

Chapter – 1

INTRODUCTION

To understand ‘Cultural Heritage’ the first thing that needs to be understood is what ‘Heritage’ is all about. The word ‘Heritage’ is believed to be something that is inherited, passed down from previous generations. It is a way of managing the past, managing history and presenting it in the present. After the First World War, the idea of creating an international movement for protecting heritage emerged. According to UNESCO, today the word heritage broadly refers to Natural heritage, cultural heritage, man-made heritage such as food heritage or industrial heritage, virtual heritage, etc.

Cultural Heritage is about culture, traditions and values and it represents the people’s history, identity, bond to the past, present and the future. According to the definition given by UNESCO, the term Cultural Heritage encompasses: the tangible cultural heritage which includes movable cultural heritage (paintings, sculptures, coins, manuscripts, etc), immovable cultural heritage (monuments, archaeological sites, etc) underwater cultural heritage (shipwrecks, underwater ruins and cities) and the intangible cultural heritage such as oral traditions, performing arts and rituals. Intangible cultural heritage can be recorded but cannot be touched or interacted with, without the vehicle for the culture or in other words the memory of the community or the few elders who have this knowledge and passes it on to the next generation. These ‘Cultural vehicles’ has been termed as ‘Human Treasures’ by the United Nations. Nietzsche observes that in the animal world, genetic programs guarantees the survival of species but humans must find means by which to maintain their nature consistently through generations, the solution to which was offered by cultural memory, a collective concept for all knowledge that directs behaviour and experience in the interactive framework of a society and one that obtains through generations in repeated societal practise and initiation¹.

¹ Jan Assman. *Collective memory and Cultural Identity*.

<https://marcuse.faculty.history.ucsb.edu/classes/201/articles/95AssmannCollMemNGC.pdf>, Page 126

It has been observed that awareness has been widely created about the preservation of tangible cultural heritage but the intangible cultural heritage has received little or no attention resulting in the danger of its extinction. With the lack of awareness and means to preserve the cultural heritage, the indigenous people the world over are in great danger of losing their identity. The Nagas constitute one among the indigenous people of the world residing in the North Eastern part of India and they are no exception to this fiasco as the various Naga tribes base their history on oral source. Amongst the various tribes of Nagaland, the Sümi Naga is one of the major tribe with the second largest population inhabiting the districts of Zunheboto and Dimapur and concentrations in almost all the districts of Nagaland. In the past they were called “Sema” but it was changed to “Sümi” by a resolution of the Sümi Hoho, the apex body of the Sümis and subsequently approved and officially adopted by the Government of Nagaland on 13th September 1994. The language spoken by them is Sümi and so the tribe is known by the name of their language.

Like the other Naga tribes, the Sümis also base their history on the oral source which has long been passed on from one generation to the next. In the foregone days, the *Morungs* (Dormitories) or the *Apuki/Iliki* as it was known in the Sümi language were the venues where such interactions took place. These *Morungs* were the cultural centres of the Sümis as the elements of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage were prominently displayed in such settings. The tangible cultural heritage of the Sümi are composed of the colourful traditional clothes, ornaments, crafts like woodcarving, weaving, stone carving, basketry, utensils, pottery, agricultural tools and implements, traditional architecture, ritual practices like stone pulling, musical instruments, art of cutting trees, cuisine, traditional games and sports, weaponry, etc. Among the tangible cultural heritage of the Sümi, the *Morung* or the *Apuki/Iliki* played a very prominent role in displaying the inter-connectedness as well as the inter-dependence of the tangible on the intangible and *vice versa*. Young boys and girls were admitted into their respective *Morung* after attaining puberty and while living in the *Apuki/Iliki*, they went through various ranks till their adulthood. Women were forbidden to enter the *Apuki* and men were forbidden to enter the *Iliki*. As a result of this, the elderly women well versed in the art of weaving, folk song, folk dance, social skills, manners, etc taught the young maidens in the *Iliki*

and in the same way elderly men well versed in the art of handicrafts, warfare, sports and oral tradition imparted such knowledge to the young men. The *Apuki* also served as meeting halls, guest house, guard house of the village and also an armoury for the village. In spite of having played such an important role, with the arrival of outsiders like the British colonisers, American Missionaries and the Indian Army operation, such centres of learning slowly lost its central position and at present in the Sümi community, there is no trace of *Apuki/Iliki* and rarely does it get mentioned in all the deliberations of the past except for minuscule references here and there. The intangible cultural heritage of the Sümi on the other hand are composed of oral traditions (folktales, legends, proverbs, sayings and taboos on marriage, women, nature, men, war), myths, folk poetry, knowledge of performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts. Language is also a very important component which has been carrying the intangible cultural heritage from one generation to the other and with the coming of the British administrators and the Western Christian Missionaries, the Sümi saw their language in the written form for the first time.

To assume that without the encounters with the people from the outside world, the Sümi tradition and culture would have been preserved in its entirety and the oral history would have remained intact as it was in our forefathers' days would be a utopia. But it is also without a doubt that such encounters though had positive aspects to its credit also contributed a great deal towards the disappearance of many cultural practices of the Sümi.

Until the mid 19th century, the Nagas in general were unadulterated by any outside influence as they were very proud, therefore, remained isolated. It was only in 1832 that the Nagas came into direct contact with the British when they came on an expedition to survey the hills. R R Shimray points out that it was only at the show of gun and might that their pride was brought down but that was after inflicting losses to the lives of the British soldiers.² The British spent the years from 1832-1850 on expedition across the Naga Hills and they started their non intervention policy from 1851 which lasted till 1865. But they had to abandon this policy due to the incessant

² Quoted by Inato Yekhetto Shikhu, *A Rediscovery and Rebuilding of Naga Cultural Values* (Regency Publication, New Delhi), p 45

attack of the Nagas on the neighbouring villages and even on the British. From 1866 onwards on the pretext of ‘civilizing’ the Nagas, they annexed the Naga Hills. After this, the Naga Hills was divided into two – British Subject Nagas and Free Nagas. Among the British Subject Nagas the Sümis were put under three groups:

1. Kohima Elaka – villages under Pughoboto area and Satakha area
2. Mokokchung Elaka – from Yemishe, Sukhalu, Sheyipu to Tichiphami down to Mukhami
3. Western Sümi villages

The Sümi of Eastern region went under the Free Nagas group. With the division of the Sümis into different regions, there arose differences in the long run. The British brought about many changes like the introduction of Dobashis who were given the judicial right along with the Village Chief to settle the disputes in the village customarily but the Deputy Commissioner and his assistants always interfered which resulted in the overlapping of powers. This ultimately led to the destruction of the traditional system of administering the village. This is just one instance of the destruction of the Sümi cultural practices.

The next group of outsiders who came into contact with the Sümi and who actually left a huge impact on the Sümi way of life and their culture were the American Baptist missionaries. The first American Baptist Missionary to work among the Naga people of present Nagaland was Dr E.W. Clark who came to work among the Aos in 1876. The Nagas were animists, thus, coming of a new faith was strongly resisted and there were instances where the entry of the foreigners into the village territory was not welcomed. The missionaries started planting churches and along with it simultaneously schools were also established. With the coming of Dr. Clark slowly the missionary activities spread across the different regions of Nagaland ultimately reaching the Sümi. The Sümi territory lies between the Ao and Angami areas and so it was through the contact with them that they heard the gospel for the first time. The first Sümi village to receive the gospel was Ighanumi village through two evangelists from Angami tribe named Seliezu and Krunizu in the year 1904 and the first two chiefs to accept the gospel was Ghopuna and Ghusuna. They were baptized at Kohima by Rev. Dr. S Rivenburg.³ But the missionaries had to

³Ighanumi, *Diamond Jubilee Souvenir*, 1987, p 18

face lots of challenges as it was very hard to change the minds of the Sümis because they lived under the complete control of their village chief (more powerful compared to other tribes as it was similar to monarchical system and chieftanship was hereditary), without whose order they could not do anything on their own will. Accordingly Dr. Bailey who worked as a missionary among the Lotha tribe said that the Semas were not like the Aos because unless the Chiefs become a Christian first, those living under him will never become Christians. The power of the Chief was great and they could bestow punishment on the disobedient subjects. For instance, when Zhekiqhe became a Christian, the Chiefs of his village Ilhokhu and Kivishe fined him Rs. 10. Another instance of the unwillingness to accept the new faith can be seen from the incident where Inaho, DB (Dobashi – Translator during the Colonial period, appointed by the British Administrators who gradually became the guardians of the customary laws) at Lumami along with the Sub-Divisional Officer of Mokokchung, Charles Pawsey made a rule wherein –

1. The Sümi Chief who converted to Christianity would not be given the red shawl.
2. The house taxes of those household who accept Christianity were to be Rs. 3 and those who did not accept Christianity were to be Rs. 2.
3. Christians were not allowed to wear the traditional shawls like *Aqhumuphi* and *Abophi*.
4. Christians were to partake in all the rituals of the non Christian without any excuse
5. No one was allowed to sing in the village.⁴

Inspite of all these resistance, many Sümi Chiefs accepted Christianity in the long run and along with them their subjects too. With this, changes both positive and negative penetrated into the Sümi society which left an impact that reverberated over the generations of the Sümi tribe. Inspite of many great changes that benefitted the Sümi in many aspects, irreparable damage was also done especially in the primal traditions which unfortunately cannot be recovered anymore. The *Apuki/Iliki* (dormitory for boys and girls) which was the institution of holistic cultural activity was gradually replaced by the Church and schools as joining it was greatly discouraged among the converts and ultimately it became non-existent. The Missionaries started terming all the material and immaterial things and practices of the Sümi as “devilish” and so the decorations of the houses with horns of animals, carvings on the post of the houses, weaving of clothes with

⁴ SABAK, *Xülhe (Sümi Christian Centenary 1904-2004)*, p 45-46

conspicuous designs and dyeing of clothes for religious ceremonies were discouraged. Their beautiful ornaments made out of cowries, shells and hornbill feathers were all burned. Even the singing of traditional songs and performing dances were considered to be animistic and devilish and so the Sümi converts started despising their own cultural practices. With these changes the beautiful art and culture almost fully disappeared. Haimendorf observed, “in these villages the hard toils on the fields remained, while much of the bright side of village life, the great annual feasts, the dancing and singing, the happy community life in the *Morung* and last but not least, the gay parties, round pots of sparkling rice beer had disappeared”.⁵

The next encounter occurred when the British left India in 1947. The Nagas declared their independence ahead of India on August 14, 1947 and informed the United Nations as per their submission of memorandum to the Simon Commission in 1929. The refusal of Naga Hills to be a part Indian union led to many negotiations between the Indian Government and Naga people for some years after August 15, 1947. However, the Indian Government betrayed the Naga people by announcing that there was no agreement made with Naga people or that the agreement was no longer considered to exist by the Indian Government. Consequently, the armed conflicts erupted and the Naga Hills was annexed to be a part of Indian union.

Nagas were never under India even before the arrival of the British and for time immemorial. It was only for their administrative convenience that they brought the Naga areas and divided them without their consent into “Naga Hills”, NEFA and “Free Nagas”. After they left, Nagas were scattered due to the occupation of the Naga territory by the Indian and Burmese forces as a result of which some Naga tribes went under the Burmese and within India, the Nagas were divided by the boundary demarcations made by the Indians which resulted in the various Naga tribes going under different Indian states like Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur. When the Indian Government was set up, they introduced the sixth schedule of the constitution but the Nagas did not accept it and the Naga National Council (NNC) decided that the Nagas will not send their

⁵ Quoted by Subhadra Mitra Channa in the article “*The Classical Ethnographies*” edited by Subhadra Mitra Channa “Nagaland: A Contemporary Ethnography” (Cosmo Publication, New Delhi, 1992) p 17

representative to the Indian Parliament and Assam Assembly. On May 16, 1951, the NNC started the Naga Plebiscite election where the representative of NNC travelled all throughout the villages in Naga territories and both male and female of 15 years and above were asked to cast their vote as to whether they want to have a separate Naga government or accept Indian government. At the end of this exercise it was found that 99.9% voted in favour of the Naga government. This was compiled as a book and was sent to the President of India, INC and the Secretary General of the United Nations. The Free Nagas did not take part in this exercise. After this the Nagas stopped paying tax to the Indian government and even did not conduct the election in their territory. When the Nagas learned that the Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the Burmese Prime Minister Thakin U-Nu was coming on a visit, the NNC decided not to cooperate but because of some NNC leaders, this decision was changed and on 28th March 1953, it was decided in the Naga Club that they would receive the Prime Ministers of India and Burma according to the Naga customs and traditions and would submit a memorandum to Jawaharlal Nehru to give compensation for the damages of war. But on 30th March 1953, the then Deputy Commissioner of Kohima, Borkotaki took the memorandum and told the NNC that they should not ask for compensation and he also did not give permission to any of the Nagas to speak saying that whoever disobeys would be heavily punished.

When the two Prime Ministers arrived, the Naga public were not aware about what took place with the DC and had gathered in large number to meet the Prime Ministers who were accompanied by Indira Gandhi. When they were informed about what Borkatoki had done, the entire Naga public left the meeting place leaving behind only the visitors. The same day Borkatoki ordered the arrest of the Nagas and imposed the Assam Maintenance of Public Order Act, 1953. With this, the arrest of all members and leaders of NNC started and so they all went underground and ran away to the Free Naga areas to hide. The Sümi also went hiding in the Free Naga region and from here they decided to join with the Sangtams and Yimchangers to fight against the Indians. During this time some Assam Rifles came to the Yimchunger village called Huker and their actions displeased the Nagas greatly as they did everything that was against the Naga culture like chopping down the bamboo without the permission of the Chief, searching for women to sleep, etc. Out of anger, on 15th March 1955, the villagers killed three Assam Rifles

with their daos. With this, on 18th April 1955, the Assam Rifles came back to Huker village and burned down the village and their granaries and killed all their animals. The Huker villagers ran away to Sümi Ngozübomi village. On hearing this, the Assam Rifles arrived at this village and burnt down the village. This was the beginning of the Indian Army operation across the Sümi region where many people were killed, villages were burnt down, women irrespective of their age were raped including the ones pregnant, men were gathered together in groups and tortured to death. The Assam Rifles even desecrated the church. And so began many wars between the Indian soldiers and the Sümi like the battle of Satakha, Tichipa battle, Sathazü battle, etc. Among the Nagas, the Indians wanted to specifically punish the Sümi due to which between a distance of 5-6 km army post was opened in the Sümi territory. With the constant battles and burning down of villages, lives were lost on both the sides and with it the most important asset of any society especially for people, who rely on oral history, they lost a generation of bearers of history, material cultural artifacts were lost which could not be revived. To cite an example, whenever a village was burned, it was not left to burn away but the Indian soldiers would wait for two things - one was to check if the people would come back to salvage what they could and another reason was to make sure that the village was burnt down to ashes including the granaries and livestock. Their aim was to starve the villagers to submission but in the process the beautiful tangible cultural heritage like the *Morungs* were also burnt and so at present if anyone goes to any Sümi village, the original *Morung* would not be visible and much will not be said about it because the generations of people who knew about it has long gone. The beautiful carvings and decorations on the houses, the carved posts for tying the Mithun for rituals, the authentic traditional clothes, ornaments, handicrafts, varieties of crops that were in use, etc disappeared along with the flames and smoke. The intangible cultural heritage especially the oral traditions and history was also lost when nearly a generation of Sümi died during this period of operation either at the hands of the Indian army or due to starvation or diseases while hiding and living in the jungles. It is said that more than 40,000 Sümi were killed between 1953 and 1990.⁶ The knowledge gap created with the loss of lives and the loss of cultural properties incurred during this period of conflict has deeply affected the history of the Sümi.

⁶N. Khashito Aye, *The Sümi Nagas*(S P Printers, Dimapur, 2000) p 20

With the process of loss incurred in the past through various encounters and the danger of losing more due to the growing knowledge gap between the older and younger generation as the days go by, there is a great need for documentation and preservation of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the Sümi without which a day may come when the very identity of the Sümi will become a matter of confusion and debate which is just starting.

Majority of the Sümi have the knowledge of the tangible elements of the Sümi cultural heritage and its usages but only few has the knowledge of how these tangible elements are made and so the greatest need is the detailed documentation of how these tangible elements are designed. For example, the knowledge of weaving traditional clothes of men and women are concentrated only among few womenfolk which endangers the continuity of this art in the future as young women at present are not interested in learning this art. Therefore proper documentation is the need of the hour along with an understanding of the types of cultural heritage that the Sümi possess and the inter connectedness of the tangible with the intangible cultural heritage where one becomes weak without the other and so with the slowly dying out of the tangible elements, the intangible is also slowly losing its voice.

This will ultimately lead to a better understanding of the culture and identity of the Sümi as a distinct tribe with its own unique cultural practices which sets them apart from the other Naga tribes.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The Sümi has a rich cultural heritage which has been passed down from one generation to the other. The cultural heritage is the source of identity, creativity and diversity for the Sümi in the absence of any written records as they like other Indigenous people of the world are oral society. Through this study, it has been observed that the Sümi cultural heritage has suffered irreparable loss due to encounters with the outsiders in the 19th and mid 20th centuries which became the foundation for the Sümi cultural heritage undergoing changes and loss. These encounters were with the British Administrators, the American Baptist Christian Missionaries and the Indian Army operation. Understanding this loss, further studies were done and it has revealed the gap in

the passing on of information from one generation to the other due to the loss of people having the memories of the oral tradition. In the absence of proper documentation the Sümi cultural heritage which consists of tangible as well as intangible are facing the threat of being lost. When we survey the documented works, the earliest work is that of J H Hutton's monograph called 'The Sema Nagas' published in 1921 by Macmillan & Co, London. This work has helped in documenting many aspects of the Sümi cultural heritage but the drawback is except for some scant information about a village or two, it didn't cover the Southern Sümi ancestral villages from where the Sümis migrated. When we observe the Southern Sümi villages, till today linguistically they are very diverse as each village has their own unique language and the cultural practices are also rich and diverse with each village having their own variations in terms of both the tangible and the intangible. The other works mostly by the Sümi does not cover both the aspects of the cultural heritage and most of them are based on similar themes for instance, land and the people, customary laws, political history etc. A complete documented work of both the tangible and intangible cultural heritage is missing. Therefore as with the passage of time, men and women who possess knowledge of cultural heritage are passing away, the need for proper documentation was felt for which the present study is significant towards filling the gap and preserving for posterity with special emphasis on the Southern Sümi region and also an analysis of the Sümi in Upper Assam as they are facing challenges in maintaining their identity as a Sümi due to the strong influence of other culture brought in by widespread inter-culture marriage.

1.2 Literature Review

Though the main emphasis of the thesis is based on field work, existing literatures were referred in order to understand as well as emphasise the need for further research and documentation. The following literatures were referred:

Ahmad, Yahaya, *The Scope and Definition of Heritage: From Tangible to Intangible*, International Journal of Heritage Studies, Vol. 12, No. 3, May 2006, pp 292-300. In this article, the Author talks about how since the adoption of Venice Charter in 1964 many conservation guidelines in the form of charters, recommendations and resolutions have been adopted and introduced by international organizations such as UNESCO and ICOMOS. He also brings out the

scope and definition of heritage as promulgated by the various charters across the globe. Stress is put on how at regional and national level, the scope of heritage was broadened to include garden, landscape and environment and later reinterpreted and defined quite differently in Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and China. The Author mentions that although the scope of heritage in general is now agreed internationally to include 'Tangible', 'Intangible' as well as 'Environment', the finer terminology of 'heritage' has not been streamlined or standardised and so no uniformity exists between the countries.

Assmann, Jan, *Collective Memory and Cultural Identity*, New German Critique, No 65, Cultural History/Cultural Studies (Spring-Summer, 1995) pp 125-133. This essay was written in 1988 in German and was translated to English in 1995 by John Czaplicka. In this essay, Assmann separates collective memory or communicative memory as he calls it and its social basis from cultural memory and its cultural basis. He brings out two distinction in which cultural memory was different from collective memory namely how communicative memory lacked the cultural characteristic and that it was different from history which does not have the characteristic of memory. For Assmann, cultural memory is based on fateful events of the past, on fixed points which he calls 'figures of memory' whose memory is maintained through cultural formation (texts, rites, monuments) and institutional communication (recitation, practice, observance). He also mentions how cultural memory's function was to unify and stabilise a common identity that spans many generations and how it was not easy to change as opposed to collective memory.

Achumi, L.K, *Sümi Lhoyeza (Sümi Customary Practices and Usages)*, self published by Author at NAVP Press, Dimapur, 2012. This is the first book on Sümi customary practices written in English which enables the non Sümi to have a glimpse of how the crude form of custom initiated by the Sümi ancestors have been carried down from one generation to the other. This book brings to light the fact that the customs and usages of the Sümi are very common with slight variations from village to village.

Aier, Anungla, *Studies on Naga Oral Tradition Volume I*. Heritage Publishing House, Dimapur, 2018. The Author talks about how the Naga tribes speaks different languages and possesses their tribe specific traditions of origin, myths and legends of migration besides a host of other folk

narratives that serves as the receptacle of the collective memory of the people's experiences. She also talks about how such traditions provides a historical frame with which the people can connect, identify with and around which their sense of people hood, belongingness and the historicity of their cultural experiences are constructed and anchored.

Aye, N Khashito, *A Brief Historical Account of the Sümi Nagas*, ATICOS Limited Publication, Dimapur, 2000. This book is an account of the origin of the Nagas and the Sümi, the customary laws of the Sümi, social and cultural life is highlighted. Emphasis is given to the Sümi district headquarter Zunheboto. The Author mentions some Sümi folktales.

Fürer-Haimendorf, Christoph von, *Youth-Dormitories and Community Houses in India. A Restatement and a Review*: Anthropos, Bd. 45, H. 1.3. (Jan. - Jun., 1950), pp. 119-144. The author talks about the practise of youth dormitories among the tribes in India and he specifically talks about how it was practised among the various Naga tribes.

Hutton, J.H, *The Sema Nagas*, Oxford University Press, London, 1968. This is the first monograph ever written on and about the Sümi and though has its drawbacks serves as a very important source. The Author was British Administrator and compilation for this book was made between 1915 and 1920. The Author has described in detail about the habitat and affinities along with the appearance of the Sümi and the dresses and weapons that was used by them. He also writes in detail about the domestic life like the village, food, drink, medicine and games that a Sümi practised on a daily life. The Author talks about the practise of exogamy and the inheritance of property and how disputes were settled. Various ceremonies and religious practise has also been described in detail. Though a great deal of information has been recorded in this book there are number of issues that have cropped up as he was misinformed by the indigenous people. There are also many malapropisms as the author was a foreigner.

Jimomi, Dr. V. Hokuto, *Sümino Naga Ghoshika Ghenguno Mülakeu*. Graphic Printers, Dimapur. This book is written in Sümi and gives a detailed description of how the Sümi joined hands with the other Naga tribes in the struggle for sovereignty. It is interesting to note that great effort has

been put to chronicle the struggles of the Sümi leaders and common man in their fight against the Indian Army and the operation and wars that took place between them. In spite of this, one drawback is that no mention is made of the cultural aspect.

Jimomi, Inavi, *Sümi Naga (Origin and Migration of the Nagas)*. Heritage Publishing House, Dimapur, 2018. In this book, the Author gives an account about the early settlement and migration of the Nagas, their habitat and affinities, some early Naga villages and then he moves on to a detailed description of the migration wave of the Sümi and the different villages at present. He also talks about the traditional political system followed by the Sümi and practices like festivals, marriage, folklores and calendar.

Kiho, H Toniho, *The Impact of Christianity on the Sümi Tribe*. Print Home, Dimapur, 2004. This book starts with the description of the land, location of the Sümi and their social, religious and cultural life in the pre Christian era. But the main focus of the Author is on how Christianity came and spread across the Sümi region and the impact it left on the social life, culture, politics and economic life of the Sümi. The impacts described are mostly those of positive impact.

Minc, Leah D, *Scarcity and Survival: The Role of Oral Tradition in Mediating Subsistence Crises*, *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 5, 39-113. 10.1016/0278-4165 (86) 90010-3. In this article, the Author brings out an interesting analysis of how subsistence of periodic crises is dependent on a group memory of past crises situation and the strategies appropriate for dealing with the altered environmental conditions. She mentions that one mechanism utilized by non literate societies for the preservation of knowledge is its incorporation in oral traditions. She mentions how oral traditions operates over two time frames – secular oral traditions (folktales, songs and histories) depend on repetition for perpetuation with inherent potential for distortion, while sanctified oral tradition (ritual performance) rely on correct reproduction of the ritual order to achieve supernatural efficacy. The Author examines the role of oral tradition in mediating subsistence crises for two hunter-gatherer groups : the Tareumiut and Nunamiut of North West Alaska.

SABAK, *Xulhe, Sümi Christian Centenary (1904-2004)*. SABAK, Pughoboto, 2004. This book commemorates the 100 years of the coming of Christianity in the Southern Sümi region and so is a historical account of how Christianity first came to the Southern Sümi region which is believed to be the region from where the Sümi villages spread out and migrated and also the area where Christianity had its first converts. This book starts with the history of the origin of the Nagas and the Sümi and also that of the Southern Sümi referred to as *Aphuyemi* and also the rites and rituals practised before the coming of Christianity. Then a detailed description of the history of Christianity in the Sümi region is given along with the pioneers among the Sümi in the theological realm. An interesting aspect of this book is a chapter on Sümi culture and tradition and how it has undergone change in the last 100 years. It also gives a slight description about the contribution of Southern Sümi in the Naga's struggle for sovereignty.

Shikhu, Inato Yekheto, *A Rediscovery and Rebuilding Naga Cultural Values*. Regency Publication, New Delhi, 2007. In this book, the Author starts with the origin, migration, tribes, language, religious practises, social institution of the Nagas and a detailed description about the pattern of administration before the coming of the British is also given. The Author also highlights the coming of the British and the various changes that was brought about by them and mention is also made about the Indian politics and attitude and its impact. Making an attempt at a comparative study of Nagas with another group of tribal - the Maoris of New Zealand who underwent the same encounters with the outsiders like the Nagas did, the Author tries to bring about an understanding of how the Maoris though a minority were attempting to rebuild and regain their cultural identity. To rebuild the Naga culture, the Author propounded the concepts such as "Trojan Horse Effect" and "Thalidomide Model" and also deals with Post-Modern ideals such as 'Multiculturalism', 'Acculturation' and 'Enculturation'.

1.3 Objective of the study

The objective of this study is to rediscover and document the age old cultural traditions and practices of the Sümi which is misplaced, misunderstood and misinterpreted and an attempt to make it meaningful and relevant for posterity. When we critically analyse the situation that the Sümi society is in at present, there is a great need for proper understanding of the source of Sümi

identity, diversity and creativity which is actually through the cultural heritage which is made up of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. By getting a clear understanding of how the knowledge gap was created with the encounters with the outsiders, remedial measures can be taken to avoid such gaps from occurring in the future. So far the encounter with the Indian armed forces in the 50's was studied only from the political perspective but in this study, the destruction caused to the cultural heritage is going to be focused upon. There is a need of documenting and the cultural heritage of the Sümi so that the younger generation can relate to it and ultimately feel the great need to go back to their roots and not take it as something that is outdated and obsolete.

The main objectives of the study are:

1. Categorisation of the Sümi cultural heritage in order to understand the interconnectedness of tangible and intangible heritage.
2. Collection of the Sümi oral tradition.
3. Documentation of original Sümi dialect, rituals, festivals, songs and dance, vernacular structures of the dwelling houses, club houses.
4. Steps for preservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Sümi.

Additionally, some of the scopes of this research that can be conceptualised and the hypothesis that may be considered are:

- The present Dual Behaviour; Characteristic of Sümi

1.4 Significance of the study

Many studies have been conducted and books written on some aspects of the Sümi cultural heritage but there is yet to be a proper documentation of the cultural heritage of the Sümi as well as an analysis on the characteristics of the Sümi cultural heritage. There is also lack of literature on the cultural heritage of the Sümi in Southern Sümi ancestral villages from where the Sümi trace their origin as well as studies on the Sümi in Upper Assam who are facing challenging times in maintaining their Sümi identity. Therefore this study is a nascent attempt at bridging the gap as well as analysing the steps in preservation of the Sümi cultural heritage.

1.5 Methods and Methodology

This study is mostly based on ethnographic method of field research (personal interviews and recordings of voice and video) to get first hand information about the cultural heritage of the Sümi and to document it. Interview method was used where personal interviews of selected elders who had knowledge of the cultural heritage in their respective villages. Focus group discussions were also held in some villages.

Secondary sources through books, journals, monographs, etc have also be adopted to gain an understanding on the extent of work that has been done and also ways in which gaps or reworking if any can be filled through this research work.

Understanding the research gap wherein the cultural heritage of Southern Sümi region from where the Sümi migrated have not been properly documented till today, focus has been on the villages in the Southern Sümi region and also other regions of the Sümi including the Northern Sümi villages in Upper Assam – Longtong, Lalpahar, Baliyan, Paharpur, Tsaliki, Tingkupathar. The emphasis on this area was given because they are the first group that is in the process of losing their Sümi identity due to their adoption of other culture, rampant inter marriage with other groups of people and high influence of Assamese culture.

1.6 Limitation of the study

- Due to Covid 19 pandemic, the scheduled field work was hampered for two years during which some intended people who had knowledge about the cultural heritage died due to the covid 19 and old age.
- In many villages, the elders whom the younger generation rely on for possessing the knowledge of the cultural heritage are either losing memories of such knowledge due to old age or due to the inability to talk about it with anyone. Therefore this created problem in acquiring complete narratives about some aspects of the cultural heritage.
- The topic being very vast, all the regions of the Sümi couldn't be covered.

1.7 Chapterisation

The thesis consists of six chapters. Each chapter has been divided into sub chapters to give a clear and concise picture about the contents.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter gives a broad introduction to the thesis. It provides a background to the thesis by discussing the root issue i.e. how the encounters with the outsiders led to the beginning of the loss of cultural heritage. The sub chapters provide the background as well as the methodologies employed in order to frame the thesis. This chapter covers topic which is helpful in understanding the concepts that has been elucidated in the entire thesis.

Chapter 2: Land and the People

This Chapter gives an introduction to the Nagas as people inhabiting the state of Nagaland in the North Eastern part of India. It gives a general idea about the ethnographic background of the Nagas as a people, the language spoken by them, the origin of the term Naga as they are known. Then it goes on to the introduction of the Sümi as one of the Naga tribe and their migration and their cultural heritage and the impact of the encounters of the Sümi with the three groups namely – the British, the American Baptist Christian Missionaries and the Indian Army operation. The effect of these encounters has been discussed in detail.

Chapter 3: Tangible Cultural Heritage

This Chapter categorises the Tangible Cultural Heritage of the Sümi into different categories and sub categories. Buildings and structures under which the important structure from the forefathers' days like the *Apuki* (dormitory for male) is studied in detail, artefacts has been categorised into charm stones, thunderbolt and tobacco filtering tool, Megalithic erections from different villages and their narratives, traditional textiles and ornaments of both men and women, handicrafts, household articles and significant materials.

Chapter 4: Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Sümi have been intricately documented and an attempt has been made to categorise them. The categories are oral tradition and expression which is further sub divided into Origin of village formation, Sümi traditional political system, Folktales, Legends, Proverbs, Folk Poetry. The next categories are Festivals, performing arts – folk songs, folk dance, social practices and rituals – rites and rituals, social practices – feast of merit, Aloi, marriage and belief and religion which is further categorised into death rituals and customs, gennas, taboos and customary laws and the practise of Lycanthrophy.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Recommendation

This chapter gives an analysis on the Sümi cultural heritage in two aspects – characteristics of the Sümi cultural heritage wherein three characteristics are brought to light namely Dual Behaviour/characteristic, inter-connectedness between Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage, Sümi cultural heritage as a source of Identity, Creativity and Diversity. The other aspect looks at the status of the Sümi cultural heritage at present wherein analysis is made in four aspects – Status of memory, cultural appropriation, the Sümi in Upper Assam and the Sümi cultural materials at Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford. Then the next part of the chapter looks at the ways for preserving cultural heritage of the Sümi where comparative studies with other indigenous communities and measures adopted by them have been studied.

Chapter 6: Analysis of the Questionnaires distributed among the Sümi of Nagaland and Upper Assam

This chapter gives an indepth analysis about the questionnaires that were distributed between the Sümi of Nagaland and Upper Assam. This was done in order to ascertain the level of knowledge about the Sümi cultural heritage and their attitude towards the Sümi cultural heritage.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This chapter gives a conclusion to the thesis and provides the information about the problems encountered during the course of the field work and suggestions for further research has also been discussed

References

- Achumi, L.K. (2012). *Sümi Customary Laws and Practices*. NAVP Press, Dimapur.
- Ahmad, Yahaya. *The Scope and Definition of Heritage: From Tangible to Intangible*, International Journal of Heritage Studies, Vol. 12, No. 3, May 2006, pp 292-300
- Aier, Anungla.(2018). *Studies on Naga Oral Tradition Volume I*. Heritage Publishing House, Dimapur.
- Ao, Temsula. (2014). *On Being A Naga Essays*. Heritage Publishing House, Dimapur.
- Ao, Temsula. (2012). *The Ao-Naga Oral Tradition*. Heritage Publishing House, Dimapur.
- Aosenba. (2016). *The Naga Resistance Movement*. Regency Publication, New Delhi.
- Assmann, Jan. *Collective Memory and Cultural Identity*, New German Critique, No 65, Cultural History/Cultural Studies (Spring-Summer, 1995) pp 125-133
- Aye, N Khashito. (2003). *Social Change Through Christian Education*. ATICOS Limited Publication, Dimapur.
- Aye, N Khashito. (2006). *The Impact of Christian Education*. ATICOS Limited Publication, Dimapur.
- Aye, N Khashito. (2014). *The Sümi Nagas*. ATICOS Limited Publication, Dimapur.
- Channa, Subhadra Mitra. (1992). *Nagaland A Contemporary Ethnography*. Cosmo Publication, Dimapur.
- Iralu, Kaka D. (2017). *Nagaland and India Blood and Tears*. Published by the Author at Genuine Printing Press, Kohima.

Jimomi, Inavi. (2018). *Sümi Naga (The Origin and Migration of the Nagas)*. Heritage Publishing House, Dimapur.

Jimomi, Dr. V Hokuto, *Sümino Naga Ghoshika Ghenguno Mülakeu*. Graphic Printers, Dimapur.

Kiho, H Toniho. (2004). *The Impact of Christianity on the Sümi Tribe*. Published by the Author at Print Home, Dimapur.

Lenzereni Federico. *Intangible Cultural Heritage: The Living Culture of the Peoples*, The European Journal of International Law, Vol. 22, No. 1, 2011.

Lotha, Abraham. (2007). *History of Naga Anthropology (1832-1947)*. Published by the Author at Creative printers, Dimapur.

Lotha, Abraham. (2016). *The Hornbill Spirit Nagas Living their Nationalism*. Heritage Publishing House, Dimapur.

Minc, Leah D, *Scarcity and Survival: The Role of Oral Tradition in Mediating Subsistence Crises*, Journal of Anthropological Archaeology 5, 39-113. 10.1016/0278-4165 (86) 90010-3

Nekha, K Nishena. (2015). *The Nagas Culture and Education*. Heritage Publishing House, Dimapur.

Shikhu, Inato Yekheto. (2007). *A Rediscovery and Rebuilding of Naga Cultural Values*. Regency Publication, New Delhi.

Swu, Gen Zuheto K. (2003). *Sümi Xü Ghili*. Published by the Author.

SABAK. (2004). *Xülhe* . Published by SABAK Pughoboto.

Zhimomi, K Kuhoi. (2004). *Politics and Militancy in Nagaland*. Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi.