study is Sikkim which was an independent kingdom within the Tibetan empire, the republic of Bhutan, certain areas of Northern Nepal like Mustang, the tiny region of Ladakh in extreme north of India, and then this paper also includes Mongolia. Thus Tibet and the larger Tibetan Culture Area is being explored in the context of a certain assertion that even in the age of information we see that there are certain information black holes and as mentioned above, within the Tibetan Culture Area in Russia in particular they are the three autonomous republics which are also the Buddhist enclaves in Russia, the Autonomous Republic of Kalmykia, the Autonomous Republic of Buryatiya and the autonomous republic of Tuva of which not much is known. While the latter two republics are situated in

Asia, it is Kalmykia that is located in Europe.

While the conflict with China and the perspective that China seeks to offer is of vehement nationalist appropriation. China has reportedly, time and again, referred to the Tibet support groups, including the present Dalai Lama as separatists, articulating the cause of Tibet's separation from China, but the major point of theoretical relevance is that China certainly is not the sole determinant of Tibet, Tibetan people and Tibet's civilizational destiny. Tibet and its cultural contours extend far beyond the area specified as Tibet by the PRC. Not only is the present day TAR exclusive of certain major parts but the classification of TAR as Tibet is reflective of China's failure to understand the social, Geographical and ethnic fabric of its own nation, if for a moment one considered Tibet as a part of China. The upholding of the principles of minority culture and minority rights, the 17 point agreement and other jurisdictions, are but a mere garb or veil under which lies the tragedy of exclusion and cultural genocide. Thus in this regards, the nature of cultural genocide inside Tibet, another major reason for vast migration of Tibetan clergies from Tibet into India, is such that nearly large number of Tibetan Buddhist monasteries have been destroyed inside Tibet. As part of the ethos of the Maoist Cultural Revolution, Tibet's traditional centres of learning were annihilated and what followed was a wave of Genocide aiming at a possible wiping away of indigenous Tibetan knowledge system. As part of patriotic re-education system, Tibetans have been forced to read the Chinese propaganda and the learning of the Tibetan language has also faced hostilities.⁴

Under such circumstances, Dharamsala in India has emerged as an alternative centre for restoration of Tibet's lost heritage. Thus as stated above that China certainly is not the sole determinant of Tibet, Tibetan people and Tibetan civilizational destiny What then emerges is the fact that Tibetan culture, religion, architecture, social organization extended its influence much beyond Tibet, as stated earlier. Thus theoretically this extension of culture and its various ancillaries across vast stretches of land, from Tawang in India's North East to Kalmykia, Buryatiya and Tuwa in Russia can be articulated as a Culture Area. Thus Caryn M. Berg in the Encyclopaedia of Anthropology, referring to Clark Wissler defines a Culture Area as a geographical/cultural region whose population and groups share important common identifiable cultural traits, such as language, tools and material culture, kinship, social organization and cultural history. Therefore, groups sharing similar traits in a geographical region would be classed in a single culture area. Berg asserts further in the same article that this concept dwells

upon identifying and “defining” a cultural core, and thus deliberating into the fragmented or nearby groups that share these traits that the core upholds or adapts or has adapted to. Evolution of the Culture Area concept is attributed to the legendary German geographer Friedrich Ratzel. Guy Mercier in his article ‘The Geography of Friedrich Ratzel and Paul Vidal de la Blache: A Comparative Analysis’⁵ originally published in *Annales de géographie* in French quotes Ratzel as saying that “in order to understand the role of Man and his destiny”, it is necessary “to picture him on the land where is set the scene of his action”. Thus the story of Tibetan Culture Area or the case study of Tibetan Culture Area stands much in tune with these famous words of Friedrich Ratzel. Ratzel though made a voluminous contribution to the field of Geography yet remains controversial for his linkages with Nazism. He also developed the concept of *Lebenstraum* or the idea of Living Space, which contributed significantly to the expansionist policies of Hitler, though there are several notions of Culture Area, the concept is also critiqued as being a by product of the concept of *Lebenstraum*. Thus several scholars have made diverse and different additions to the idea of what a Culture Area is all about, what sort of categorization can take place using this tool of analysis and if there is a Culture Area or not. Thus here in the context of the Tibetan Culture Area the historical connection is of great importance, some of the landmarks of the historical connection between Tibet and the greater cultural area are people like the 6th Dalai Lama who happened to be from Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh and the Kalmyk monk Agvan Dorzhiev whose activism as a diplomatic genius is of relevance, even the Cho yon relationship between the Mongols and the Tibetans is associated with the historical linkage, in the same manner the reverence of the present Dalai Lama in all of these places that form a part of the Tibetan Culture Area speaks of the role of History in the formulation of the Tibetan Culture Area and also in understanding its present day viability. Thus there is also a perspective that seeks to assert that any classification of a Culture Area is a time bound phenomenon and that a Culture Area is not independent of the notions of Time and Space. In the case of the Tibetan Culture Area, the point of establishing a connection is through mapping the period of the convergence of a particular area with the tenets of Tibetan Buddhism. Since it was after the rise of Buddha Dharma that Tibet emerged as a seat of learning and the religion too, i.e. Buddhist religion acquired a distinct character. For example there are certain tribal groups apart from the Monpas in Tawang who are followers of Theravada Buddhism, thus they necessarily do not constitute a part of the Tibetan Culture Area, similarly the Lhasa Katchis who are the Tibetan Muslims, many of whom have migrated to

Kashmir and Ladakh are an integral constituent of the Tibetan culture area, since Tibetan Islam has its own distinct character which is a result of the influence of the Tibetan Culture. Thus this also helps elucidate a submission that though the Cultural or religious symbolism dominates as far as the Tibetan Culture Area is concerned yet the phenomenon and classification is offered through a secular approach.

Networked Real Time Resistance

Christian Fuchs seeks to differ from the usage of the term Network Society and brings up his own terminology to analyse this networked phenomenon and thus he calls it as a Global networked capitalism. As he asserts Global network capitalism is based on a transnational organisational model, organisations cross national boundaries, the novel aspect is that organisations and social networks are increasingly globally distributed, that actors and substructures are located globally and change dynamically (new nodes can be continuously added and removed), and that the flows of capital, power, money, commodities, people and information are processed globally at high-speed.” Fuchs believes that “The term ‘network society’ obscures the continuity of domination and capitalism and stresses the discontinuity brought about by the increasing importance of computer networks, knowledge and transnationalism.” While there may be difference of terms in defining this phenomenon, the fact remains that at the core of this lies the idea of space, this space may have emerged as a result of the capitalist endeavour to transcend from a fordist mode of production to the new economy.

Speed is a component that separates this online space from its counterpart i.e. networked space within the physical space. Currently the networked space operates at a real time speed and thus now more than ever before interaction between those who constitute the network is faster, unlike the era of tele communication or newspapers or the radio. Thus while analysing the spatial nature of Global network capitalism, Fuchs calls it as an antagonistic system; where “transnational networks are both spaces of domination and spaces of potential liberation from domination.” Tibetan cyberspace and its networked nature is a curious case that resembles both tendencies, while the emancipatory nature of it is reflected through the large-scale networks of trans national organizations, activists and leaders, this vary space also faces a threat from the Chinese government and all those who control the cyberspace for their alliance with the CCP, through censorship and blockage. In 2006, pro Tibet groups led an emphatic campaign against Google for

violating the ideals of freedom of unbiased information, several Tibet support groups held protests, demonstrations and agitations against Google's move to set up a separate engine for the Chinese whereby the results that it would generate for terms like Free Tibet, Falun Gong, Dalai Lama would be much lesser than the result that another Google site would generate for another location, not based in China. Radical transnational groups like Friends of Tibet, Students for a Free Tibet and Tibetan Youth Congress were actively involved in what was a 'No Luv 4 Google' campaign. Students for a Free Tibet, even went on to the extent of launching a website www.noLuv4google.com on the Valentine's Day on February 12, 2006 as a matter of opposing the Google led censorship against those who are resisting Chinese hegemony. According to estimates of the Press and the SFT organization, around 2000 people joined the campaign against Google and registered at the 'No Luv 4 Google' website²⁹. Thus taking cue from Fuchs, this campaign and this phenomenon is a small example of how Tibetan cyberspace has moved on from early egalitarian hope towards an environment where it is not devoid of coercion and domination. Fuchs introduces the idea of Networked Commons in his paper and asserts that networked commons challenge the networked capitalism. Thus while reading through this paper one comes across the basic challenges within what he calls as the global network capitalism which we may look at as a networked space, these challenges are

- 1) Network capitalism
- 2) Networked control
- 3) Networked manipulation

And he also suggests an anti-thesis to the problems that he highlights, his solution or rather the treatise for resistance is networked commons, network participation and networked wisdom. Thus it is another debate as to whom one would classify within the Tibetan cyberspace as network commons, what their ethno-political affiliations are but what is emerging as a clear fact is that 1) Cyberspace as deliberated upon with the example of the Google campaign, is not an independent phenomenon and that it stands in tune with the reality that surrounds one and all. 2) While cyberspace is not an independent phenomenon from the real space boundaries, it also does not allow the attempts of discursive annihilations because it is a space that operates within the hypertext reality, thus any attempt to vindicate a discourse is merely an attempt to delete a certain location because there is always a space and a facility for re-emergence and relocation. Thus as evident within the example of Google campaign that while Google has been

a party to vindicate anti-China aspirations as far as its portal for China is concerned it is not a party to any of such attempt as far as its other sites are concerned. Thus Google's complacency in the case of its Chinese experience can be viewed as censorship and a consent for digital and digitised discursive coercion, it still does not seek to challenge the very nature of cyberspace itself which is as mentioned earlier, hyper textual and simultaneous. Thus within the contours of the same network speed, same device and same browser, someone not based in China can still access both the sites on his computer and get two different quantum of results, while someone based in China cannot. Thus the problem of censorship is reflective of real space constraints and not cyber spatial constraints.

Virtual Reality of the Tibetan Cyberspace

The ongoing argument throughout this paper has been that cyberspace is not a phenomenon which is independent of its roots, i.e. reality. Cyberspace is made and unmade by those who occupy it and thus Tibetan cyberspace and the reality that it seeks to present is also rooted in the real life experiences of the Tibetan people it is not something which features a discourse which is alien to its audience, but certainly the interactive nature of the technology and the speed at which it functions gives a semblance of newness and a certain hallucination of a newer world. Thus as Rebecca MacKinnon asserts that while the networked technology operating within the cyberspace through the internet is a very powerful medium it is yet not an independent entity rather the success and the failure of internet based activism depends upon various other factors, she highlights the case of economics and the economic reality of a place, of a community or a policy influences internet activism, along with several other factors like societal factors, ethno-religious factors along with the deep rooted past. Thus the activism that happens on the internet has more to do with the reality within the physical space. As Barnett opines that the 2008 riots were also a reaction against the suppression of freedom inside Tibet and the lack of freedom to criticize the Chinese government, along with these factors, Barnett and Akiner in *Resistance and Reform in Tibet* has also sought to highlight the economic hardships which were responsible for aggravating the situation and leading the Tibetans to more vehemently join the protest and the riots against the migrant Chinese. Alongwith it, the 2008 Olympics witnessed large-scale online campaign by the Tibetan Diaspora in exile and several protests that took to the streets in many cities across the globe. Students For A Free Tibet, a vehemently tech savvy pro-Tibet organization also launched a special website dedicated to the Olympics and their season of protests, the domain name of the website was

www.freeTibet2008.org. The site is still live on the internet and it features various campaigns carried out across the globe by the activists of the SFT. Thus the socio-ethnic composition of the activists consists of those from diverse nationalities, and not just the Tibetans. Therefore, a website such as this by SFT can be viewed as an effort to publicise their resistance in Diaspora against the Olympics being held in China, for what the pro-Tibet groups believe is that the Olympics are also a basic violation of the Olympic spirit and also the fact that the Olympics represented the best opportunity to highlight the plight of Tibet.

Cyberspace activism and Tibetan cyberspace in particular is reflective of how information has been commodified, how information has become the most sought after means of authenticity and for the fact that the mode of production today is itself based upon Information. Thus Why cyberspace and internet based social media are so very important for the Tibetans and the Tibetan movement? The basic reason being that it is the medium through which information passes across vast tracts of people and places. The landscape of the internet and the cyber spatial network is such that it widens the scale of a network in the real space. For example, a Lhakar Wednesday protest outside the Chinese embassy in London may be an event taking place in its oblivion surroundings but it has larger significance for those who adhere to the values that the protestors seeks to argue for and thus those who adhere to are spread in far off places yet in the virtual world it is just a click away , at times it is happening right on their home page and they too feel connected because of the multimedia updates, valorising the work of the activists on the ground. Therefore magnitude of the event on the ground is today not measured by the number of people present at the real space protests but rather by those who are a part of the larger free Tibet network. Even the Free Tibet network is a more ideational network that constitutes all those who adhere to the idea of freedom for Tibet and Tibetans inside Tibet. Within the larger Free Tibet network there are sub networks, sub networks which are based upon organizational networks, say a members who form a part of actors within the network of Students For A Free Tibet, members who from a part of the Friends Of Tibet network, members who form a part of Tibetan Youth Congress, members who form a part of United Nations For A Free Tibet etc. Thus the larger network being Free Tibet and within it are various sub networks, which are made by the members who adhere to the ideas of the different organization. Thus the Tibetan cyberspace is a network based phenomenon where each actor is connected with the other through values and ideas and idealism, the idealism being Tibet, the value

being concern for what is happening inside Tibet. So one is not seeking to assert that a protest on the ground is magnified by social media, but rather cyberspace provides an opportunity for the activists on the ground to be more assertive about the values they uphold and the cyber spatial propagation and generation of support helps enthuse them for they understand the greater relevance of their action.

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Gender and Power Relationship in Ao-Naga Family System

RESENMENLA LONGCHAR

Abstract

Gender is the knowledge about the differential positioning of men and women in the society. The society fixes meanings to the role ideology and role behaviour of men and women keeping in view their biological and cultural differences that are genetically and epigenetically transferred along generations. Gender is created in response to power relations. Power relations are constituted within the role a person plays. A gender role is a set of expectations about what behaviours are appropriate for people of one gender. As the role changes, the power relations also change and vice versa. This paper discusses about the gender norms and relations between Ao-Naga men and women observed in different roles – husband vs. wife, siblings, parents vs. children etc, - through the folk narratives.

Keywords: *Gender; Power; Family; Roles; Patriarchy; Behavior; Narratives*

Gender is emerging as an important paradigm to interpret the dynamic roles and relations of men and women in their respective family systems. Family which is the citadel of social organization functions as a centrifugal and centripetal force in determining and construing gender. Gender is the knowledge about the differential positioning of men and women in the society. The society fixes meanings to the role ideology and role behaviour of men and women keeping in view their biological and cultural differences that are genetically and epigenetically transferred along generations. In other words masculinity and femininity are conferred upon the men and women resting on their gender performances prescribed by their respective societies. Gender is created in response to power relations. Power relations are constituted within the role a person plays. A gender role is a set of expectations about what behaviours are appropriate for people of one gender. As the role changes, the power relations also change and *vice versa*. Hence, these relationships are highly dynamic. The frequent shifts in these relationships find expression in their speech genre like tales, proverbs, and

slurs. They manifest the process of gender construction and the patterning of roles and relationships of men and women in their respective societies. It is because, the relationships especially between the two sexes are generally believed to have been manipulated and preserved by social customs and traditions. The structuring of different events and interaction among various social dyads in folktales reflects a network of gender relations and the process of gender construction that the people undergo in a given society (P.S.Kanaka Durga, 2000, pp. 89-120).

Folktales of Ao-Nagas¹ told by men and women of different ages bear sound testimony to the biases that exist between the two sexes regarding their gender performances and roles. The gender norms and relations between Ao-Naga men and women observed in different roles – husband vs. wife, siblings, parents vs. children etc, - can well be explained through the folk narratives.

I. Husband Vs. Wife of Ao-Naga

Generally the husband has power to regulate and manipulate his family relations as he is supposed to be the bread-earner. Being the head, he should be able to protect his family prestige and should be sober with his wife and children.² His contribution towards the society should not be neglected. When the husband comes back from work or public meetings (*yimden mapa*) or public participations, the wife is expected to speak politely/ humbly and make arrangements for warm bath, clean clothes and delicious food. The wife is supposed to negotiate both the domestic and public realms within the family and in the society. The family schedule is determined by the woman. Normally, wife/mother is expected to learn in quietness and full submission. Being a woman she should be dissent, not expected to teach or have authority over her husband, must be silent and not be malicious but temperate and trustworthy in everything. She must be worthy of respect and must manage her children and the household well.³ Wife should work hard; take care of her family members including their parents and in-laws. She should maintain healthy relationships with the neighbours and exchange honours with them by gifting or offering delicacies etc.⁴ Thus, the role expectations of wife are multifaceted. Any deviation of women from their respective societal expectation was treated with contempt.

The following narrative delineates how a husband abides the norms of the family and endures his relations with his wife and children even though she violated them. Any disagreement that arises between the husband and wife is supposed to be settled by them only. The return of the wife to her

husband in the narrative further suggests that for a woman, her man is the only ultimate resort to live in peace and glory.

Narrative 1.1: Wife who returned home

Once there was a couple. They had two sons. One day, without any reason the wife took her two sons and went to her father's house. The husband was not happy with his wife's attitude so he said to himself, "I did not ask her to go but she left home without telling me any reason; let her come back on her own. I won't ask her to come". He spent his days working and going to the field, taking care of the pigs and cooking for himself. On the other side, the wife was missing him and wanted to go back to the house but she could not do so as she was the one who left the house. She could no longer bear the loneliness. One day, she decided see her husband. She held the eldest son in her arms, carried the younger son on her back, and told them, "Let's go and see what your father is doing at home." After reaching the house, they peeped through the door. They saw him cooking food for the pigs. The elder son shouted, "Father! We are standing here." Hearing that, the father quickly replied, "Oh! Why are you standing there, come inside the house." That's how the wife returned home.⁵

The extent of intimacy between the husband and wife is also finds expression during the pregnancy and delivery time of the Ao-Naga woman. The husband's participation on the eve of childbirth is amazing event that shares the experience of pleasure and pain between the couple.

In a family, good relationship between husband and wife is maintained when they are faithful to one another despite their differences and weaknesses. When dissatisfaction between them takes place they should able to solve it by themselves.

Narrative 1.2: Stepmother

Once upon a time, there was a family. Unfortunately, wife died leaving her husband and son. Later, the husband got re-married. The new wife then gave birth to a son. She nourished her own son with warm and good food and gave him good cloths and beautiful shawl woven by best yarn. She fed her stepson with cold and spoiled food and gave thick and roughly woven cotton shawl to wear. The villagers could sense the differential treatment given by the stepmother to her stepson. One day, the wife asked some villagers, "Have you seen two boys one wearing shawl made with soft yarn and the other with a rough yarn." They replied, "We don't see any distinction in their shawls." The mother did not understand why the villagers could not differentiate their shawls. One day, when the father and his son were working in the field, they heard the sound of the *Osü* bird. The boy sings to the bird, "Even if you shout loud, your meat is sour to taste and your intestine is bitter." The father was shocked to hear that and told him, "My son, why are you singing like that." He replied, "But father, what can I say it tastes like that only." Then the father understood that something wrong was going on at home when he was not there. So he told his son, "Son, tonight also I will take home one *Osü* bird with me. I will taste some meat from your plate". The son said, "It's my pleasure father." Then they went back to their home after work. During the dinner, whatever food was served by the wife to her stepson it was

tasted by the husband. He found out that she served him some leaves that taste sour and the seeds that are bitter. She did not serve the meat. The father grew angry with his wife for ill-treating her stepson and expelled his wife and her son out of the home on that night only. Thence, the father and the son lived alone. ⁶

The above narrative explains how the husband loses his temper when he found out his wife's one weak point. Without showing any sympathy to her, he expelled her and never let her step inside his house again, knowing that they have a son. But before he realizes his mistake it was too late because his wife had gone away and never to return home. It is a typical patriarchal story which depicts the right of husband to desert the wife if he can trace any asymmetry occurs in hers thought or practices in their conjugal relationships. The narrative further tells that asymmetrical marriages cannot sustain for longer times.

Narrative 1.3: Sungrochetla who became cuckoo bird

In the past, humans, animals and gods lived together. During this time, *Sungrochetla*, daughter of god married to a human being. She was very fair and beautiful because her parents fed her with human flesh. One day, *Sungrochetla* told her husband, "These days I'm feeling extremely weak and seem to be losing my weight so, can you please go to my parents and bring the usual food I use to have at home." He agreed and went to the jungle to meet her parents. He was asked to stay the night with them. Next morning, *Sungrochetla's* parents cut one human hand and wrapped the hand several times with a leaf called *Am*, and tied it with bamboo string and gave it to their son-in-law. On his way home, he wanted to see what was inside the leaf so he slowly opens one of the layers. Every time he tries to opens the leaf, a bird (which was send by her parents to guide the food) always shouts at him, "*Ni nü nangla sayiko*" (I will tell them). When he reached home, he saw that he had opened all the layer of the food, except one. He gave the food to his wife who was making rice-beer. She got so excited to receive the food. After that, she told him, "I'm going to make rice-beer so go and fetch water or collect firewood from the jungle." She did this because she didn't want to let her husband know about the food. But he did not trust his wife so he peeped through the bamboo-matting wall. He was shocked when he saw her taking out a human hand. She then roasted the hand on the fire and slowly enjoying the hand with rice-beer. Then slowly, her face began to glow and became beautiful as before.

He told the entire story to his father and asked him for an answer. His father told him, "You take her into the deep jungle and leave her there." But the son replied, "I have a son to take care so please let me not do that business." So his father took *Sungrochetla* to the jungle told her, "Let's go and collect *yarang* (*young banana*) from the jungle." She happily agreed and went together to the jungle. On their way, the father-in-law collected some clouds and put it on a container. He asked her, "Do you know this jungle." She replied, "Yes, this is place where we frequently come". The father-in-law thought to himself, "If

I leave her here I'm sure she will be able to come home so let me take her to another place". They went deeper and deeper into the forest. At last, they reached a place near a river from where she could not return. Then the father-in-law opened the container containing clouds and poured them over her. Then the entire surroundings were thickly covered by clouds. Both cannot see each other. Then the father told her to wait there for sometime till he comes back with some leaves. Thus he deserts her into the forests.

Sungrochetla's son cried whole night searching for his mother's milk, so in the morning her husband told his father, "please go and bring her back because the baby cried the whole night searching for her." The father-in-law agreed and went to the forest in search of her. He took food along with him. He called out, "*Sungrochetla, Sungrochetla* where are you? I came to take you home." But she told him that she got transformed into half human and half bird and hence she could not come out. She shouted at him, "*Akongtongdong, akunur ashi kulaker.*" (Father-in-law is cunning). So he left half of his food to her and returned home. He told his son, "She will never come back, she has gone to her parent's side, and so you take care of you son."⁷

From the above narratives it is observed how a man uses his patriarchal authority to over-rule his family as well his wife.

During my fieldwork I could not collect folktales on wife beating. But there are many contemporary narratives that show how husband beats his wife due to drinking and loss of temper which finally end up in divorces or family problems. It is interesting why there are no folktales regarding wife beating despite the fact that the Ao tradition and culture shows the plentiful usage of rice beer. Though Christianity condemned drinking, the people cannot alienate themselves from it. Older generation tell that the wife beating and mutual negotiation are common in the society and they are not the problems to be publicized out. That exists in the family realm and the issues are internal to their private life. That's how the issue of wife beating is internalized by the traditional people and this may be reason for the absence of the motif of wife beating in their oral narratives.

II. Parents Vs. Children

The strength and wealth of a family depends upon the nature of relationships that exist between the parents and children. The parents should set examples to their offsprings. In Ao-Naga society, though the gender roles and duties of father and mother are hierarchized in the absence of one, the other takes the responsibility of the one who was lost and patches up the situation. Especially the Ao-women have the caliber to take the role of the father in upbringing of the children. Because of the internecine and inter-tribal

warfares in the past, there was no security to men's lives. Hence the women are equipped with the qualities that are essential to arouse the community and family consciousness among their children for revenging upon their enemies. Thus the role of portents in character building of children is very crucial in Ao-Naga society. The parents expect their children to learn about their genealogy and history of their respective families. The children are expected to know not only about their properties but also their debts, friends and foes. The debts of not only money but also relationships like realizing the promises of their parents or revenging upon their clan enemies are expected to be cleared by the offsprings (N.Talitemjen Jamir & A.Lanunungsang, 2005, p.236). In the past, sons were sent to the boy's dormitory (*Arju*) which was the primary step to socialize him to the rules and regulations of the family at the base and the community at the apex. Children who just listen to advices but never do things in their practical life are referred to such proverb, "Like water not staying in *Yum* leaf" (*Manüto nung tsü mamong ama*)⁸ The proverb means to say that, water never stays on the *yum* leaf. It always falls down the moment water touches the leaf because it is very slippery and even if one tries to let the water stays on the leaf it just rolls down and falls on the ground. The following narrative explains how a father disciplined his son.

Narrative 1.4: The spoiled son

Long time ago, there was a family. They had only one son. He grew up according to his own wishes and his parents provided him with all the good food like fish and meat. To test and see the son's reactions, one evening, his parents give him only a simple dish without any meat or fish. The son told his father, "*Opa nibo ayimmur.*" (Father I want to shout). Actually he means to say he wanted to have some meat or fish. His father quickly replied back, "*Tongshi nungji wor ayimang.*" (Go and shout near the wooden post). The father just replies what his son said. Only then the son realized what his father means to say and never demanded anything extra. He stopped crossing the limit and tried to be a good son.⁹

The father and son relationship develops through the participation in activities of the Village Council (*Putu Menden*). Traditionally the role of the mother was to manage the home, to look after the children, weave clothes for the family, and train her daughters to weave, cook food, feed the children and animals, and fetch water and firewood, brew rice-beer, pound paddy works in the field throughout the seasons. The mother was considered as an example of hard work for her children. Even today, the daughter is expected to be like the mother. Mother is expected to mould the behaviour of the daughter. Mother vs daughter conflicts are not shown in the narratives. Cordial relationship is manifested even in other folk expressions of the Ao-Nagas.

III. Sibling relationships

The sibling relationships in the case of sisters were noticed in the folk narratives. Expected behavior for siblings may depend on where the child is in the sibling hierarchy (oldest, middle, or youngest child) and whether the child is male or female. Children with siblings learn how to share and resolve conflicts quite easily. And with the right kind of guidance from parents, siblings also get a lot of practice in learning how to be cooperative, supportive, and nurturing to others. Siblings serve many functions for one another. There are many folk narratives based on siblings' relationship. When the older sibling tries to exert too much control over the younger one then there arise conflicts among them. They are expected to be responsible, help one another and not to exploit their sibling control. This is explained in the following narrative.

Narrative 1.5: Aier chanu agi ozu akumba (A girl who turned into a bird)

Once upon a time, in a family there were two girls. One day as their parents were away to the field, they spent their day going to collect firewood. Since they went to collect firewood for several times, they felt very tired and hungry. The youngest sister asked her elder sister, "Sister, shall we have food". Her sister replied, "if you want to have food then you go first to collect water." After coming back from the pond, when the younger sister again asked to have food, her sister told her, "There are some few grains so you pound the grains." At last she fainted and could not do any work because of hunger. She told her sister, "I will not do any work because I am feeling very hungry" and then she rested. But again her sister demanded, "You first cook rice" so she started to cook. She took out some rice with a spoon and tasted to know whether it was cooked or not as she was feeling very hungry. But unfortunately this act was seen by her elder sister. Her sister snatched away the spoon and beat her terribly. Because of the beating, the younger sister got very angry and she cried hysterically as if she was going to faint. As she was very angry, she tore her cloth and put the cloth on her arms and backbone to look like bird wings and feathers. Fixing it so, she went to *sünglang* (balcony) singing this song, "*Ati mangla süngpeni wangte, Tzüteri mangla, ongpang mentitila nung onglak onglak*" (Sister you told me to collect firewood and to fetch water, what kind of sister are you).

When their parents returned from the field, they could not find the youngest daughter. When the sun was about to set, they found her in the corner of the *sünglang*, transformed into a bird. She was there jumping joyously singing the same song which she sang to her elder sister. When they saw her and heard the song, they called her many times thinking that her elder sister might have scolded and made her very angry. They requested her, "Child, please come to us. We will scold your sister". But she never returned to her. The parents scolded the eldest sister and so she too became very angry and at the same time, she also did not come back to them. She went down to the balcony. Even she turned into a bird and went away making sound, "*Tenü-a tenü-a*" (sister-o sister). During *metsü mapang* (sowing season), the sound of this bird is heard.

The narrative illustrates the problems the parents face with children when they leave their home for earning livelihood. In any relationship the 'strong' exploits the 'weak' and the 'elder' snubs the 'younger' and sometimes the *vice versa*. In the end the 'defeated' or 'exploited' will escape into a blissful world. Here the younger daughter who was frequently exploited by her sister got transformed into a bird and flies into skies.

Maintaining good sibling relationships can be found when problems, sufferings and danger occur between them. The Ao-Naga depends for food not only in cultivation but hunting as well. So the male siblings help one another for the sustenance of the family. During hunting in the jungle, they face dangers in many forms, so their relationship is recognized at this time. The following narrative explains the relationship of two brothers where they helped one another to save themselves from the danger, on their way from hunting birds.

Narrative 1.6: Two brothers and a tiger

Once upon a time, there were two brothers. They went to hunt birds (*anung asai*). They caught many birds, so the younger brother said his brother, "Odi (brother) lets go home, and we've caught enough birds." But his brother said to him, "Let's wait and catch more birds and let's also catch a big bird for our mother because there will be lots of birds coming when evening comes." As they were engrossed in their hunting, it became dark. As they were going back homeward, they saw an old man holding a bamboo torch and walking through the woods making an, "mmmh mmmh" sound. Since it was dark and they had no torch with them, they shouted, "ohhoi! We don't know who you are, but wait for me and my brother." So, the old man waited for them. Actually it was an old tiger. The tiger said to them, "Burn all the birds one by one and put into my mouth otherwise I will kill both of you." They told him, "We will burn and give it to you one by one, all the birds." Meanwhile, the younger brother said to his brother, "Brother, do not give the biggest bird to the tiger which we caught for our mother"; he kept repeatedly saying this for several times. While doing so he made a long stick out of tin, put it on the fire and told the tiger, "Grandfather close your eyes and open your mouth big, I will give you the biggest bird." When he did so, the younger brother put the hot, burning stick into his mouth. His tongue burned and he ran away in search of water. So they shouted, "I and my brother enemy went in search of water. Please let there be no water in the river." As the tiger reached the river all the water dried-up, and he had a difficult time with his burned tongue. This tale means to say that, people come across danger when they live in a poor condition.¹⁰

IV. Relationship with in-laws

In-laws can be a great source of support and closeness. They can also be a major problem in the marital relationship. As mentioned earlier, roles change according to the position. When a man is married to a girl, he becomes a member of the girl's family. The son-in-law is expected to be present

in the in-laws family occasions rendering his help. The son-in-law's help, presence and concern should be made known to the father-in-law through respect. Since son-in-law has married his daughter so it is his obligation to attend whenever need arises. For example, if his brother-in-law is to get married, he should be the first one near them by even, sacrificing his sleep. In the past, the husband used to go to the wife father's field to help and for all practical purposes to accept as a member of her family. The father-in-law's role is to make sure that his daughter lived securely and happily with his son-in-law. He is also expected by the society not to be too involved in the son-in-law family affairs because being a nuclear family, he has his own family and once the daughter is married to him, the son-in-law assumes the responsibility and right towards his daughter. If he tries to involve and control his son-in-law's family then it will only bring disturbances between the two families and affect the relationship of the kinship. Till today it is a practice and custom that during an occasion if a pig is killed then the son-in-law give a thigh of the pig to the father-in-law's family. In this way the relationship is maintained.

Unlike the joint family of the Indian society, generally in the Ao-Naga family everyday close interaction is not found between the daughter-in-law and mother-in-law because of its nuclear set-up. This doesn't mean that the relationship between them is distant but they maintained their relationship by sharing information, instructions and advices even during pregnancy and delivery. They share their love and care through gifts and also respect their roles and power. Conflict arises like divorce, bad relationship when they interfere in the family affairs.

According to Anungla Aier, "Our social structure has a clear division of gender roles, while the menfolk were historically engaged in protecting our villages and clans, women were confined to the family and kitchen. I think it will take some more time for the society to change its mindset".¹¹ Gender plays an important role in determining the role of male and female in any society. The Ao-Naga society being a patriarchal society gave men more rights in decision-making. Men not only worked to look after their own families, but as members of the village council they also took importance decisions for their respective village or clan. The women too in the Ao-Naga society had an important role to play. Though they confined themselves to the four walls of the house, it's their duty to take care of the family and look after all the household chores. They were responsible in molding the daughters to become good wives and mothers. The fathers played a huge role in shaping the lives of the sons. Despite the norms set by the society

in certain cases where the women had no say, she did not have the right to property and she could not become a member of the village council. Thus the patriarchal society decided the norms for both male and female and power too is determined by the relation between male and female.

It can be concluded from the above discussion that the organization of Ao-Naga society rests on functioning of its various institutions like family, kinship, marriage and gender relationships. The narrative tradition of the Aos reveals how these institutions standardize their personal as well as the community lives and ensure the continuity of their identities in changing times. Family (*kibong*) is the basic social institution established through the custom of legitimate marriage (*Kiyimba*) and function on the norms of patriarchy. Marriage rests on the stringent rules of exogamy and endogamy. The norms of kinship are strictly followed in terms of marriage and related behaviour. The trespassers are punished by the customary law. Polygamy and adultery in conjugal life are prohibited for Aos. The narrative tradition suggests the women (wives) not to compete with men (husbands) in family life as both are complementary in their role behaviour. The society warns the women that they receive more bites from men than privilege. The women has vital role to play in bringing up the children as per the norms of the Ao society if the father dies in tribal warfare, hunting or in protecting their community or away from home. The society expects that the men should always be ready with his *dao* to die for the cause of his community. Every woman wishes that her husband or son should emerge as a headhunter and prove his virility and prowess as a member of Ao-Naga society. Though the nature of the family is nuclear, parental care is mandatory as per their custom. The children are eligible for inheriting property as well as debts of their parents. The family functions on division of labour. The gender roles and functions are determined by custom. The obligatory and customary relationships between parents, parents vs. children, in-laws, between siblings (brothers vs. brothers, brothers vs. sisters and sisters vs. sisters) bounded by tradition.

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Endnotes

¹ One of the tribe from Nagaland, North-East India.

² Information gathered from L.Teka Longchar, 65 years, Longkhum village, interviewed on 13.06.2008

³ Information gathered from Longrichila Longchar, 78 years, Longkhum village, interviewed on 20.12. 2007

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ *Ibid*

⁶ Information collected from Imolemba Jamir (M), 57 years, Ungma village, interviewed on 19.12.2007,Otsufuba Longkumer (M), 73 years old, Longkhum village, Interviewed on 18.12. 2007

⁷ Information gathered from Otsufuba Longkumer (M), Interviewed on 18.12. 2007

⁸ The explanation for the proverb is gathered during informal chat with the community people in the Longkhum village.

⁹ *Ibid*

¹⁰ Information gathered from Tsükdinungba Longkumer (M), 75 years old, Changtongya village, interviewed on 24.04. 2008

¹¹<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/politics-remains-outofbounds-for-naga-women/278891/>

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Diacritical Marks

Vowels

आ ā

ई ī

ऊ ū

ए, ऐ ē } (long)

ओ, औ ō } (N.B. long ē and ō are for the particular syllables in Dravidic languages.)

ऋ ṛ and not ri; (long ऋ, which rarely figures, may be rendered as r̄) .

Nasals

Anusvāra

(·) ṁ and not m

anunāsikas

ङ ṅ

ञ ñ

ण ṇ (or ṇa as the case may be)

Hard aspirate

Visarga

(:) ḥ

Consonants

Palatals

च ca and not cha

छ cha and not chha

Linguals

ट ṭa

ठ ṭha

ड ḍa

ढ ḍha and not ḷha

Sibilants

श śa

ष ṣa

स sa

Unclassified

ळ ḷa

क्ष kṣa and not ksha

ज्ञ jñā and not djñā

ल् ḷṛ and not ḷṛi

General Examples

kṣamā and not *kshamā*, *jñāna* and not *djñāna*, *Kṛṣṇa* and not *Kṛishṇa*, *sucāru chatra* and not *suchāru chhatra* etc. etc., *gaḍha* and not *gaḷha* or *garha*, (except in Hindi)

Dravidic (conjuncts and specific) characters

ॠ ṛ̣

ॡ ṛ̣̣

ॢ ṛ̣̣̣

ॣ ṛ̣̣̣̣